

The town of Hampton has recognized the importance of using renewable energy as a substitute for fossil fuels, with the resultant cost savings, and preserving the environment through conservation and recycling efforts. As a result, the Hampton Green Energy Committee (HGEC) was established on December 7, 2009, with the charge “to study and recommend an energy savings/green energy plan for the Town of Hampton.”

Since its inception, Committee members have attended seminars and followed legislation in order to keep town leaders and Hampton residents and businesses informed of ongoing incentive programs. Working with the following agencies and services, the committee has procured funding for local clean energy resources, as well as advice, coordination and outreach materials: **Connecticut Green Bank** (formerly Connecticut Clean Energy Fund and Connecticut Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority), **Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund**, supported by the utilities and their customers, and the **State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection**. These services created the umbrella **EnergizeCT**. Hampton has additionally benefitted from the **Institute for Sustainable Energy at ECSU**.

Working with these resources, the committee was an early participant in the **Clean Energy Communities** program -- establishing energy reduction benchmarking, and committing to a goal of purchasing at least 20 percent of its electricity by 2010 for municipal facilities from renewable energy sources. Through this program, Hampton earned a 4kW photovoltaic system installed on the elementary school and the benefit of expanding it to 9kW for a minimal cost. More recently, the committee worked with a solar company to submit a Power Purchase Agreement/Zero Emission Renewable Energy Credit proposal for the town of Hampton resulting in the installation of a 127kW photovoltaic system on the roof of the Hampton Elementary School.

The committee has also taken advantage of the following opportunities: **CTCleanEnergy Options**; grants from **Innovations, Sunshot** and **Bright Ideas** programs and **The Last Green Valley; Home Energy Solutions** services; and the ambitious **Solarize CT** initiative to promote energy savings installations for residents.

The Town Hall and Hampton Elementary School have undergone energy audits, identifying areas for improvement, and serving as a base for upgrades and installation of energy saving systems. Town Hall now has extra insulation, a new energy efficient furnace, outdoor lighting improvement, and a solar photovoltaic system. Hampton Elementary School now receives 100% of its electricity from solar panels installed on its roof. Additionally, an earlier grant incentive enabled the installation of a solar thermal system to provide hot water to the school. The installation of a dedicated monitoring station at the school keeps track of the energy created by these renewable resources. New outdoor LED/Dark Sky compliant

lighting reduces the nighttime glow as well as the cost of lighting the exterior of the school. The Hampton Firehouse also has a roof mounted photovoltaic system.

In addition to seeking funding and organizing the installation of energy efficient systems, the Green Energy Committee works to spread the word about energy efficiency and clean energy utilization. Hosting Regional Energy Forums in 2010 and 2015 brought together representatives from surrounding towns to discuss clean energy strategies. Ongoing energy fairs held at the elementary school provide Hampton residents with ideas and contacts for conservation and clean energy resources. The children of the school, not to be left out of the learning experience of addressing clean energy, sponsored solar car and solar cooker contests, supported by HGEC community grant money, and shared their ideas, through speeches and music, with the broader community.

Further outreach to the community includes the creation of the committee's web page, light bulb exchange, film series (the latest in partnership with **Goodwin State Forest**), and a brochure about reducing waste.

In the coming years, the Hampton Green Energy Committee will continue to seek out ways to reduce energy use and cost for the people of Hampton, and create the "clean" community that helps make our town environmentally responsible.