

## Save Energy and Money with the help of Community Energy Advisors

by Danielle Salisbury



We survived the winter, but there is still the memory of low temperatures and high energy bills. This spring is a good time to think about what you can do to save energy and money in your house. It can be something that you do yourself, like change your lightbulbs to LEDs, or it can be applying for a program where a contractor makes energy upgrades to your house for free or at a reduced price.

The good news is there are resources here in the Hudson Valley to help you make informed energy decisions. Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) Dutchess County is working with Cornell Cooperative Extension Sullivan County to help people and businesses reduce their energy consumption and energy costs. It doesn't matter if you rent or own your home. Community energy advisors are available to:

- Support you while you apply for energy programs, including guiding you through the application process
- Inform you of financing options for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects and products
- Guide you through the process of implementing clean energy projects
- Connect you with energy contractors who can implement clean energy projects.

If you are thinking about making energy upgrades to your house, the first step is to obtain an energy assessment. A consultant will come to your house and diagnose where and how you are wasting energy. The consultant will give you a list of recommendations to make your home more energy efficient. Almost every person

who lives in New York State is eligible to receive an energy assessment for **free** with the help of certain programs. After the energy assessment, you decide which projects, if any, you would like to do.

If you would like to lower your energy bill, but you can't make energy upgrades to your house right now, there are still other programs to which you can apply. For example, we can connect you with a program that, depending on your income, can enroll you in a free solar subscription. With this program, you receive a share of electricity generated by a community solar farm near you, which shows up as credits on your utility bill. You can save anywhere from \$10-\$20 each month on your energy bill!

Here at Cornell Cooperative Extension we want to help you save energy and money while making your home more comfortable and safe. **We offer this service free of charge** to seven counties including Ulster, Rockland, Orange, Sullivan, Dutchess, Putnam, and Westchester.

If you have any questions or you would like to speak about your options, please send an email to Danielle Salisbury at [ds778@cornell.edu](mailto:ds778@cornell.edu) or call (845) 677-8223 extension 138.