



## Worcester One of EPA's Top Green Power Users Among Local Governments

*Worcester, MA (May 29, 2015)* - Worcester is ranked one of the top 30 local government users of green electricity in the country, according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

In its quarterly [Top 30 Local Government list](#), the EPA recently ranked Worcester as number 28 out of 126 local governments within the Green Power Partnership, a voluntary program that encourages organizations to use green power in order to reduce negative environmental impacts associated with conventional electricity use. The Partnership includes 1,300 organizations nationwide.

"The City of Worcester is committed to reducing our environmental impact through as many means as possible, whether it is by building solar arrays at public schools or installing energy-efficient LED streetlights around the City," City Manager Edward Augustus said. "Investing in renewable energy is a key way for us to follow through with the goals outlined in the Climate Action Plan and to illustrate our dedication to promoting green energy."

In 2014, approximately 36 percent of the City's municipal electricity came from green power. The City had purchased a quarter of its municipal electricity via renewable energy certificates (RECs), and the remaining 11 percent came from the Renewable Portfolio Standard - the state-mandated green portion of the electricity supply. The minimum requirement to participate in the Partnership for a city the size of Worcester is 20 percent green power.

EPA defines green power as electricity that has been generated from renewable resources that provide the highest environmental benefit. Sources of green power include: solar, wind, geothermal, biogas, eligible biomass and eligible low impact hydroelectric sources.

Although Worcester first joined the Green Power Partnership in 2012, the City has been purchasing green electricity since 2009. The commitment is, in part, a result of the City Council's ambitious resolution in 2005 for "clean, renewable electricity" to account for 20 percent of the City's electricity use by 2010, as well as the result of the goals set in the City's Climate Action Plan.

The current contract to purchase RECs is with Renewable Choice Energy. The RECs are sourced from multiple renewable energy facilities throughout the US and may come from some or all of the following technology sources: wind, solar, low-impact hydro and biomass.

Though it costs Worcester marginally extra to purchase renewable energy certificates, at \$0.0015 cents per kWh for this contract term, the City believes that the environmental and societal benefits of green power easily outweigh the additional cost to the City (approximately \$22,000 annually).

Overall, Worcester is saving a significant amount of money on its electrical costs due to its support of renewable energy. As a result of a solar net metering credit agreement signed with SH Solarne II LLC in 2014, the City will save around \$225,000 per year for the next 20 years on its electricity costs. Each year, Worcester will purchase approximately 5 megawatt-hours of electricity directly from SH Solarne's solar array in Brimfield, MA at a rate 28 percent less than what the City would pay National Grid. To fund a portion of this project, SH Solarne II LLC will sell the RECs created from generated electricity on the green power market.

[Previous](#) • [Back](#) • [Next](#)

© 2015 | Copyright City of Worcester, MA | All Rights Reserved.