

Marketing and Outreach Plan

Outline a marketing plan that describes methods to create community awareness around the Solarize Mass program. Describe ways in which a joint marketing strategy between the Municipality, the volunteer team, and the selected Installer could increase the number of sign-ups for a solar site assessment and expand solar PV adoption within the community. Provide a plan for implementation, including methods to engage additional community members and volunteers. This could include an outreach activity timeline, expected volunteer activity hours, preliminary goals for community participation and solar PV adoption during the program. Include information on where community events could be held, including the Meet the Installer community meeting.

Ashfield, Buckland, and Plainfield Marketing and Outreach Plan

The outreach plan for Plainfield, Ashfield, and Buckland (*Solarize PAB*) is to spread Solarize Mass information as widely as possible using as many communication tools as possible. Our goal is to share the Solarize Mass message throughout the three towns to create interest and maximize participation. We plan to communicate (and have already communicated) through word-of-mouth, written articles, brochures or flyers, posters, hand-outs, lawn-signs, radio, TV, and the internet. We will go to our farmers' markets and our town dumps. Releases about the forming of the *Solarize PAB* partnership have already been sent to *The Ashfield News*, *The Berkshire Eagle*, *The Country Journal*, *The Greenfield Recorder*, *The Hampshire Gazette*, *The Plainfield Post*, *The Shelburne Falls and West County Independent*, and the Buckland CATV station, Falls Cable.

We will partner with community organizations with forums, presentations, and displays by using our solar coaches, municipal representatives, core teams, and numerous volunteers and helpers.

The proximity of the three towns and their similarities (all are rural hilltowns with much open space for ground-mounted solar PV) lends itself to sending a consistent message. *Solarize PAB* volunteers will increase awareness of the importance of solar PV on residences and businesses in all three towns. We will do our utmost to encourage businesses and residents to install solar PV systems.

We will do this (and have already started to do this) with a multi-faceted campaign that spurs community interest and by engaging municipal and community leaders to exercise their influence.

We have and will do this by recruiting local leaders and committees and commissions and getting them to support solar PV and take part in *Solarize PAB*. We will also work with community groups such as schools (the three towns share the same schools from 6th grade up), faith-based groups, and non-profit organizations and ask them to promote *Solarize PAB* among their members.

Those organizations already contacted or who will be contacted are:

Project endorsers (governmental):

Ashfield Selectboard
Ashfield Energy Committee
Buckland Selectboard
Buckland Energy Committee
Buckland Board of Health (pending – Oct. 8 meeting)
Buckland Conservation Commission
Buckland Historical Society /Commission- (pending)
Buckland Planning Board
Buckland/Shelburne Council on Aging
Buckland Cultural Council- (pending)

Buckland Public Library
Buckland Fire Department – (pending)
Plainfield Selectboard
Plainfield Conservation Commission (pending)
Plainfield Congregational Church (pending)
Plainfield Council on Aging (pending)
Plainfield Democratic Town Committee (pending)
Plainfield Energy Committee
Plainfield Planning Board (pending)
Plainfield Recreation Committee (pending)
State Representative Steve Kulik (represents all 3 towns)
State Senator Ben Downing (pending)
State Senator Stan Rosenberg (pending)

Project endorsers (non-governmental):

American Friends Service Committee (pending)
Ashfield Hardware
Ashfield Soap Company
Ashfield Tools
Bear Swamp Orchards
Buckland Historical Society – (pending)
Bug Hill Farm
Center for Ecological Technology (pending)
Claydance Pottery
Country Pie
Deerfield River Watershed Association (pending)
Ed Branson Glass
Eddie's Wheels
Elmer's Store
Franklin Land Trust
Franklin Regional Council of Governments
Great Welcome Healing Arts
Harris & Gray
Hilltown Community Development Corporation (has developed affordable housing with PV systems) (pending)
Hilltown Mascots
Hilltown Networks (pending)
Kurt Meyer Fine Woodworking
Ladies Benevolent Society of the Plainfield Congregational Church
Lakeside Ventures
Mary Lyons Educational Foundation – (pending)
Plainfield Congregational Church (pending)
Plainfield Democratic Town Committee (pending)
S.T. & I Services
Sessions Repair
Shaw Memorial Library (Plainfield) (pending)
South Face Farm
"Sunhaus Solar, LLC"
The Inn at Norton Hill
Uppercut Glass
"Walter Cudnohufsky Associates, Inc."
Wm Cudnohufsky Woodwork/Artisan

The team will reach out to:
Climate Action Now! In Massachusetts
Hampshire Council of Governments
Mohawk Regional School District (includes Ashfield, Buckland, and Plainfield)
Parent Teacher Organizations
Sierra Club
The Nature Conservancy
Western Mass Green Consortium

