

The PEAK Coalition:

A Campaign to Replace Polluting Power Plants in NYC's EJ Communities

Peaker plants in New York City are a grievous environmental injustice. On days with extreme weather, like heat waves or sub-zero temperatures, people consume more energy to stay cool or warm, which puts excessive demand on the grid. In response, highly polluting power plants known as “peakers” fire up in the South Bronx, Sunset Park, and other low-income communities of color throughout New York City. These inefficient peakers spew harmful emissions into already overburdened communities.

The PEAK Coalition—UPROSE, THE POINT CDC, New York City Environmental Justice Alliance, New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, and Clean Energy Group— have worked together since 2019 to end this long-standing burden on the city's most climate-vulnerable residents. Our work shows that an equitable clean energy system to replace peaker plants can eliminate emissions, reduce utility bills, improve public health, and make the grid more resilient.



Peaker Plants = High Demand + Dirty Energy + Big Money + Low Efficiency

May 2020: Released Dirty Energy, Big Money, a landmark report highlighting peaker power plants' disproportionate health and economic impacts.

March 2021: Published The Fossil Fuel Endgame: A Frontline Vision to Retire New York City's Peaker Plants by 2030, a strategic roadmap to transition all of the city's peaker fleet through wind, solar, energy efficiency, and battery storage.

April 2022: Released a study in partnership with NYPA affirming the ability to replace peaker plants with battery storage alternatives by 2030; NYPA subsequently issued an RFP to realize the study findings.

January 2024: Released Accelerate Now! The Fossil Fuel Endgame 2.0, documenting the progress made towards retiring the city's peaker plants since 2019.

October 2020: Started a groundbreaking partnership with the New York Power Authority to explore how NYPA can transition its peaker plants to clean energy.

December 2021: Successfully prevented the repowering of more than a gigawatt of peaker capacity in the environmental justice community of Sunset Park, Brooklyn.

January 2023: Successfully fought against NRG Astoria's dirty and expensive repowering proposal. NRG is now working to convert the site to offshore wind uses.

October 2024: Released Demanding a Better Grid: How Demand Management Can Accelerate the Phase-Out of New York City's Peaker Power Plants, highlighting the potential of robust demand management programs as an underutilized tool in energy planning to increase grid reliability and affordability.

2020

2021

2022

2023

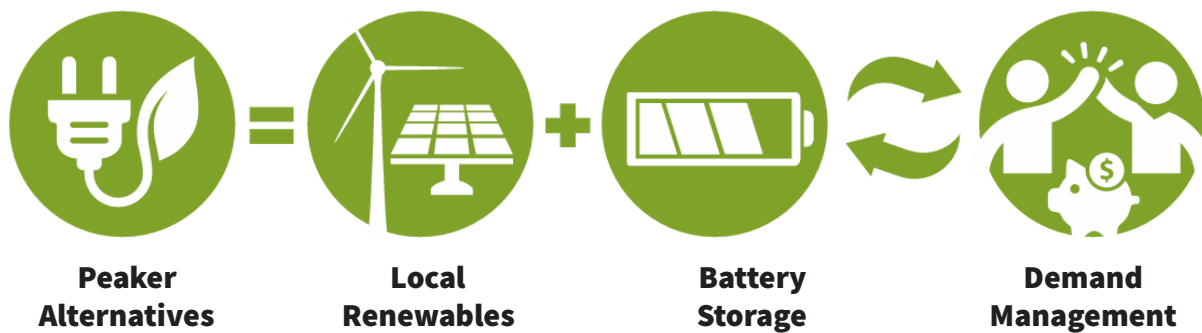
2024

2025

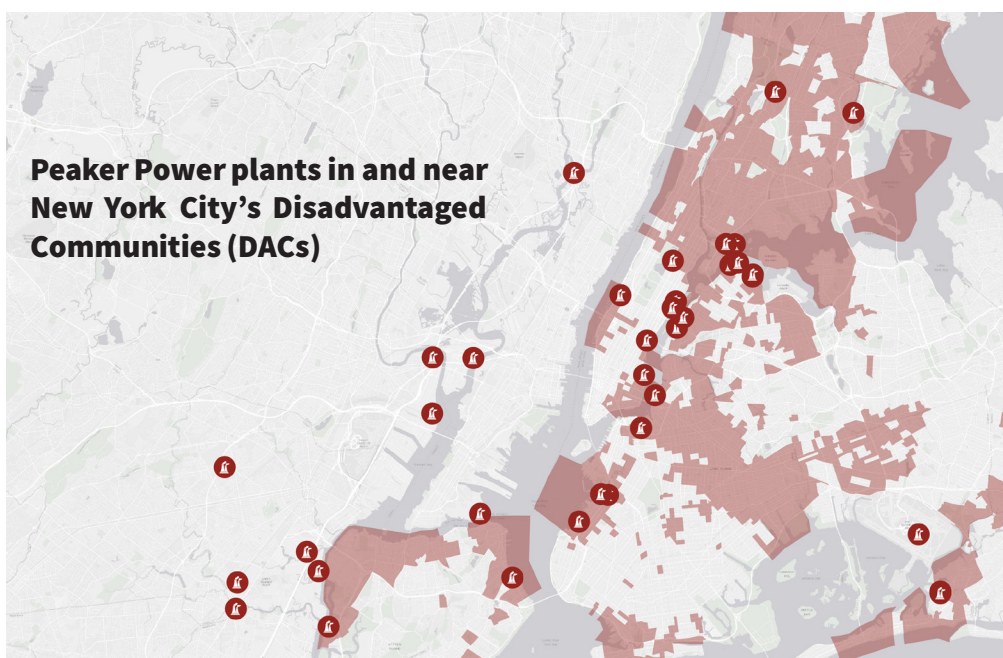
Looking Forward:

The need to transition away from fossil fuels has never been more evident in this era of climate crisis. In the last decade, **peaker plant owners received an estimated \$4.5 billion just to be “on standby,” while utility bills for low-income households remain at an all-time high.** Our plan of present work looks to:

- Fight for a transparent rate case process for people in overburdened communities like Hunts Point and Sunset Park. ConEd has proposed to increase electric bills by 11.4% after 2025,
- Educate communities on the impacts of energy planning, such as the rate case, and alternatives to peaker power plants for better health and wealth outcomes,
- Bring public officials and utilities directly into impacted neighborhoods, uplifting community voices that may otherwise be excluded from the rate case procedure,
- Scale existing and create new demand management programs to provide bill savings and health benefits for peaker plant communities,
- Hold the state accountable in its mandate to shut down publicly owned peakers.



Phasing out peaker plants offers a major opportunity to improve New Yorkers' lives. As the New York State Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act mandates, it is also a critical step toward achieving a zero-emissions statewide electricity grid by 2040. Our work has shown that this energy transition is no longer theoretical. New York already has a lot of models to look to around the country. Prioritizing publicly or community-owned clean energy infrastructure in New York City's environmental justice communities provides energy resiliency, local wealth creation, and other benefits to the city's most vulnerable populations.



Responsibly phasing out aging fossil fuel peaker plants is a test case for how well New York will live up to its climate and equity commitments. Despite some progress, our work is not done. The PEAK Coalition is committed to uplifting the environmental injustices caused by peakers and building a post-peaker New York City from the grassroots.