



## Cool Congregations Certification Application

Welcome and thank you for your interest in becoming a Certified Cool Congregation! Certification applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Your project can be a recently completed project or a one completed in prior years. You must be able to provide “before” and “after” energy use figures so we can help determine the level of certification.

Please review the application questions below and answer them (and keep a record) before you open the online application. You must complete the application in one sitting. You will not be able to save a draft and come back to it later. If you're ready to apply, go to [coolcongregations.org](http://coolcongregations.org)

There is no fee to enter -- although we do request that participating congregations consider making a [donation to Interfaith Power & Light](#) from your energy cost savings to "pay it forward" so that we can continue to help more congregations go green.

Those who are certified will receive a Certified Cool Congregations paper certificate for framing, a window cling sign, and become a national role model with a listing on the [coolcongregations.org](http://coolcongregations.org) website, inclusion in the U.S. Green Building Council's Green Building Information Gateway, and the option of purchasing an attractive, sustainable engraved wood wall plaque to showcase their achievements to all who enter their congregation.

All fields are required. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Please allow 6 weeks for your application to be reviewed. We will notify you directly of your certification status as soon as it becomes available. For questions contact [programs@interfaithpowerandlight.org](mailto:programs@interfaithpowerandlight.org)

Application questions are below.

1. Do you have permission to apply on behalf of your congregation?
2. Full name of congregation as you would like it to appear on the certificate.
3. Average number of members of your congregation.
4. Religion or denomination
5. Setting
  - a. Urban
  - b. Rural
  - c. Suburban
6. Is your congregation predominantly (50% or more) BIPOC? (BIPOC includes Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latinx, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander)
7. If your congregation is predominantly (50%) BIPOC, please select the predominant group from the drop-down menu.
8. Is there another way you'd like to describe the racial make-up of your congregation?
9. Address of congregation
  - a. Street address
  - b. Street address Line 2
  - c. City
  - d. State
  - e. Zip
10. What county is your congregation located in?
11. Your name, or other contact person
12. Contact person's email

13. Contact person's phone number
14. Project Start Date (estimates ok)
15. Project End Date (estimates ok)
16. What committee or team worked on this project? Please tell us a bit about them, and mention any names or credits here.
17. Please describe your energy saving project (ie. What challenge were you faced with and how did you meet it? Final results are asked in a narrative question below) **(250 word limit)** ex. Challenge: an aging boiler, concern about climate change, high energy bills, lightning struck our rooftop AC unit, etc. Met the challenge by deciding to install geothermal, or go all-electric powered by solar, etc.
18. Cost of your project (estimates ok)
19. Annual cost savings of your project (estimates ok)
20. Baseline usage of electricity from the grid/utility, expressed in kWh per year. Provide an annual figure. (Baseline year refers to BEFORE improvements)
21. Grid/Utility Electrical usage AFTER improvements, expressed in kWh per year. Provide an annual figure.

22. Baseline fuel usage, expressed in therms (gas, oil, coal). Provide an annual figure. (Baseline year refers to BEFORE improvements)
23. Fuel usage AFTER improvements, expressed in therms. Provide an annual figure.
24. Please enter surplus electricity from your own solar or wind in kWh/year generated for which you are being credited. If not applicable, list NA.
25. If you purchase “green” electricity from a company that sells electricity sourced from renewables through a special contract with your congregation, (must be 5 years in length or longer to count for this certification) please provide average annual usage in kWh. Please attach proof of contract to this application. If not applicable, list NA.
26. If you purchase electricity through a solar contract such as a power purchase agreement or a community solar agreement (must be 5 years in length or longer to count for this certification) please provide average annual usage in kWh. Please attach proof of contract to this application. If not applicable, enter NA.
27. If you purchase carbon offsets (must be a commitment of 5 years in length or longer to count for this certification) please provide average annual figure in kWh avoided. If not applicable enter NA. Please attach proof of purchase to this application.
28. How many tons of carbon emissions per year has your congregation reduced on average compared to before the project began? Please measure the combined carbon footprint of electricity and gas to figure the difference. Report the savings in tons. Use the Cool Congregations Congregational calculator to determine before and after figures for total CO2 reduced. [coolcongregations.org](http://coolcongregations.org)
29. Carbon calculator used:
  - a. Cool Congregations Calculator

- b. EPA's Energy Portfolio
  - c. Other
  - d. None, did calculations by hand
30. What percent reduction or certification level would you like to be considered for by Interfaith Power & Light?
- a. 10%
  - b. 20%
  - c. 30%
  - d. 40%
  - e. 60%
  - f. 80%
  - g. 100%
31. What motivated your congregation to undertake this project? (ex. a sermon, a study group on climate, high energy bills, concern for the climate your grandchildren will inherit, concern for the poor who suffer the worst from climate impacts?....) (250 word limit)
32. Describe the final results of your project. (Help us understand how you measured the success of your project, and its impact on the climate. Tell the story about cost and carbon and energy savings, who was involved in terms of volunteers, a green team, the community, what you did, and so forth.) (250 wd limit)
33. What will others find inspiring about your project? (What about this project will others find particularly inspiring?) (250 word limit)

34. Has your congregation ever participated in any of these programs that you know of?

- Faith Climate Action Week
- Cool Congregations Challenge
- Carbon Covenant
- None of the above

35. Has your congregation participated in climate advocacy or environmental justice programs or sermons?

- Yes
- No
- We're thinking about it

36. Attach up to 5 photos and accompanying documents that you would like to provide. Photos will be used for Cool Congregations.

37. Add your web address if desired.

### **Cool Congregations Certification policy**

IPL offers certification as a Cool Congregation to recognize congregations who have made changes to reduce their energy use. IPL offers certification at many levels.

#### **Permanent changes to the facility**

IPL counts 100% of the reductions in energy use due to permanent changes made to the congregational facility and its operations towards certification. IPL places the greatest emphasis on making permanent changes to the facility to save energy through energy efficiency or energy conservation, or through installing renewable energy sources.

#### **Solar contracts**

IPL also acknowledges congregations who engage in long-term (at least 5 years) contracts for renewable energy through power purchase agreements or community solar contracts. 100% of these reductions count towards a congregation's certification level. Please attach proof of contract to this application. (It could be a copy of the contract or an energy bill with the name of the provider.)

#### **Green electricity contracts**

IPL acknowledges and certifies purchases of 100% renewable electricity from a utility company in long-term contracts (at least 5 years) by adding up to 5% to the certification level. Renewable electricity is electricity supplied through the grid in a special contract with a utility provider that

provides 100% electricity from renewable sources, such as East Bay Community Energy (ebce.org) For example: if a congregation has reduced electricity use by 50%, and has purchased 100% renewable electricity for the remaining 50% of electricity use, IPL will award up to an additional 5% certification level for a total of 55% certification. Please attach proof of contract to this application. (It could be a copy of the contract or an energy bill with the name of the provider.)

### **Carbon offsets**

IPL acknowledges the purchase of carbon offsets and will add up to 5% to a congregation's total certification level from the purchase (for a commitment of at least 5 years.) For example: if a congregation has reduced by 50%, and has purchased carbon offsets for the remaining 50%, IPL will award up to an additional 5% certification level for the offsets for a total of 55% certification. Please attach proof of purchase to this application.

As of May, 2021