Outreach Methods (including but not limited to)

- Municipal Robo-dialing (approved in all 3 towns)
- Team-led informational sessions
- House parties
- Updates to town committees
- Staffed information tables
- Ashfield Farmers' Market
- Shelburne Falls Farmers' Market
- Ashfield transfer station
- Buckland transfer station
- Plainfield transfer station (a.k.a. town dump)
- Presentations at community organizations such as the Council on Aging, the PTO, churches
- School events in all towns
- Informational display at town library—all towns
- *Solarize PAB* countdown timeline visual displays
- Calendar of events on Ashfield and Buckland web sites
- Articles on Ashfield and Buckland web sites
- Notices on Falls Cable (Buckland CATV)
- Appearances on Falls Cable (Buckland CATV)
- News releases and letters-to-the-editor in *The Ashfield News*, *The Berkshire Eagle*, *The Country Journal*, *The Greenfield Recorder*, *The Hampshire Gazette*, *The Plainfield Post*, and *The Shelburne Falls and West County Independent*
- Mailing Inserts: All three towns send mail to homeowners and businesses containing tax bills. We plan to add Solarize Mass inserts to these mailings.
- Flyers and door hangers
- Direct mail postcards
- Solar PV information sent home with students
- Lit drops door-to-door
- Conversations, personal contact and over the phone
- Emails from volunteers and asking people to forward emails to friends
- Utilizing the Plainfield Directory with names, addresses, phone #s, and some emails
- Social media: Facebook and Twitter
- Tours of homes with solar arrays
- Lawn signs for those who have signed contracts
- Contacting all people who have expressed interest in a free solar PV feasibility and estimate
- Solarize Plainfield announcements posted on Plainfield Town Office billboard
- WWLT-TV, channel 22, of Springfield has indicated interest in doing a story should Solarize PAB get the grant
- Will contact WGBY-TV, PBS channel 57, for story
- Will contact local radio stations for interviews

How it works

Here's how our teams will build interest and meet our installation goals:

Campaign Strategies

Ashfield and Buckland's successes in community education and achieving Green Community designation includes outreach methods like those outlined above that bring results. The *Solarize PAB* teams will accomplish our goals by:

1. Building on the trusted brand of Solarize Mass to promote solar PV through solar coaches and community events to give residential and business customers the information and confidence they need to sign contracts;
2. Building connections between volunteers and residents through small group and individual presentations and the internet
3. Using social and news media and events to reach a wide range of audiences to spread interest and excitement and build community.

Outreach Activity Timeline

Volunteers in Plainfield, Ashfield, and Buckland (PAB) are already making confidential lists of people interested in estimates on solar PV. We will have major publicity if and when we receive the Solarize Mass grant in November. Our volunteers are now ready for the customer sign-up period when we pick the installer in February. Major events will happen in February and March, and smaller events to promote *Solarize PAB* will occur throughout March and April in each of the three towns. When the weather is warmer in April and May, we will have more outdoor activities such as visits to homes with installed solar PV, and in June a major push, perhaps community-wide, to get those on the fence to sign contracts.

Volunteer Activity

We anticipate that between the three towns there will be about 30 volunteers in addition to the Municipal Representatives and Solar Coaches. From February through June 2015 we expect this group will spend at least 800 hours promoting Solarize PAB.

Preliminary Goals

Solarize PAB hopes to have a minimum of 100 kilowatts of PV installed on homes and businesses. This amount is based on an average PV system of about five kilowatts and that up to 11 October 2014, at least 35 people have expressed interest in solar PV in Ashfield, 40 in Buckland, and 58 in Plainfield.

Solar 101 and other meeting locations

Potential meeting venues in the three towns include:

- Ashfield Town Hall: capacity 400
- Ashfield Community Hall: capacity 99
- Sanderson Academy (Ashfield/Plainfield elementary school – located in Ashfield)
- Buckland Town Hall: Capacity for 100 in large upstairs (accessible) meeting space (*50 chairs available at present!*)
- The Buckland Public Library: Capacity for 25 in accessible Community Room
- Mohawk Trail Regional High School and Middle School: Located in Buckland, Mohawk is the regional 7-12 school serving area towns including Buckland, Ashfield, and Plainfield. Possible meeting spaces include an auditorium, cafeteria, library, and classroom spaces. Buckland holds its Annual Town Meeting in the school auditorium.
- Plainfield Town Hall: Seating capacity of 100 people and is the location of town meetings, (accessible)
- Shaw Memorial Library (Plainfield): Seats about 30, (accessible)
- Plainfield Safety Complex: Seats about 100, (accessible)