Climate Change Awareness & Action

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"The climate crisis is about human security, economic security, environmental security, national security, and the very life of the planet."

--Joe Biden

Questions? Comments? Want to submit an article? Please send to: news.ccaa@gmail.com

Musings from the President

George Lorefice (loreficegj@gmail.com)

I waited until after the election to write this piece since the results dictate the impact on the environmental movement and specifically climate change mitigation. This election gives me great hope that we can restore our democracy and enact meaningful legislation regarding the climate.



The insanity of the federal government and the president have slowed down the movement to renewable energy while China and the rest of the world have moved forward, embracing solar wind and batteries. Let's hope the results of this election bode well and will get us back on track to achieving our climate goals. In New York State, now that the election is over, we will see if Re-elected Governor Hochul recommits to being an environmental advocate

No matter how events unfold, CCAA is looking ahead to 2027 by assessing where we have been and where we want to be in the future. In that regard we will be asking our membership to let us know what their priorities are and where they see an organization such as ours, with limited resources and people-power, moving into the future.

At this point you can be assured we will continue educating our community about climate change and ways to reduce our impact. The newsletter and our tabling efforts have been a cornerstone to those efforts, so that will continue. Ideas generated through our discussions will hopefully generate actions to take so we can engage our members and the CNY community.

More good news is that my solar panels are producing electrons, but I'll have to wait until Spring to see their full potential. Have a Happy Thanksgiving!

Announcements

OUR BOARD MEMBER: CCAA is grateful for the guiding hand that Dr. Sonia Kragh has provided to our organization for the past several years. Her many contributions span a legacy of sustainability, accountability for the Micron project, leadership in organizing our successful SUNday event and even assuming the challenging role of treasurer.



Sonia's commitment to the environment began as a member of the Sierra Club. Through networking, she met CCAA founders Peter Wirth and Yvonne Chu. At that time, efforts were underway in Dewitt to make a pledge for 100% renewable energy and Sonia participated. She subsequently became a member of the Dewitt Advisory Conservation Commission and CCAA.

Sonia is not abandoning the climate awareness fight we are continued to be engaged in. Rather, she is directing her energies, skill and knowledge to the SustainCNY group and will be our representative to this organization. She remains a valuable resource for CCAA. And we sincerely thank her for her passion and commitment.

On October 14, 2026, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) announced the framework for the deployment of $200 million through the State's Sustainable Future Program to expand access to affordable solar energy in communities across New York. The funding, which was announced by Governor Hochul as part of the New York State Fiscal Year 2027 Enacted Budget, is expected to support more than 565 megawatts (MW) of new solar, enough to power over 90,000 homes, and deliver energy bill savings for low-and moderate-income households. The

program also includes incentives that encourage siting on rooftops, parking canopies, and other developed sites making the most of New York's existing built environment. READ THE ANNOUNCEMENT.

Scientists warn that a "Super El Niño" event is developing in the Pacific Ocean, already profoundly disrupting global weather patterns and promising severe ecological threats to our common home, along with a dramatic increase in impact on our most vulnerable neighbors. REGISTER for this timely webinar on the possible impacts of this event on our communities and the planet. The event takes place on Monday, November 9, 2026, at 2 p.m. ET.

Syracuse property owners can now register to receive a free tree from the city's Parks and Recreation Department to plant on their property. The yearly program aims to support residential tree plantings as part of ReLeaf Syracuse, an initiative led by the Syracuse Parks Department to increase the city's tree canopy. You need to SIGN UP.

On November 5, 2026, the Watershed Stewards of Manlius are sponsoring a talk by Lindsay Speer, Principal Planner at the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board. She will address the topic, "Suds and Floods, Designating a Critical Environmental Area", a local story of resident impact. She will speak about the process involved in the Critical Environmental Area designation, the role of resident participation in environmental preservation, and selecting strategic approaches to support environmental conservation. The event takes places in Manlius, NY at the Taco Bell Cantina Meeting Room.

And finally, It takes a village to keep the focus on the environment. Whether we are informing the public via tabling, sending letters to the editor, attending town board meetings, or publishing this newsletter…CCAA members can help make a difference. We would love your help with any of these activities. Please email: news.ccaa@gmail.com to volunteer!!

