



Keeping Things Cool With White Rooftops

Source: [The Epoch Times](#)

By: Kristina Skorbach



2nd from R: Community Environmental Center (CEC) President and Chief Executive Officer Richard Cherry, 3rd from L: New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) Commissioner Margarita Lopez, far left: Buildings Commissioner Robert LiMandri and others demonstrate the process of rooftop cooling on top of LaGuardia Community College. (Kristina Skorbach/The Epoch Times)

[NEW YORK—Cool Roof Program](#), a project aimed at cooling down the city's buildings by painting the roofs white, had volunteers dip their paint rollers into buckets of white paint on the rooftop of CUNY's LaGuardia Community College in Long Island City on Tuesday. Student and staff volunteers will dedicate their time this summer to help the City of New York go greener and stay cooler.

Mayor Bloomberg initiated the pilot program last fall and the program was launched on Tuesday by Buildings Commissioner Robert LiMandri, [ConEdison](#) Vice President of Facilities Saddle L. Smith, and other officials, who announced their determination in cooling down the rooftops of NYC's buildings. "It's cool to have a cool roof," said LiMandri.

By the end of the year, the team plans to finish 1 million square feet of rooftops, focusing on [NYPD buildings](#), subway stations, Department of Buildings headquarters, and the Department of Homeless Services facility.

A white-colored roof refracts sun rays better than the traditional black rooftop, which results in the surface of the roof being around 60 degrees cooler. Consequently, the temperature of the interior of the building can be lowered by 10-20 degrees, which means that less air conditioning will need to be used, thus cutting down on energy bills and producing less pollution. Once the paint job is finished, it will last for 20 years.

"When we get to finishing the whole city, we will have saved \$100 million a year in electricity. That's our goal," said Richard Cherry, president of Community Environmental Center. According to the City's Chief Service Officer Diahann Billings-Burford the city plans to decrease greenhouse emissions by 30 percent by 2030.

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LiMardi pointed out two reasons for initiating the project, the first is to reduce energy costs for air conditioning in the summer and to benefit the environment, but also to cool down all the hotspots in NYC. Targeting the hotspots in the city will decrease the Urban Heat Island Effect, which is an ability of a highly urbanized city like New York to retain heat because of the abundance of dry impermeable surfaces causing the city to be 5-7 degrees warmer than the surrounding areas.

[Long Island City](#) is one of the hotspots in NYC, where the lack of vegetation and abundance of roadways and industrial rooftops produces a 5-10 degree difference in temperature than the city itself, thus making it an even hotter environment.

Volunteers at the LaGuardia College eagerly demonstrated the first steps to cooling the roof of their school by rolling layers of white paint onto the rooftop. "What's great about this project is that it's easy, it's fun, I mean who doesn't like playing with a hose, and hosing things down or rolling the roller?" joked Cherry.