



Renewable Communities 2021

Massachusetts cities and towns
leading the way to 100% renewable energy

Worcester: Community Choice Aggregation Program

In 2020, the city of Worcester launched its Community Choice Aggregation Program (CCAP). This program takes advantage of bulk purchasing power to provide renewable energy to residents and businesses at an affordable rate.¹

Through municipal aggregation, also known as community choice energy, a city or town can purchase electricity from a competitive supplier on behalf of its residents and businesses. More than 160 Massachusetts cities and towns have adopted municipal aggregation.² Although local governments often focus on reducing energy costs through these programs, some cities and towns are using municipal aggregation to increase the percentage of renewable electricity provided to the community.³

Under Worcester's CCAP, "Standard Green" is the default for all residents. In 2021, the Standard Green option consists of 38 percent renewable electricity, 20 percent more than state law currently mandates.⁴ As the state's required baseline increases, the percentage of renewable energy for the Standard Green option will increase with it, by 2 percentage points each year.⁵ Residents can upgrade to a 100 percent renewable energy option, or opt out of the program altogether and pay the basic service rate offered by National Grid, the electric utility serving the city.⁶

The renewable energy provided to residents under both Standard Green as well as the 100 percent renewable energy option will consist of Massachusetts Class I renewable energy certificates (RECs), primarily sourced from wind power in New England.⁷ At the time the program was launched, city manager Edward Augustus said that the city's goal was to "significantly increase the

amount of renewable electricity in Worcester's supply while charging electricity customers about the same as what they would pay with National Grid's basic service."⁸

The city council approved community choice energy in 2017, and in 2019 the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU) signed off on the details of Worcester's program.⁹ The CCAP is a key part of Worcester's strategy to eliminate carbon emissions. The Green Worcester Plan, adopted in April 2021, commits the city to achieve 100 percent renewable electricity by 2035 and 100 percent renewable energy in all sectors by 2045.¹⁰

1. "Worcester Community Choice Aggregation," MassPowerChoice, <<https://masspowerchoice.com/worcester>>.

2. "Municipal aggregation," Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities, <<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/municipal-aggregation>>.

3. *Green Municipal Aggregation in Massachusetts: 2nd Edition*, Larry Chretien et al., Green Energy Consumers Alliance, February 2020, <<https://info.greenenergyconsumers.org/gmareport2>>.

4. "Options and Prices," Worcester Community Choice Aggregation, <<https://masspowerchoice.com/worcester/options-prices>>.

5. Email communication with John Odell, Director of Energy and Asset Management, City of Worcester, 11 August 2021.

6. 100 percent renewable option: "Worcester Community Choice Aggregation," MassPowerChoice, <<https://masspowerchoice.com/worcester>>.

Opt out: "Opt Out," Worcester Community Choice Aggregation, <<https://masspowerchoice.com/worcester/opt-out>>.

7. "Options and Prices," Worcester Community Choice Aggregation, <<https://masspowerchoice.com/worcester/options-prices>>.

8. "Worcester Community Choice Electricity Aggregation Program to Launch in February 2020," City of Worcester, 5 November 2019, <<http://www.worcesterma.gov/announcements/worcester-community-choice-electricity-aggregation-program-to-launch-in-february-2020>>.

9. "Program Implementation Process," Worcester Community Choice Aggregation, <<https://masspowerchoice.com/worcester/faq/program-implementation>>.

10. *Green Worcester Plan*, Department of Energy & Asset Management, City of Worcester, <<http://www.worcesterma.gov/finance/energy-asset-management/green-worcester>>.