

December, 2008 Volume 3

Community Energy Challenge Monthly Update

Welcome to the Community Energy Challenge monthly update, a monthly publication by EPA New England promoting energy efficiency and clean, renewable energy.

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Coming Next Month: Tips for Energy Efficiency! Share some of the great work going on in your municipality by contacting Linda Darveau of EPA New England at Darveau.Linda@epa.gov or (617) 918-1718. Your tips will be included in the next Monthly Update for Community Energy Challenge Partners!

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

1) Middle School Sustainability Challenge

The Siemens Foundation invites middle school students to participate in the “*Siemens We Can Change the World Challenge*.” Through this national sustainability education initiative, students are challenged to create sustainable, reproducible environmental improvements in their local communities. Prizes for winners include savings bonds, TV appearances, cameras, and travel. Entries are March 15, 2009. For more information, go to: <http://www.wecanchange.com/about-challenge/challenge-description>.

2) Funding Available through the Sustainable Skylines Initiative for Government and Non-Profit Organizations

EPA has announced \$250,000 in grant funds through the Sustainable Skylines Initiative (<http://www.epa.gov/sustainableskylines/index.html>) for up to five U.S. communities interested in working to integrate transportation, energy, land use, and air quality planning. SSI was piloted in Dallas and Kansas City, and EPA now plans to expand the effort nationally. The long-term goal of SSI is to help communities build self-sustaining, community-based partnerships that will achieve positive environmental impacts, livability, and economic development benefits for many generations to come. The Request for Applications (RFA) is available at: <http://www.epa.gov/air/grants/08-08.pdf>. Contact Halida Hatic at 617-918-1680 for more information. Applications are due December 17, 2008.

3) NH Energy .Org

NH Energy.org is the website of the New Hampshire Community Energy Project, a project devoted to the objective distribution and sharing of information. The website is a great source of ideas, and suggests sample projects for your Local Energy Committee. For more information go to: <http://www.nhenergy.org>

4) Renewable Energy Incentives from the Energy Improvement and Extension Act

President Bush recently signed the highly publicized \$700 billion Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-343) into law. This Public Law also included the Energy Improvement and Extension Act Of 2008, which provides extensions and enhancements of critical tax credits and financing relating to renewable energy and energy efficiency:

- The act provides a one-year extension of the \$0.02/kWh production tax credit (PTC) for wind energy, keeping the credit in effect through 2009.
- The act also provides a two-year PTC extension, through 2010, for electricity produced from geothermal, biomass, and solar energy facilities, as well as trash-to-energy facilities, small hydropower facilities using irrigation water, capacity additions to existing hydropower plants, and hydropower facilities added to existing dams.
- The act creates a new PTC for electricity produced by marine and hydrokinetic renewable energy systems (also called advanced water power systems) with a rated capacity of at least 150 kilowatts and placed in service by 2011.
- To help on the financing end, the act authorizes \$800 million in new Clean Renewable Energy Bonds for all of the above technologies. For more information go to:

5) Lowell's *Getting to Zero Energy Challenge*

The city of Lowell, MA, in partnership with National Grid, Advanced Building Analysis, the University of Massachusetts at Lowell, and the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources, is launching the "Getting to Zero Energy Challenge." Competitors will develop a strategy to implement energy efficiency and renewable energy measures into an existing residential building that will come closest to a net zero energy building. The two proposals that show the deepest energy reductions will receive a \$25,000 award to help execute their plan. One award will go to an applicant who is classified as low or medium income and the second will be unrestricted by household income limits. The winners will serve as models for developers and homeowners seeking ways to reduce their energy needs. For more information go to <http://gettingtozero.lowellma.gov/>

6) Environmental Education Grants from EPA Available

EPA is seeking applications for environmental education grants from educators, education institutions, public/state environmental agencies and non-profit organizations. EPA funds environmental education projects that focus on educating teachers, students, parents or the general public about human health problems. These issues range from pollution; improving teaching tools and techniques for educators through workshops; building state or local capability to develop and deliver environmental education or public outreach programs; or promoting environmental careers and stewardship among students through hands-on activities. Applications must be postmarked by Dec. 18, 2008. For information on how to apply for EPA's environmental education grants go to: <http://www.epa.gov/enviroed>.

ARTICLES

1) *R.I. sets course to map its waters for wind farms*

As coastal states race to build the country's first offshore wind farms, it is clear that Rhode Island is following a unique path. Rhode Island's plan is to have the state's Ocean Special Area Management Plan find the most suitable sites for wind turbines so Rhode Island can avoid the lengthy and costly controversy that has surrounded the Cape Wind project proposed for waters off Nantucket. Most other states have their energy offices or economic development personnel leading their wind-farm siting efforts. Massachusetts just enacted a law this year to plan uses of its coastal waters, but Rhode Island officials believe they are ahead because they have been doing such planning for decades. To read more, go to: http://www.projo.com/news/content/ocean_wind_mapping_09-23-08_RJBJ9R_v21.17c1d58.html

