

Ossining Climate Action Plan

Detailed Recommendations: Energy Sector

Commercial Energy Efficiency

Defined as:

Techniques and best practices designed to decrease electricity demand and heating fuels usage by commercial structures with the objective of reducing the business's greenhouse gas footprint. This includes usage of energy-efficient appliances, fixtures, and electronic devices as well as measures to reduce heating energy losses to the outdoors.

List of Measures:

A. Green Operations Plans – Energy Efficiency Component

Partner with local business for training sessions on best practices in energy efficiency. These training sessions could be done in partnership with the Ossining Chamber of Commerce and other local groups and could serve as a precursor to a Green business program for local businesses. The energy efficiency component would be one of several components focused upon at the training sessions, which would be done under the umbrella of promoting Green practices for local businesses. The goal of these sessions would be to work with each of the businesses to produce a short, easy-to-follow operations plan tailored to their particular needs and detailing steps to take to Green their operations. Business could sign a pledge sheet within the plan that would demonstrate their commitment to making their business more environmentally friendly.

Short Term Recommendations:

- Establish a Green Ossining subcommittee and gather information about potential local entities that have the necessary knowledge base and ability to partner with the Green Committee to conduct local energy efficiency training workshops
- Reach out to the previously identified local groups to open an initial dialogue
- Establish a pilot program with one local business via Chamber outreach with goal of refining program and creating model operations plans
- Finalize program details and hold kickoff event

Long Term Recommendations:

- Conduct training sessions on an annual or biennial basis to ensure that local businesses are kept up to date on the best practices in water conservation; revisit operations plans with local businesses at regular intervals to update them as needed

B. Green Business Guide – Commercial Energy Efficiency Component

- Draft a document consisting of best practices in environmentally-friendly operations for small businesses. The energy sector would be one of several areas of practice addressed within the document, which would be written in user-friendly language and would target measures that will boost the businesses' bottom line as well as lessen the environmental impact of their operations. The Guide would also contain information on how to create a Green Operations Plan for businesses not interested in undertaking the formal process of creating one through the training sessions outlined in (a), and it would include a checklist of Green measures that a business could undertake within the document.

Short Term Recommendations:

- Gather materials on best practices in energy efficiency small businesses; provide information on best practices being currently undertaken by local businesses to provide examples and show how these can be done
- Assemble document and release via Web Blast, Village & Town websites, press releases to local newspapers, and other identified conduits

Long Term Recommendations:

- Release updated versions of the document as best practices evolve over time

C. Ossining Green Business Program – Energy Efficiency Component

- This would consist of a program in which participating local businesses are provided with a set of Green energy efficiency-related measures. The program could be modeled on the Westchester Green Business Challenge and the Green business initiatives currently under development in other Westchester communities. Businesses would be graded using a set of criteria developed by the Green Committee, with energy efficiency as one of several categories on which the businesses would be judged. Businesses that meet a certain threshold of points would be eligible to display a "Green Ossining" emblem in their window and could be recognized via the Ossining Web Blast, GOTV, the Green Ossining website, and at

a Green Ossining event. The program would utilize the Green Ossining website as a clearinghouse for Green business activities and as a venue to make it known which businesses are making an extra effort to Green their energy usage practices.

Short Term Recommendations:

- Establish Green Ossining subcommittee and reach out to Chamber of Commerce; gather information on operations of Westchester Green Business Challenge Program and similar programs in other Westchester communities
- Design and develop program, determining evaluation criteria and program details.
- Work with Chamber of Commerce to reach out to local businesses and determine initial pool of participating businesses
- Conduct an Ossining Green Business Program kickoff event and begin program

Long Term Recommendations:

- Maintain program operations over the long term, expanding it to include additional businesses over time

Household Energy Efficiency

Defined as:

Techniques and best practices designed to decrease electricity demand and heating fuel usage by residential properties with the objective of reducing the home's greenhouse gas footprint. This includes usage of energy-efficient appliances, fixtures, and other electricity-using devices as well as measures to reduce heating energy losses to the outdoors.

List of Measures:

A) Create a "Did You Know" Campaign on Household Environmental Practices

- The campaign would consist of two components: an initial focus group and an outreach initiative. The focus group would consist of residents solicited via the Ossining Web Blast and notices placed on the Town and Village websites. The purpose of the focus group would be to obtain a sense of residents' current energy usage practices, information on the types of products that they purchase, knowledge of best environmental practices, and gaps in their knowledge.