Legislative Update

Submitted by Jan Kublick

I'm writing this on another flawless day of autumn high pressure, after having deleted today's scores of last-minute appeals from candidates. Surely you've heard about the upcoming 'mid-terms', which for New Yorkers includes statewide races as well. Climate and renewable energy, and the transition away from fossil fuels are surely on the ballot, and by the time this newsletter reaches you it will be over, and we'll see the card that our fellow New Yorkers, and Americans generally, have dealt.

What are the constants? Demand for electricity is growing due to data centers, Micron locally, cryptocurrency, and the electrification of cars, homes and businesses. For climate change to be slowed, the demand for electricity must rise. The magic is that renewables, from wind, solar, and

geothermal systems, paired with battery storage, are the cheapest way to produce electricity, and are still getting cheaper. The 'market' is on the side of transition away from fossil fuels.

CCAA is committed to the rapid and wide deployment of renewable energy generation and storage. It reduces fossil fuel emissions and pollution, increases grid capacity, and lowers the cost of that energy. This year CCAA will be supporting renewable energy and battery storage projects, and providing information to individuals, groups, and municipalities evaluating these projects. One important dimension of the proposed projects is the additional revenue offered by means of Host Community Benefit Agreements, Payment in Lieu of Tax Agreements, and the employment, payrolls and benefits that large capital projects bring to a community. These dimensions of projects are seldom subjects of public discussion when a project is being considered. They should be; the cuts to municipal budgets due to the One BBB (HR 1) take effect in the new year and they will adversely impact communities in our area.

New York has passed some measures aimed at speeding up the transition to renewable energy. It remains to be seen whether they are implemented with the same enthusiasm and determination that the Governor showed in weakening the CLCPA's targets and greenhouse gas tracking metrics.

Finally, there is a bi-partisan Permitting Bill that will be considered by the lame-duck session of Congress. While permitting reform is generally supported by both fossil and renewable advocates, many on the renewable side feel that it is going to be far more beneficial for the fossil side for at least the next two years. For those of us following climate and renewable energy closely, it will be interesting to see if the draft bill changes or is delayed in response to possible Democrat majorities in both chambers of Congress.



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- Four of the largest construction firms in the country will be building Micron's four fabs: the Bechtel Company; Kiewit Construction Company; Gilbane Inc.; and Jacobs Engineering. Some of these companies have been forced to pay large settlements over their work in several U.S. cities. BE INFORMED HERE.
- Micron could receive up to $25 billion in taxpayer subsidies for the first two factories under the 2022 CHIPS and Science Act, designed to bring chipmaking back to the U.S. from overseas.
- On Sunday, October 18, 2026, Neighbors for a Better Micron sponsored a forum allowing residents to dialogue directly with candidates in the upcoming election and understand their

position. Students from Colgate University provided informational posters which allowed residents to learn about all the ways Micron's arrival will impact our neighborhoods and our region.

Environmental Calendar

DATE: November 5, 2026

EVENT: "Suds and Floods, Designating a Critical Environmental Area"

TIME: 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

PLACE: Taco Bell Cantina, 4 Stickley Dr., Manlius, NY

DATE: November 7, 2026

EVENT: Beyond Plastic Grassroots Advocacy Training

TIME: 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

AGENDA: learn practical and powerful ways to end plastic pollution and engage your larger community.

REGISTER HERE for free on ZOOM.

DATE: November 9, 2026

EVENT: Super El Niño Webinar Zoom Event

TIME: 2 p.m.

REGISTER: CLICK HERE.

DATE: November 9 – 20, 2026

EVENT: COP 31 United Nations Climate Change Conference

PLACE: Antalya, Turkey

This is the world's biggest climate conference. Participating countries will engage in a spirit of unity and shared purpose to work together to deliver transformative and ambitious outcomes at COP 31 that enhance ambition and implementation of the global response to the threat of climate change. Main goal: transition away from fossil fuels.

DATE: November 12, 2026

EVENT: Beyond Plastic Grassroots Advocacy Training

TIME: 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.

AGENDA: learn practical and powerful ways to end plastic pollution and engage your larger community.

