

## **Switching Your Home's Electricity to Renewable Energy**

On September 8, St. Camillus hosted a workshop on how home owners and apartment dwellers can purchase and use renewable electricity in their homes, even if they cannot place solar panels on their rooftops. An electronic version of the consumer's guide to "Buying Green Electricity for Your Home," developed by St. Camillus parishioners in conjunction with members of other Montgomery County congregations that are part of the Montgomery County Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions (MC-FACS), can be found here on the St. Camillus website:

<https://stcamilluschurch.org/green-electricity>

St. Camillus hosts this document (in English and Spanish versions) for MC-FACS.

Purchasing renewable energy through your electric bill involves the legal proof that you own the renewable electricity you are consuming. This is demonstrated through Renewable Energy Certificates (or RECs), which are described and explained in this EPA video, also shown at the workshop:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_12VYXms6-c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_12VYXms6-c)

The workshop also discussed some strategies for increasing energy efficiency in your home. A description of how to get a home energy audit for free from Pepco is in the attached short guide that was distributed at St. Camillus on Earth Day in 2018. The top of the second page has a discussion of what this quick audit entails. Pepco's telephone menu mentioned in the document has changed since 2018 -- currently, after dialing the toll-free number (1-866-353-5798), you now press 1, press 1 again, and then press 2 to get connected to a person who can schedule you for a home energy check-up.

Finally, there was discussion at the workshop about a specific technique to save energy by plugging leaks in the ductwork that some houses have for their forced-air heating and cooling systems. This technique, known as aroosealing, is a strategy to consider in older homes. Here is a link to the federal ENERGY STAR program webpage on duct sealing in general (with further links to fact sheets):

[https://www.energystar.gov/campaign/heating\\_cooling/duct\\_sealing](https://www.energystar.gov/campaign/heating_cooling/duct_sealing).

One Maryland firm that the workshop speaker had used to conduct a more intensive home energy audit and to aereoseal ductwork (this firm can also do the free quick audit mentioned above that Pepco pays for) was Atlas Home Energy Solutions in Frederick, Maryland. They also helped with the application for rebates from the State of Maryland that covered most of the cost of the more intensive home energy audit (reducing its cost from \$400 to \$100) and part of the cost of the follow-on efficiency upgrades. Here is a link to their website that describes their services:

<http://www.atlashomeenergy.com/>

They are a registered partner in Pepco's "Home Performance with ENERGY STAR" program and here are links to (1) their review page on Angie's List, which provides customer reviews of the firm, and (2) their review page on HomeAdvisor:

<https://www.angieslist.com/companylist/us/md/frederick/atlas-home-energy-solutions-llc-reviews-7476454.htm>

<https://www.homeadvisor.com/rated.AtlasHomeEnergy.49851964.html>

Finally, if you want to take a deeper dive into what aereosealing is, here is a link to a promotional brochure by the company that invented and licenses the technology to companies like Atlas Home Energy Solutions:

<https://aeroseal.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Aeroseal-Residential-Ebook.pdf>