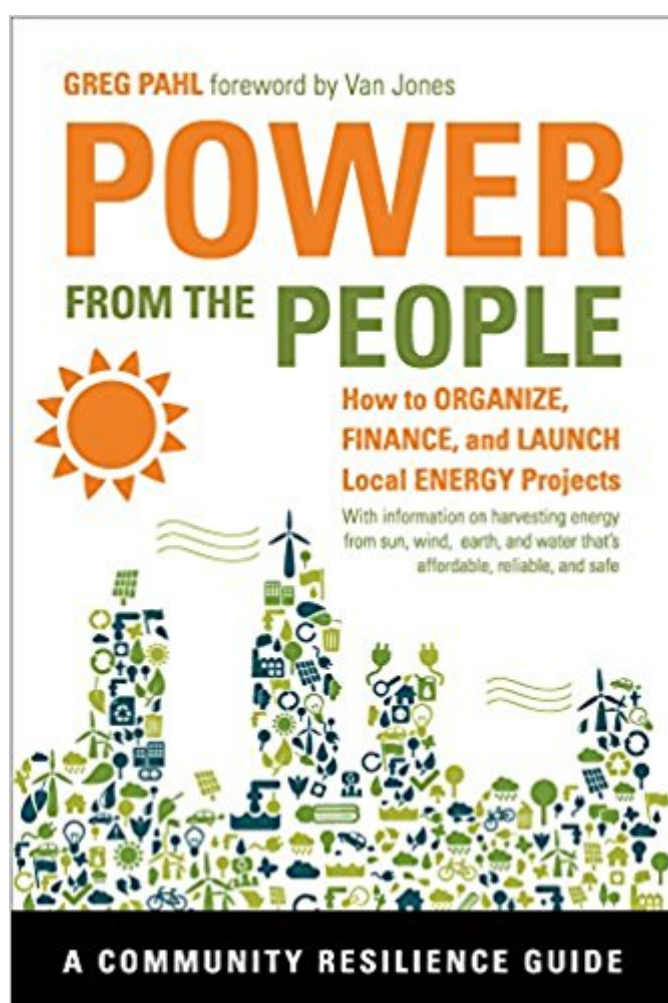


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# Power From The People: How To Organize, Finance, And Launch Local Energy Projects (Community Resilience Guides)



## Synopsis

Over 90 percent of US power generation comes from large, centralized, highly polluting, nonrenewable sources of energy. It is delivered through long, brittle transmission lines, and then is squandered through inefficiency and waste. But it doesn't have to be that way. Communities can indeed produce their own local, renewable energy. *Power from the People* explores how homeowners, co-ops, nonprofit institutions, governments, and businesses are putting power in the hands of local communities through distributed energy programs and energy-efficiency measures. Using examples from around the nation - and occasionally from around the world - Greg Pahl explains how to plan, organize, finance, and launch community-scale energy projects that harvest energy from sun, wind, water, and earth. He also explains why community power is a necessary step on the path to energy security and community resilience - particularly as we face peak oil, cope with climate change, and address the need to transition to a more sustainable future. This book - the second in the Chelsea Green Publishing Company and Post Carbon Institute's Community Resilience Series - also profiles numerous communitywide initiatives that can be replicated elsewhere.

## Book Information

Series: Community Resilience Guides

Paperback: 288 pages

Publisher: Chelsea Green Publishing (August 13, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1603584099

ISBN-13: 978-1603584098

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.7 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 4 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #744,358 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #197 in [Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Energy Production & Extraction > Alternative & Renewable](#) #207 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Home Improvement & Design > Small Homes & Cottages](#) #870 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Public Affairs & Policy > Environmental Policy](#)

## Customer Reviews

Pahl's alternative energy guidebook, *The Citizen-Powered Energy Handbook* (2007),

urged homeowners to cut their dependence on fossil fuels and looked at communities, such as those in Asheville, North Carolina, and Sweden, where locally produced, renewable energy has already made a significant impact. With its focus on U.S.-based technologies and resources, this follow-up volume offers brass-tacks practical advice on the planning, organizing, and financing angles of implementing alternative power without waiting for big government to pitch in. In 14 impressively detailed and inspiring chapters, Pahl explains why our current reliance on fossil fuels is unsustainable and provides concrete how and where examples of coops and neighborhoods in states from Oregon to Vermont, in which such energy sources as solar, wind, and geothermal are now supplementing and even supplanting conventional power. Along with an extensive guide to grass-roots power associations and online resources, Pahl gives sound advice on how individuals can conserve energy. For any private citizen or community looking to cut the cord from corporate utilities, Pahl's manual delivers a cornucopia of ideas. --Carl Hays