REGISTER HERE for free.



DATE: November 12, 2026

EVENT: Renewable Heat Now Campaign.

TIME: 7 p.m.

PLACE: ZOOM event. Sign up RIGHT HERE!

DATE: December 5 and 6, 2026

EVENT: Plowshares

TIME: 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Saturday), 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Sunday)

PLACE: Nottingham High School, Syracuse, NY

Plowshares is a CCAA Tabling Event.

Please feel free to volunteer to help at tabling events. Email Ken Johnson at Kmjohnson717@msn.com

DATE: December 8, 2026

EVENT: Climate and Sustainability Workshop

TIME: 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

AGENDA: Sponsored by OCM BOCES and OCRRA, the workshop features an interactive session covering the role of Onondaga County's waste system in climate change and sustainable resource use. Credit for teachers available.

LOCATION: 200 Elwood Davis Dr., Liverpool (adjacent to main campus). INFO and Registration HERE.

DATE: February 6, 2027

EVENT: 2027 Youth Climate Summit

TIME: 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

PLACE: SUNY ESF

WHAT: Organized by the New York State Master Teacher Program, the day-long event features expert keynotes, green career fairs, and hands-on Climate Action Plan (CAP) workshops. Geared for

middle and high school students and teacher mentors from central New York, the core goal is designing practical Climate Action Plans (such as school energy reduction "Blackout Day" projects or campus composting) to launch in local schools.

2027 Youth Climate Summit is a CCAA Tabling Event.

Please feel free to volunteer to help at tabling events. Email Ken Johnson at Kmjohnson717@msn.com

Articles of Interest

Land Use Leadership Alliance Training

Submitted by Sara Bollinger, Town of Manlius Supervisor (sbollinger@townofmanlius.org)

This three-day seminar was designed to assist public officials to understand how to engage with renewable energy projects locating in their jurisdictions. It was led by the Land Use Law Center at Pace University and NYSERDA.

The session began with describing the various roles of local government such as planning, zoning, permits and codes enforcement. Each participant was provided with a Clean Energy Assessment for their locality. The presenters emphasized the importance of having a Comprehensive Plan and land use regulations. However, the NYS Office of Renewable Energy Siting and Electric Transmission (ORES) and the Public Utility Variance can override local ordinances based on 'public necessity'.

Public officials, landowners and advocates should be able to 'think like a developer'.

- Energy facility (wind, solar, battery and nuclear) siting is closely aligned with existing electric utility infrastructure. Where are the sub-stations and transmission lines in your community?
- Does the proposed land include viewsheds, steep slopes, water bodies, wetlands or rock outcroppings that will impact potential development?
- Are there known or suspected historic or archeological sites on the property?
- Is there convenient road access to the site?

Most renewable energy facilities are located on sites that are currently or were once farmed. There were presentations on agrivoltaics (farming around the solar panels) as well as the impact of renewable energy on soil health and rural economies. We heard from a beekeeper and a shepherd who have businesses based on agrivoltaic farming as well as a representative from Renewable Energy Farmers of America.

NYS has established a standard for renewable energy property tax assessment. Participants were encouraged to engage with prospective developers/operators to negotiate tax incentives such as PILOTS, Host Community Agreements and Host Community Benefit Agreements.

There was also a Deep Dive session about Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) -which are NOT a fire hazard and another on Decommissioning Plans - be sure your bonds renew for the life of the project.

The Land Use Law Center is a terrific resource if you want to learn more. Jessica Bacher is the Executive Director and Tiffany Zezula is the Deputy Director.

An Invitation: Help Make NY Healthier

Submitted by Andrea Leimanis, Program Director, Alliance for a Green Economy (andra@agreeny.org)

You're invited to the Renewable Heat Now campaign's virtual power hour at 7pm on Thursday, November 12. RHN fights for policies and funding to phase fossil fuels out of buildings, fight climate change, lower utility bills, create good green jobs, and make New York healthier. These meetings are a great place to get plugged in and take quick, impactful actions.