2) *Off and spinning: Kittery celebrates windpower*

When it comes to energy, wind may bear the town to new heights. Local and state officials gathered at Kittery's solid waste facility for a ribbon cutting ceremony on the town's new 150 foot tall, 50 kilowatt wind turbine. As Town Manager Jon Carter took the podium to welcome guests, the turbine spun with a quiet whoosh in the breezy background. Town Council Chairman Jeff Thomson said the project was the end result

of months of hard work from town employees and committed residents, especially the some 30 who make up the Kittery Energy Advisory Committee. Especially striking was the town's ability to get the windmill constructed in difficult economic times, thanks in part to a \$50,000 grant from the Maine Public Utility Commission's Voluntary Renewable Resources Fund for the wind turbine. To read more, go to: <http://www.seacoastonline.com/articles/20081014-NEWS-81014026>

3) *Mountain wind sites eyed*

Looking to expand its considerable array of northern Maine wind farms, First Wind of Massachusetts has placed two test towers atop mountains just north of its Stetson Mountain site. Test towers are a first step among many before the company seeks permit approvals, company officials have said. They gather data usually over a period of several months that the company uses to determine whether enough wind flows over the site to make an electricity farm feasible. To read more, go to: <http://www.bangornews.com/detail/49309.html>

4) *Methuen unveils its first solar array*

Methuen Mayor William M. Manzi, III announced that the city has put its first solar-power lighting system online. The system is used to light the Arthur M. Hilgendorf memorial and flagpole at the Raymond J. Martin Park on Riverside Drive in West Methuen, MA. The city had wanted to light the monument since it was installed, but it was too costly to run electrical wires underground to the site. The lighting system was made possible through a grant from the Commonwealth's Renewable Energy Trust (RET). To read more, go to: <http://www.billmanzi.com/?p=880>

EVENTS

1) *NHSEA's December 6 2nd Annual Home Energy Conference*

The New Hampshire Sustainable Energy Association's (NHSEA) annual energy conference in Durham, NH will have 18 workshops for homeowners, community volunteers, and energy industry professionals on subjects ranging from efficiency, to solar pv and thermal, wind, wood, and local energy policy. For more information, go to: <http://www.nhsea.org/hec/index.php>

2) *Landfill Gas Energy Workshop: A Sustainable Energy Source from Small Landfills in New England*

This workshop will provide landfill operators, municipal officials, and other interested parties with information on renewable energy policies and carbon finance examples necessary to understand the potential for developing landfill gas energy projects at small landfills. If you manage a landfill or have an interest in facilitating LFGE projects, this workshop is for you. The workshop will be held on Thursday, December 11, 2008 from 9:30 AM - 4:30 PM at Lee Community Hall, Wishcamper Center, University of Southern Maine, Portland, ME. Visit the workshop's information page for more information, to review the preliminary agenda, and to register online: <http://www.epa.gov/lmop/conf/lge121108.htm>

TOOLS /TRAINING

1) Clean Energy-Environment Municipal Network

EPA's Clean Energy-Environment Municipal Network will resume webcasts in January 2009. To receive announcements about upcoming webcasts, sign up for EPA's State and Local Clean Energy-Environment Listserv. To sign up for the listserv or review previous webcasts, go to: <http://www.epa.gov/cleanenergy/energy-programs/state-and-local/webcast.html>

2) Combined Heat and Power for Hospitals/Health Care Facilities Webinar

This webinar is part of the EPA's Clean DG Policy and CHP Webinar Series, which covers a variety of topics related to Distributed Generation (DG) and Combined Heat and Power (CHP). This call will be held on Thursday, December 18, 2008 from 3-4:30pm EST. To register, go to: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/584639182>

3) New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPC) Training: *Benchmarking Costs & Identifying Energy Savings at Water & Waste Water Treatment Plants*

On January 13, NEIWPC is holding a training course in Haverhill, Massachusetts that will cover the identification of unit processes with high horsepower requirements, methods for reading an energy bill and understanding the rate charges, and the use of the Pump System Assessment Tool (PSAT) and Energy Star software products. The MA DEP/MA Div. of Energy Management's Pilot Program for Water and Wastewater Treatment Plants will also be discussed. All participants are encouraged to bring copies of their plant's electrical bills. This course is limited to 22 students, all of whom will be provided with a computer workstation. This course is approved for 6 TCH for MA Drinking Water Certification. For more information and to register, go to: <http://www.neiwpc.org/training/schedule-details.asp?ID=173>

4) ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability: *Data Collection and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventorying Webinar*

Thursday, December 11 from 11:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. (EST) , a web-based training focused on:

- How to organize and conduct a greenhouse gas emissions inventory
- The types of data your community will need to acquire to conduct a Greenhouse gas emissions inventory
- Where inventory data can be found, and
- How to organize this data

Participants will leave the training with the knowledge necessary to start collecting the data they need to begin their greenhouse gas emissions inventory.

This webinar training is open to all ICLEI members in the Northeast/Mid-Atlantic Region. No prior experience with greenhouse gas inventorying is necessary.

To register or find out more about ICLEI-local Governments for Sustainability go to: <http://www.iclei.org/news-events/event-folder/iclei-webinar-data-collection-and-greenhouse-gas-emissions-inventorying/>

Monthly e-update

All 122 communities in New England Community Energy Challenge program will automatically receive this email unless they indicate that they would like to be removed from the list. All other New England communities that would like to receive it are welcome to subscribe as well (for more information on joining the Challenge please visit: <http://www.epa.gov/region1/eco/energy/energy-challenge.html>). For additions or deletions from this email list or if you have ideas on information that you would like to see in future monthly updates, please contact Linda Darveau of EPA New England at Darveau.Linda@epa.gov or at (617) 918-1718.