



community development partnership

Creating opportunities for people to live, work, and thrive on the Lower and Outer Cape

Fred Bell Way in Wellfleet Receives Rooftop Solar Energy System

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A collaborative effort that lasted several months has successfully installed energy-efficient solar panels and electric heat pumps at Fred Bell Way, a townhouse-style rental property in Wellfleet managed by the CDP. The 12-unit affordable housing community received significant upgrades during the installation of the rooftop solar energy system. As a result, the residents of Fred Bell Way will enjoy the benefits of clean energy and energy savings.

The CDP worked with Cape Light Compact and RISE Engineering on the project that included insulation and air sealing, the installation of heat pumps and heat pump water heaters, solar photovoltaic (PV) systems, and roof replacements. The project was initiated through Cape Light Compact's Cape and Vineyard Electrification Offering (CVEO), a pilot program designed to provide incentives for home decarbonization measures. These measures included heat pumps, heat pump water heaters, electric stoves, solar PV systems, and battery storage when feasible. The CVEO program aimed to expand access to home electrification measures and clean energy for low- to moderate-income households on Cape Cod and Martha's Vineyard.



Joe Russe (L) and Andrew Earl (R), a Fred Bell Way resident.

"A significant amount of collaboration, effort, and expertise contributed to the success of this project," said Joe Russe, a CDP maintenance technician. Several vendors worked together to accomplish various tasks, including the removal and installation of new roofs, extraction of existing propane gas heating systems and water heaters, removal of old insulation, and installation of new insulation in all attics. They also removed gas tanks and piping, and installed new electric split units, heat pumps, piping, and water heaters. The final tasks included the installation of solar power breakers and junction boxes. "They hooked everything up, powered it on, and the vendors executed their tasks in perfect sync—they were fantastic," Joe commented. "There was a lot of communication throughout the entire process."

The new electrical systems powered by solar energy are more efficient and environmentally friendly than the previous systems. "It's a significant step forward—energy-efficient to a tee and much cleaner," Joe explained. With such a large project at this facility, the benefits are substantial for both the environment and the budget. Joe is so impressed that he hopes to convert his home to solar energy as well.

Residents of Fred Bell Way played a crucial role in the success of the project. Joe noted that many of them have pets and busy schedules, so the team worked to minimize disruptions amid the expected and unexpected challenges of such a large-scale endeavor. "They faced a lot of activity, particularly during the insulation installation, but they went above and beyond to help us make this process as smooth as possible," Joe said.

Andrew Earl, a resident of Fred Bell Way, expressed his enjoyment in participating in this project and learning about the technology. He remarked, "It feels like 22nd-century innovation!" Andrew gained insights into the benefits of residential solar power systems by watching online videos and discussing installations with his neighbors. He noted, "It's fossil-fuel-free, and it's beautiful."

Joe agreed, saying, "Solar energy is extremely efficient and relies on the sun, which is a free power source." Solar panels function like batteries, storing energy for use whenever it is needed. Although the initial cost of the equipment can be high, the technology is continually evolving, and there are ongoing efforts to decrease these costs.

Cindi Maule, Chief Property Management Officer at CDP, said that the Cape Light Compact launched its Cape & Vineyard Electrification Offering (CVEO) project in May 2023. She added, "The CDP has utilized this program for all our eligible properties. Among these, the Fred Bell Way project is the largest and possibly the most impactful." She highlighted the advantages of clean energy and energy savings, noting that roof replacements for all buildings were included in the CDP's capital needs plan. Cindi also credited RISE Engineering for their exceptional work in property review and permitting approvals.

Stay tuned for a future CDP newsletter update detailing the energy and cost savings achieved through this project.