

New Bedford awarded EPA's first-ever "Superfund Excellence in Site Re-use" award in New England



New Bedford's "Sullivan's Ledge" Solar Project Receives Award from EPA; City Turns Environmental Liability Into Environmental Asset

New Bedford has been awarded EPA's first-ever "Superfund Excellence in Site Re-use" award in New England for the installation of a solar farm at Sullivan's Ledge, a federally-recognized Superfund site.

At 1.8 megawatts, and with more than 5,000 solar panels spread across ten acres, the Sullivan's Ledge solar project annually produces enough electricity for 226 homes. It is projected to shave \$2.7 million off city government utility bills over the next twenty years.

The Sullivan's Ledge solar project is one of ten solar

projects installed under the City's Renewable Energy Initiative. All together the projects will save city government \$22 million over the next twenty years. With the recent completion of Sullivan's Ledge, New Bedford now has the most installed solar per capita in the continental United States. On the East Coast only New York City has installed more solar in absolute terms.

The EPA award is in recognition of the innovative and forward-thinking approach to the redevelopment of Sullivan's Ledge which transformed a previously underutilized public property into a source of abundant, clean, renewable energy—turning what was once an environmental liability into an environmental asset.

“Just a few years ago this site was regarded as a problem with no good solution. Just a few years ago New Bedford began testing solar on a few school roofs and city buildings. Today, what we once thought of here as a problem is now a source of pride. And what was once a modest local effort has turned into one of the nation's most ambitious moves to adopt solar. New Bedford's leadership position has other communities asking how we managed to achieve so much so quickly,” said New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell.

“For nearly 35 years, EPA has worked to identify and remediate the most contaminated parcels in New England to better protect people's health and our environment,” said Curt Spalding, regional administrator of EPA's New England office. “We are very pleased to recognize our first recipients of the EPA New England Superfund “Excellence in Site Re-use Award” for implementing re-use projects on sites in Massachusetts that will benefit local communities for many years to come.”

The Sullivan's Ledge project team was comprised of the City of New Bedford, Blue Wave Capital, and SunEdison. A New Bedford-based solar company, Beaumont Solar, was responsible for installation of the panels, with a dozen local residents

working on the project.

“This project is a credit to EPA which brought a can-do attitude to the venture and to the City of New Bedford, a City which has stepped up more than any other community in the Commonwealth to realize the financial and environmental benefits of solar,” said John DeVillars, BlueWave Capital’s Managing Principal.

“As we speak, the Sullivan’s Ledge Solar Project is quietly generating power, cutting City utility bills and saving taxpayer dollars. Our renewable power program is also strengthening our City’s economy and our environment in a big way. I could not be prouder of the creativity, commitment, and teamwork of all those here who helped us reach our goals,” added Mayor Mitchell.
