



Who is PA IPL?

Statewide network of people of faith and conscience taking action on climate change as a moral issue. We educate, advocate, and conserve for peaceful and just futures. We are taking action all May long - we are moving, shaping, and doing in community! You can learn more and join us: <http://paipl.us/pa-ipl-climate-advocacy-bike-hike/>

What are Energy Audits and How Can My Community Get Started? Energy audits are an important step that communities can take to align with their values. Energy audits are comprehensive reviews that evaluate actual performance of your property's systems and equipment against their designed performance level or best available technologies. Difference between actual performance and best available technology reveals the potential for energy savings. The audit alone won't result in the energy savings, you will need to take the recommended steps in order to unlock those. Audits can be done through self-evaluation or with professionals. There are three standard levels of professional analysis: walk through, energy survey and analysis, or detailed analysis with capital intensive modifications. Energy audits can be expensive if done professionally but this will yield important data that can inform decision-making especially before engaging in bigger, capital projects related to energy. [The Inflation Reduction Act \(and other federal funding\)](#) is worth exploring for a number of tax credits and incentives that can support faith-based nonprofits in energy transitions.

[Energy Star for Congregations Workbook](#) provides tools for congregations looking to be more energy efficient. They have a [FREE portfolio manager](#) where you can enter two years of your billing data and through a benchmarking process can identify potential efficiency improvements. There is also a process by which you can become credentialed as an Energy Star Congregation. [Cool Congregations](#) offers some resources including a competitive grant round each year (PA IPL can help advise on your proposal if needed). The program also hosts a basic calculator to track congregational carbon footprints.

If you are seeking to immediately take action to reduce the carbon emissions of your community, you can explore using [PA Power Switch](#) to switch over to renewable energy options. For some this might result in a cost savings, or it could result in cost neutrality/cost increase. It depends on what the primary goal is for your community and how you want to get there - different paths may be the best fit depending on whether cost savings, energy efficiency, or lessening climate impacts is the goal. Or it might be a mix of all of these and

more!



Communities of Faith Responding to Climate Change

Reducing our building-based emissions from our houses of worship is an important step. It must be combined with efforts to collectively decarbonize and hold accountable the energy industry if we are to stabilize rising temperatures and pollution in our communities.

How do I Build Buy-In Within My Community?

Buy in is a mission critical piece when you are passionate about an outcome or project and want to see it materialize in your community. Buy in provides many important outcomes including longevity and success of the project, community-building and relationship strengthening, and crucial connection to your cause.

A few tips for building buy-in:

1/Research and learn more about the project or goal you'd like to achieve (why does it matter for climate/environment, how did others do it, is there funding available, are there considerations to make).

2/Connect it to your mission/cause/beliefs (what inspires your community to care about climate and/or environment? are there teachings you can draw from? is there community benefit or connection to existing offerings, one example might be savings on the electric bill).

3/Make this a group project (this will need to be a team effort for so many reasons!)

4/ Seek credentialing (what will it take to get leadership and key decision makers engaged/excited to become your cheerleaders?)

5/ Don't be afraid to talk about money and economics (faith-based communities invest money in what matters to them, be open and transparent in your conversations about cost-benefit)

6/ Make it fun! (the collective work of our time to care for our planetary home can inspire us to laugh more, love deeply, and be freer - let your project be the catalyst for more of this in your community)

7/Be prepared to pivot, navigate barriers, and be asked questions (experiencing resistance isn't an indicator of anything other than a multiplicity of views and values in your community)

- lean in, and see what you learn!)