For example, we're working to make sure a law that we helped pass will be implemented! New York's gas utilities have been profiting by charging you for someone else's new gas hookup due to an outdated, unfair policy called the 100-ft rule. New Yorkers are using less gas and switching to heat pumps, but utilities are still expanding the gas system. These gas hookups increase delivery charges on **everyone's** gas bills ($600 million dollars statewide each year) as utilities earn a guaranteed rate of return on that pipe.

In June 2025, the Renewable Heat Now campaign and building electrification allies across NY worked to pass legislation ending the 100-foot rule, and in December 2025, Governor Hochul signed it into law. Now New York's utility regulator, the Public Service Commission, must finish the job by implementing this law in order to stop the extra charges going forward. We thank all the CCAA members who signed petitions, made calls to legislators and the governor, and joined us at press conferences and rallies.

We'll also share information about the Building Electrification Equity Platform (BEEP) that 142 organizations from across New York sent to Governor Hochul in October urging her to address NY's growing energy affordability crisis with investments to help New Yorkers reduce energy use and limit wasteful utility spending. We hope you will take a look at the letter, sign up for the RHN power hour, and join us in fighting for cleaner heat and lower bills

Kilowatt Confusion

Submitted by George Lorefice, CCAA President (loreficegj@gmail,com)

If you are like me, trying to grasp the concept of a watt or watt hour has been confusing. How about kilowatts, megawatts, even terawatts? What follows are some definitions, output of electricity sources and how that energy is consumed.

Power in watts (W): measures the instantaneous rate at which a source generates or uses electricity.

Energy in watt hours (Wh): measures the cumulative energy produced or used over time.

1 kilowatt (kW) = one thousand watts

Then 1 kilowatt over an hour = 1 kWh

1 Megawatt (MW) = one million watts

1 Gigawatt (GW) = one billion watts

1 terawatt (TW) = one trillion watts

I compiled some data that may help put those terms into perspective. These data are only approximations and depend on a number of variables, but at least the examples will put things in the right ballpark. I used various internet sources for the examples, and the estimates varied among sources.

Sources of Electricity:

1 Nuclear Plant = 1 Gigawatt (GW) output

1 Coal Plant (ugh) = 500 MW – 1 GW

1 Onshore Turbine = 2 MW – 3 MW

1 Offshore Turbine = 4 – 5 MW

1 Solar Panel = 400 Watts (o.4kW)

1 acre of Solar Panels = 0.4 to 0.6 MW

Appliance Use of Electricity

Refrigerator (old model) 15 cu.ft.	72 kWh / month
Refrigerator (newer model) 14 cu. Ft.	28 kWh / month
TV	0.016-0.18 kWh /hour
LED light	0.008-0.038 kWh / hour
Dishwasher	0.5-2.17 kWh / load
Hair drier	1.5 kWh / hour

Household Use of Electricity

1 MW powers about	750-1000 average U.S. homes
1 GW powers about	750,000-1,000,000 average U.S. homes

An average U.S. household uses about:

899 – 920 kWh / month

Onondaga County uses an average of:

3,403,983 MWh

New York City uses an average of:

137 – 153 GWh per day

THAT'S A LOT TO PROCESS! Remember, I didn't say it wasn't confusing, but I hope this helped in your understanding. With the cost of electricity continuing to climb and the talk of more nuclear power plants, data center construction and growing renewable sources of electricity (wind, solar, batteries), some understanding is needed in order to make decisions for yourself and the community.

October Solar & Battery Statewide Conference Summary

Attended by and submitted by Van Cleary-Hammerstadt, CCAA Treasurer (vanjonch@gmail.com

On October 25,2026, I attended the statewide Solar & Battery Vendors Conference in Albany. The conference featured sessions on promoting solar energy and battery storage across New York State with a particular focus on overcoming the challenges facing the industry.

Solar and battery providers are facing several headwinds, including the loss of federal subsidies, changing state policies, complicated regulations, and local opposition. In response, many contractors are expanding their services to include insulation, heat pumps, batteries, and generators, becoming one-stop providers of energy efficiency solutions.

Despite these challenges, the industry's potential is significant. New York is adding approximately 1 GW of solar generation annually, with roughly 8 GW currently installed and another 2.7 GW in the pipeline. The industry has created more than 16,000 jobs, with estimated consumer savings exceeding $200 million. Demand is growing faster than supply, making continued investment and state support essential. Solar panels and batteries are becoming increasingly affordable, even as fossil fuel costs rise.

