



Empowering Our Clean Energy Future

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 7, 2024

**Press Contact:**

Jackie Nuñez | Bilingual Communications Manager  
(925) 695-2124 | [communications@mceCleanEnergy.org](mailto:communications@mceCleanEnergy.org)

## **MCE and Partners Unveil Virtual Power Plant, Bringing the "Home of The Future" to Life**

*All-electric clean energy home showcased in Richmond, California*

**SAN RAFAEL and CONCORD, Calif.** – On August 6, 2024, MCE unveiled a newly built all-electric clean energy home which will be sold to a lower-income first-time home buyer in Richmond, California. The innovative approach is intended to serve as a model to help homebuyers at every income level access clean, all-electric technology for their homes.

**"Virtual power plants are an emerging solution in California's clean energy transition,"** said Noemí Gallardo, Commissioner of the California Energy Commission. **"They represent a promising step forward in supporting our clean energy future. The CEC is proud to support projects like these, which help ensure grid reliability during extreme events and promote equitable access to clean energy solutions."**

Funded in part by the California Energy Commission, led, in partnership, by the ZNE Alliance and MCE, the Richmond Advanced Energy Community Project offers select Richmond residents and businesses a unique opportunity to electrify and save money on their monthly bills. Some of the homes are being rebuilt by RCF Connects using an innovative funding tool called a social impact bond.

**"With this groundbreaking project, we're finding creative solutions to our housing and clean energy goals in Richmond while providing an affordable pathway to homeownership,"** said Jim Becker, Executive Director of RCF Connects. **"Together with MCE and our partners, we have the opportunity to upgrade as many as 100 homes and 20 businesses, including 10 previously abandoned ones. These properties will be able to plug into MCE's Virtual Power Plant."**

MCE's Virtual Power Plant (VPP) helps participants save money with clean energy technologies and receive monthly credits on their energy bills. In exchange, they allow their smart energy devices to respond to MCE's signals to shift load based on the grid's needs. This includes reducing energy use during more expensive times of the day, sending energy back to the grid when needed, and reducing grid strain when weather events threaten outages.

**"Our Virtual Power Plant connects distributed energy resources like solar, battery storage, electric vehicles, electric water heaters, and heat pumps into one system that can be shifted when needed,"** said Vicken Kasarjian, MCE COO. **"When combined, these small resources can provide clean electricity to the grid during peak hours when the demand is high and take energy from the grid when there are surplus conditions in the grid due to high generation and low loads."**

1125 Tamalpais Avenue, San Rafael, CA 94901  
2300 Clayton Road, Suite 1150, Concord, CA 94520  
(888) 632-3674

[mceCleanEnergy.org](https://mceCleanEnergy.org)

The Richmond Advanced Energy Community is supported by a \$5 million grant from the California Energy Commission and up to \$2.8 million in match funding from various partners including the City of Richmond, CalEPA, and MCE. The project aims to help create a cleaner, more reliable electric grid while also addressing low-income housing needs.

**“We look forward to expanding MCE’s Virtual Power Plant to our full service area once we secure more funding,”** said Kasarjian.

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***About MCE:** MCE is a not-for-profit public agency and the preferred electricity provider for more than 585,000 customer accounts and 1.5 million residents and businesses across Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, and Solano counties. Setting the standard for clean energy in California since 2010, MCE leads with 60-100% renewable, fossil-free power at stable rates, serving a 1400 MW peak load, significantly reducing greenhouse emissions, and reinvesting millions in local programs. For more information about MCE, visit [mceCleanEnergy.org](https://mceCleanEnergy.org), or follow us on your preferred social platform @mceCleanEnergy.*