For Immediate Release
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Solarize Upper Valley Sees 181 More Households Sign Contracts to Go Solar

Winter Program Doubles Solar in 10 Communities; Recruiting for Spring Program Begins

February 6, 2015 – White River Junction, Vt. – Through the successful Solarize Upper Valley program, 181 more homeowners across the Upper Valley have signed contracts to go solar this year. The initiative, led by the nonprofit Vital Communities and local volunteers to increase the rate of solar adoption in the region, encouraged homeowners in Hanover, Orford, New London, Andover, and Wilmot, N.H.; and Woodstock, Pomfret, Randolph, Brookfield, and Braintree, Vt. to commit to solar by a January 31 deadline.

"We're thrilled that every Solarize community met or exceeded the goal of doubling the amount of solar in their towns," said Vital Communities Energy Program Manager Sarah Simonds. "The dedicated volunteers who helped educate and encourage their neighbors should be very proud of their success in getting more renewable energy onto the grid and into residents' homes. We hope the results of the first two rounds of Solarize – with more than 300 households signing contracts to go solar – will inspire residents across our region to consider solar as a viable option."

In all, more than 800 homeowners – 7 percent of households – requested site visits from their community's partner installer. The 181 households that committed to going solar in Round Two will add over a megawatt of renewable energy capacity to the region. Most installations will be completed this spring and summer.

Solarize Upper Valley teams up community volunteers with competitively selected solar photovoltaic (PV) installers for 15 weeks of outreach around small-scale solar energy, offering competitive prices, accessible resources, and a simplified process for solar PV installations. "At the launch event I found that even at the highest price level cost was much lower than when I looked at solar three years ago, and the utility payback is better than we expected," reflected one new solar homeowner. According to another, "The incentive of a group doing it and lowering the cost was great."

Vital Communities is currently recruiting volunteers for its third round of the Solarize Upper Valley program, which will launch publicly in June. Interested community members are encouraged to attend an information session hosted by Vital Communities on Thursday, February 19, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at the Montshire Museum of Science in Norwich and can learn more at VitalCommunities.org/Solarize. The deadline for communities to apply is March 16.

With support from the John Merck Fund, the Jane's Trust Foundation, and an individual donor to Vital Communities, Solarize Upper Valley is part of a larger network of Solarize programs aimed at catalyzing a very public and lasting movement toward new residential solar installations across New England and beyond. Solarize programs have been successful in Massachusetts and Connecticut and are now taking root in other parts of the region and country.

Vital Communities, a nonprofit organization based in White River Junction, Vt., brings together citizens, organizations, and municipalities to take on issues where an independent voice and regional approach are essential. Working together, we make our region a better place to live, work, and play. Learn more at VitalCommunities.org.

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