Battery safety and community concerns were also addressed. New York has introduced nine new regulations and training initiatives to help fire departments respond to the rare incidents involving battery fires. Balcony solar was highlighted as another promising development, particularly for renters in New York City.

A major conference theme was the importance of local education and advocacy. Outside New York City, many communities remain skeptical of solar and battery projects. Presenters emphasized that local groups like CCAA can play an important role in building understanding and support.

Key recommendations for local advocates included:

- Start early by building relationships with municipal officials and residents.
- Be transparent and address community concerns honestly.
- Educate elected officials and dispel common myths.
- Emphasize the economic benefits of solar and battery storage.
- Engage trusted local leaders, community groups, colleges, and Chambers of Commerce.
- Hold public education forums and share successful local examples.
- Identify supporters, develop clear talking points, and encourage letters to the editor and social media outreach.

Presenters also cautioned against relying on online debates with entrenched opponents, allowing projects to appear secretive, or using confusing technical jargon. Local voices and trusted community champions are far more effective than outside experts or Albany-based messaging.

NYSERDA offers valuable resources, including solar and battery guidebooks, technical assistance, and training for municipal officials and fire departments. Its three-day Land Use Leadership Alliance (LULA) training helps elected officials understand solar and storage development. Another is a battery safety training for fire and code officials so that they can implement the fire code for battery storage.

NYSACHO is also a trusted source of information.

The conference was affirming for our local efforts, as CCAA already employs many of these strategies. One presenter even recognized Third Act as a helpful resource! There is much work ahead, but we have useful tools, growing opportunities, and many potential partners to help move these efforts forward!

Additional NYSERDA resources:

Solar Guidebook:

https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/-/media/Project/Nyserda/Files/Programs/NY-Sun/Solar-Guidebook.pdf

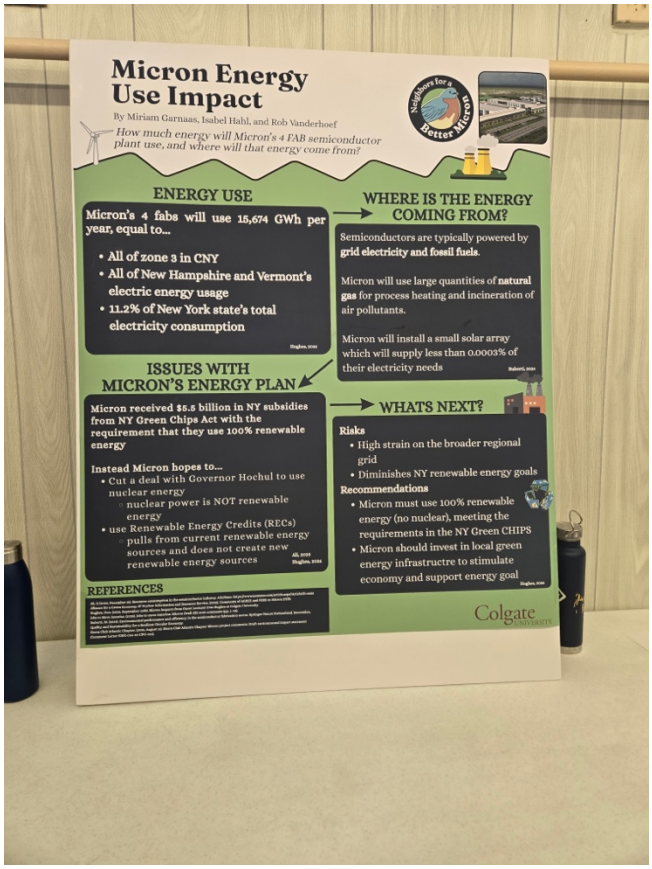
Battery Guidebook:

https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/-/media/Project/Nyserda/Files/Programs/Clean-Energy-Siting/battery-storage-guidebook.pdf

NEIGHBORS FOR A CLEAN MICRON

Submitted by George and Roseann Lorefice, CCAA Board members (loreficegj@gmail.com AND loreficer@gmail.com)