- The results of the group would be used to generate PSAs and other outreach materials. For the energy sector, the materials would also contain information on Energy Star appliances, high efficiency lighting, programmable thermostats, and tips and techniques to conserve energy.

Short Term Recommendations:

- Create Green Ossining subcommittee; Develop focus group discussion materials based upon questions designed to elicit responses from participants that yield the most accurate picture possible of their day-to-day energy usage practices.
- Solicit participants via Web Blast, Village and Town websites, and other identified conduits. Conduct focus group.
- Results are analyzed to determine gaps in residents' knowledge, with PSAs designed to target these knowledge gaps. PSAs should be made available in Spanish as well as English.
- Conduct program evaluation one year later to determine effectiveness of focus groups and PSA outreach.

Long Term Recommendations:

- Conduct additional focus groups in the future and create PSAs at designated intervals to work toward increasing overall knowledge of Green energy usage practices among Ossining residents.

B) *Create a "Greenest House in Ossining" Contest*

- Establish a "Greenest House in Ossining" contest consisting of a competition to reduce the household's environmental footprint to the greatest extent possible. Energy usage practices would be one of several categories on which the household would be judged. Participating households would be graded on a set of criteria developed by the Green Committee, and the winner of the competition would have a mini-documentary or case study created on their household's practices that would be available online via the Green Ossining website and YouTube.

Short Term Recommendations:

- Establish Green Ossining subcommittee; Design and develop program, determining evaluation criteria and program details
- Conduct outreach via Ossining Web Blast, Village & Town websites, and send press releases to local newspapers to generate interest in the contest

- Conduct a Greenest House in Ossining kickoff event and begin program by releasing online household survey containing indicators developed by Committee
- Evaluate survey results using Committee's criteria and select finalists; finalists will be asked to provide photos & other documentation of Green household practices and Green home elements
- Publicize winner via press releases, Green Ossining event, Village and Town websites, and Green Ossining website; work with winner to obtain information on household for the creation of a case study and/or a short documentary describing the household and its practices

Long Term Recommendations:

- Evaluate program's strengths/weaknesses; maintain contact with finalists to produce a "where are they now?" follow-up after a designated interval to see if the household has taken additional steps

C) Conduct informational workshops on energy efficiency

- These informational workshops could be done in partnership with Con Edison, Westchester County, NYPA, or another organization with the required expertise. The workshops would take place in the evening and would present information on various energy efficiency programs and incentives that are available, including free and low cost energy audits, tax incentives, energy usage reduction incentives, and other initiatives, as well as best practices in conserving energy. Workshops could be targeted toward small businesses, homeowners, and/or multi-family dwellings, with each session's programming tailored for that specific audience.

Short Term Recommendations:

- Establish Green Ossining subcommittee; Reach out to Westchester County, Con Edison, NYPA, and other organizations and discuss potential for partnership; identify potential sites to hold initial event
- Confirm event location; set date for workshop and create press release; create a short feedback form for participants to fill out following event; Put information on workshop on Town, Village, and Green Committee websites and Web Blast
- Conduct workshop or series of workshops

Long Term Recommendations:

- Evaluate success of workshop; revise programming for future workshops based on evaluation from participants

D) Create home energy efficiency materials for multi-family landlords and tenants

- Create informational materials focusing on best practices in energy usage for both apartment dwellers and building landlords. The materials for tenants would be designed to take into account the constraints faced by apartment dwellers in controlling energy usage, many of whom do not directly control their unit's thermostat or directly pay utility bills each month. The materials for landlords would focus on ways to optimize the district heating systems that multi-family buildings utilize and would contain information on energy-efficient upgrades that could be performed to units as circumstances allow.

Short Term Recommendations:

- Establish Green Ossining subcommittee; Conduct research on best practices in energy efficiency for apartment buildings and reach out to local landlords to determine awareness of best practices
- Draft brochures and make available in Village and Town offices, on Village, Town, and Green Committee websites, and distribute to local realty offices for dissemination to landlords and tenants

Long Term Recommendations:

- Update brochures over time as best practices evolve