

## The Summer of Solar for Orange County Residents!

### *Launch of the Solarize Campaign Brings Education and Discounts to the Community*

**Orange County, NY:** Saturday June 3, 2017, kicked-off an exciting time for all Orange County residents looking to go solar. The anticipated launch of Solarize Orange began with a public education event in coordination with the Illuminated Festival. This is a State-supported nonprofit program, combining education, and solar discounts for area homeowners and commercial property owners throughout the county. During the summer months, there will be workshops where residents can listen and learn about how the program works, ask questions to see if it's right for them, and meet with local installers. Those interested can find the details of these events on the groups Facebook page or website: [www.solarize-hudsonvalley.org](http://www.solarize-hudsonvalley.org).

Solarize Orange is sponsored by the Orange County Department of Planning, City of Newburgh Conservation Advisory Council, and the Village of Highland Falls Economic Development Corporation. Having led the State with the highest number of solar installations in 2015, this will be the second time that Orange County is participating in the program, and likely the last time the Solarize program will be available to its constituents. The opportunity for residents to sign-up at an event or on-line and be eligible for discounts lasts through Friday September 1, 2017.

"Solarize programs are designed to run with community support—they depend on the inside knowledge and passion only a local team can provide," said John Wackman, a Hudson Valley resident and Solarize Hudson Valley organizer. "This program also enables home energy efficiency improvements that will increase the value of solar."

Over the last two years, the Solarize Hudson Valley group has been funded by NYSERDA to work in conjunction with local solar installers to educate area residents about the benefits and financial discounts available for "going solar," and to help walk homeowners through the process, answering their specific questions along the way. Following success across the river in Dutchess County, the Orange County program will be running alongside Ulster County, where previous campaigns spurred the installation of 110 solar systems, ranging from 3kW in size to 17kW in size, and here in Orange County the 2015 campaign resulted in 115 installations totaling 975 kW.

"The Solarize campaign is so important for Newburgh, because we are a community working to revive itself, and we have a history of innovation that's being resurrected. We're looking forward to saving money, lessening our reliance on fossil fuels, and helping our children, our neighbors, our beautiful city and our planet, all at the same time," said Deborah Brown, City of Newburgh resident and Solarize volunteer.

Area residents with questions or looking for more information now can visit [solarize-hudsonvalley.org](http://solarize-hudsonvalley.org).

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The Solarize Orange County effort is coordinated by Solarize Hudson Valley, which is part of Catskill Mountainkeeper and Sustainable Hudson Valley's RenewableNY program. The three-year effort is funded in the Hudson Valley and Southern Tier by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) under Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's NY-Sun initiative and Community Solar. By leveraging group discounts through pre-selected installers and community outreach, residents receive a 10-20% automatic discount on their solar systems. You can visit [solarize-hudsonvalley.org](http://solarize-hudsonvalley.org) or [RenewableNY.org](http://RenewableNY.org) to learn more.

For information regarding Orange County Department of Planning's sponsorship of this program, residents can contact Kate Schmidt, Planner, at 845.615.3858 and [kschmidt@orangecountygov.com](mailto:kschmidt@orangecountygov.com) or visit: [www.orangecountygov.com/planning](http://www.orangecountygov.com/planning).



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