ForeWord Reviews-"The movement to source energy at the local level has boomed in recent years. Power from the People is a good guide for entrepreneurs looking to get in on the trend in an environmentally conscious way. Community energy has multiple facets, and this book covers them in a logical way. Part One discusses the various aspects of energy localization, including sections on "Energy and Our Communities" and "Rethinking Energy." Part Two brings the discussion down to a hyper-local level with "Your Household's Energy Resilience." This section expounds on the point that there are several steps to energy efficiency, and the first is energy conservation. The book provides concrete advice for the homeowner seeking to reduce their energy consumption and then offers ways that a homeowner can reduce their dependence on outside power generation. It covers relatively unknown topics such as geexchange and micro-hydro and also includes tips specifically for urban dwellers. From there, the discussion expands to include the entire community. Part Three addresses the parallels and differences between consumer energy and consumer agriculture. The book details important steps to setting up cooperatives, partnerships, and community investment in the project and expands to discussion of specific types of energy. Part Three also offers specific examples of communities around the country that have successfully relocalized many forms of energy. From the Burlington Cohousing Solar Project in Vermont to liquid biogas initiatives at Quad County Corn Processors in Iowa to geothermal power plants at the Oregon Institute of Technology, Power from the People gives real-life examples of the ways that a community can energize itself. Containing appendices with extensive endnotes, a virtual library of additional resources, and a glossary of common industry

terms, this book provides a great starter guide for anyone pursuing a local energy project." Booklist Reviews-"Pahl's alternative energy guidebook, The Citizen-Powered Energy Handbook (2007), urged homeowners to cut their dependence on fossil fuels and looked at communities, such as those in Asheville, North Carolina, and Sweden, where locally produced, renewable energy has already made a significant impact. With its focus on U.S.-based technologies and resources, this follow-up volume offers brass-tacks practical advice on the planning, organizing, and financing angles of implementing alternative power without waiting for big government to pitch in. In 14 impressively detailed and inspiring chapters, Pahl explains why our current reliance on fossil fuels is unsustainable and provides concrete how and where examples of coops and neighborhoods in states from Oregon to Vermont, in which such energy sources as solar, wind, and geothermal are now supplementing and even supplanting conventional power. Along with an extensive guide to grass-roots power associations and online resources, Pahl gives sound advice on how individuals can conserve energy. For any private citizen or community looking to cut the cord from corporate utilities, Pahl's manual delivers a cornucopia of ideas."Bookwatch Review- Greg Pahl, an environmental activist who co-founded ACORN and served as an intelligence officer in the military during the Vietnam War, presents a "community resilience guide" for the local energy movement. He organizes the book into four progressive sections. The first consists of three essays that outline broad trends in energy usage and sourcing around the world, conservation and re-localization, and the need to rethink our relationship to energy. The second turns to household energy use and how to become more efficient or produce your own energy. The third and largest section explores alternative energy sources in different localities where they have been implemented. They include solar, wind, geothermal, and new fuel-sources for combustion. The very last chapter in that section turns to "exceptional community initiatives." Part four is Pahl's "call to action" and advice for preparing for action. A resource guide in the back includes energy programs, community development, and transportation. Community Van Jones provides a forward."Energy is at the heart of our 21st century economic-ecological crisis, but most writing on the subject is suffused either with immobilizing anticipation of doom or giddy wishful thinking. Here at last is a genuinely helpful energy book, one that's realistic and practical. If you want to actually do something about our energy future, here is where to start."--Richard Heinberg, senior fellow, Post Carbon Institute; author, The End of Growth"Talk about down-and-dirty. Or rather, down-and-clean! Here's the actual useful detail on how to do the stuff that really needs doing. Read it and get to work!"--Bill McKibben, author of Eearth: Making a Life on a Tough New Planet"Greg Pahl's superb guide to community energy and how to unlock its potential is essential reading for anyone interested in the economic future of the

place they live. As a Community Resilience Guide it is just that--a powerful guide showing how enhancing your community's resilience is a key form of economic development. And there is nowhere better to start than with rethinking our relationship to energy. You will find yourself waking up at 3 a.m. to scribble down the ideas and actions that this book has inspired. Make sure you keep a pen and paper by the bed."--Rob Hopkins, author of *The Transition Companion*"Greg Pahl's *Power from the People* is an inspirational guide to the burgeoning community-power movement. His case studies of people who are making a difference are often tales of endurance and survival, but also powerful testaments to the human spirit. Bravo to Pahl and *Power from the People* for explaining how feed-in tariffs have produced a community-power revolution in Europe and how they can do the same here in North America."--Paul Gipe, author of *Wind Power*, advocate, and renewable energy industry analyst

Clear, well-organized, but not an exciting read. Probably a good place to start when going local for juice. But we need to remember that having a reliable and affordable source of electricity, though certainly desirable, only gets us part way home in a contracting economy---or in the cresting one we've got.

EXCELLENT...

I will work with the information in this book for a long time. Some of us in my community are determined to bring solar projects to our town. This book will help us to begin the process.

There is always a debate when it comes to energy independence and responsibility to the earth, but few come to the table with real solutions that each of us can do. If you find yourself frustrated with the politics of energy programs then Greg Pahl's book *POWER FROM THE PEOPLE* is something you should seriously consider. The book is written in a way that allows you to see the role that all of us have in doing our part when it comes to the local level and putting in place energy-efficiency programs. Though you might not believe the issue is something you have to worry about, what Pahl does in the book is allows us to see that regardless of where we live there is something that can be done to affect the way we live and make decisions that will have a lasting impact not only on us but the world. After reading *POWER FROM THE PEOPLE* I felt empowered and encouraged. It all begins with communities making a decision that they have the real power when it comes to what impacts them and then coming up with real solutions that work and can be duplicated. The author

allow us to see how we can plan and organize projects that make a difference. This is the time for all of us to seriously consider doing our part in making sure the way of life we have come to enjoy is sustained in a way that doesn't seriously harm the earth. If you are really looking for viable answers POWER FROM THE PEOPLE is a great place to start.

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