Neighbors for a Clean Micron held a community meeting in Clay, N.Y. on October 18, 2026, to introduce local candidates for public office and discuss Micron. We attended one of the three sessions, so we only heard from four candidates. After each session, attendees viewed poster presentations by students from Colgate University facilitated by Sonia Kraig representing *Sustain CNY* and a member of *CCAA.*



The candidates were not opposed to Micron's construction but generally wanted them to be good stewards of the environment. Much of the candidates' presentations and questions centered around PFAS, air pollution and water treatment. Little was said about energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. The Colgate student's poster presentations were very well done and covered all the concerns about Micron including energy use, water, air and jobs.Micron including energy use, water, air and jobs.

News Bites and E info

- **Batteries in the News.** A battery system installed in a Buffalo apartment building will store excess energy when it's plentiful and power the building when the grid is strained and electricity is costly. The manufacturer and state officials hope it will show that larger batteries can safely operate where people live and work. It's a GREAT ARTICLE TO READ!

- **Good News About Coral!** After sick coral was placed in direct contact with healthy coral of the same genetic makeup, they recovered at "incredible" speed, scientists found. CHECK THIS OUT!

- **A Supreme Court battle over climate change begins.** The justices are about to hear a lawsuit that could determine whether the oil industry faces billions of dollars in liability for damages caused by global warming. READ ABOUT IT HERE.

- **States sue over Trump's repeal of climate rules for power plants.** The mostly Democratic-led states say that the E.P.A. acted unlawfully when it erased Biden-era limits on carbon dioxide from coal- and gas-fired plants. HERE'S THE ARTICLE.

- **Why solar power is taking over the world.** HERE are four reasons solar energy has seen a meteoric rise in recent years.

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- The October Renewable Energy Supporter Speaker Series welcomed special guest Dr. Jared Buono, Director of Cornell's Hudson Valley Research Laboratory for a look at the emerging science of **agrivoltaics** and how New York farms could produce food and clean energy on the same land. Dr. Buono shared research from Cornell and agricultural institutions across the country exploring how solar panels can work alongside crops, livestock and existing farming operations. You can listen to the recording HERE.

- **FOOD FOR THOUGHT.** We need to know both sides of the issue of electric school buses. So check out this article on why some schools are hitting the brakes on Electric Buses. READ IT HERE.



Editor's Note: Meet Kevin Nickels, our local solar expert! Kevin is the Vice President at Nickels Energy Solutions and is fully committed to bringing solar energy solutions to homeowners and business owners in New York state. In this section, Kevin will give us some insight on solar trends and answer common questions about transitioning to solar energy! Read more in the section below!

If you've never pursued a solar estimate before, you might be wondering what that process looks like. I'm happy to explain the process.

First, I like to request a copy of the Utility Bill so I can review the usage data and the cost data. If you have National Grid (like I do), Page 2 shows a month-by-month summary of your usage. This allows me to calculate your annual usage based on your past consumption. Then, I review the property in Google Maps to get a "lay of the land." Satellite imaging allows me to figure out which roofs will perform the best.

We invest significantly in solar design software that allows us to place digital "panels" on the roof as close to scale as possible. Our focus at this point is to add as many panels as possible to the best performing roof(s). We love it when we can eliminate 100% of the past usage, but that's often not the case. Going solar is still a worthy investment even if the solar panels eliminate less than 100% of the past usage.

Once we know how many panels can fit, we provide an estimate showing the price, applicable incentives, estimated savings and more. We complete all of this remotely, but we offer a free site visit to improve accuracy.

Help CCAA's Mission: Purchase a t-shirt

From the beginning, CCAA has focused on its mission to inform and educate the public about the need to protect our environment in the face of climate change. Our organization sponsors events that bring this goal to the public. But we need your help. Volunteers offer time and energy but the reality of the costs of providing materials, sponsoring attendees at conferences, attending tabling events, maintaining our website, etc. have mounted and so we're reaching out to you.



Can you help? Purchasing a CCAA t shirt not only supports our efforts but promotes more awareness every time you wear it. It's available online ON THIS SITE.

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