

September 2009 Volume 11

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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ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1) **Welcome to the Newest Member of the Community Energy Challenge**
EPA New England welcomes the communities of Woodbury, Willimantic, and Bethany Connecticut, and Chelsea, Vermont, the newest members of the Community Energy Challenge! These communities have pledged to form a local energy committee, benchmark their municipal buildings, and reduce their energy use by 10%. These steps will help them to save money and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. With this addition there are 151 CEC members. Welcome!

2) Press Release: 150 New England Communities Take Steps to Save Energy and Money

On August 19, 2009 EPA New England's Community Energy Challenge program reached a new milestone by accepting its 150th participant. Reflecting a growing national interest in greening local government, municipalities that join EPA's Community Energy Challenge pledge to reduce energy consumption in their municipal facilities by at least 10 percent. Collectively, the communities participating in the Community Energy Challenge represent more than 30 percent of New England's population.

For the complete press release, go to:

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/6d651d23f5a91b768525735900400c28/ad971cf363caebaa852576170069aa22!OpenDocument>

3) New Hampshire Governor Lynch Signs Local Energy Commission Bill

House Bill 189 was signed into law by Governor Lynch. This bill enables New Hampshire Municipalities to establish local energy commissions giving local and volunteer work on energy issues official standing. For the legislative language, go to: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/legislation/2009/HB0189.html>

4) Recovery Act Announcement: Obama Administration Delivers over \$25 million for Weatherization Program in Connecticut

U.S. Department of Energy Secretary Steven Chu announced that the Department of Energy is providing more than \$25 million in funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to expand the weatherization assistance program in Connecticut.

Connecticut will use its Recovery Act funds to weatherize approximately 7,400 homes and re-weatherize an additional 100 homes over the three-year grant period. The Department of Social Services administers the Weatherization Program, assisting low-income persons in minimizing energy-related costs and fuel usage in their residences.

5) EPA Challenges American School Districts to Save Energy and Money with Energy Star

During the back to school season, EPA is challenging school administrators and building managers to improve energy efficiency throughout their facilities. School districts can answer EPA's call-to-action by taking the Energy Star Challenge, a pledge to improve the energy efficiency of our nation's buildings. Schools that accept the challenge will join more than 500 school districts across the country that are helping to fight climate change by committing to reducing their energy use with help from Energy Star.

The annual energy bill to operate America's primary and secondary schools totals nearly \$8 billion — more than is spent on textbooks and computers combined. Schools that take the Energy Star Challenge can use energy tracking tools, technical guidance, case studies, and other Energy Star tools and resources to help them improve their energy efficiency.

EPA is also asking parents, teachers and students to work together to save energy at home and at school. To engage youth and families in learning about changes they can make in their homes and schools to save energy and protect the environment, Energy Star has teamed with Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) Today, a national organization dedicated to supporting family involvement in education. Together with Energy Star, PTO Today offers "Go Green Night" activities to the nation's parent-teacher organizations, to help families learn about saving energy together.

Sign up your school for the Energy Star Challenge: <http://energystar.gov/challenge>

In New England there are 57 schools that have achieved the ENERGY STAR label since 2000.

To create a map of Energy Star qualified schools near you: <http://www.energystar.gov/buildinglist>

6) EPA Announces Houses of Worship Can Now Earn Energy Star Label and Reduce Their Carbon Footprint

America's houses of worship can now earn the Energy Star label, joining the nation's schools, hospitals, hotels, and other facilities in their efforts to fight climate change, save energy and reduce their carbon footprint. EPA's energy tracking tool, Portfolio Manager, currently allows facilities to track energy use and the associated greenhouse gas emissions, set targets for investment priorities and verify efficiency improvements. Now the estimated 370,000 houses of worship across the United States can use Portfolio Manager to receive an energy performance rating, and the most energy efficient among them can earn the Energy Star label.

Worship facilities in the United States spend more than \$3 billion annually on energy costs. Improving the energy efficiency of America's houses of worship by just 10 percent would save nearly 2 billion kilowatt-hours each year, preventing more than 1 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions and representing a cost savings of about \$315 million annually.

Through Energy Star, EPA provides a proven energy management strategy and free tools for public and private organizations to save energy and money through increased energy efficiency. EPA has also made additional enhancements to its tools including the ability to specify on-site green power generation and use. This feature provides a better assessment of a building's actual energy efficiency and a more complete picture of associated carbon emissions.

Learn more about Energy Star for congregations: <http://www.energystar.gov/congregations>

ARTICLES

1) *Unlocking Energy Efficiency in the U.S. Economy*

A program to improve the energy efficiency of American homes, offices, and factories could slash energy consumption by 23 percent by 2020 and produce \$1.2 trillion in savings, according to a report by the McKinsey consulting firm. The report stated that taking steps such as better insulating buildings, replacing old appliances, and sealing ducts is the fastest and best way to cut the country's energy consumption. The firm recommended an investment of \$520 billion in energy efficiency programs over the next 10 years, an amount that dwarfs the \$10 billion to \$15 billion included in the Obama administration's economic stimulus package. McKinsey executives acknowledged that carrying out such an efficiency program on a large scale faces numerous challenges, including the reluctance of homeowners and businesses to invest sizeable sums of money and a lack of tax breaks and other financial incentives for efficiency improvements. Still, the report cited that better education of homeowners and businesses, tighter building codes, stricter efficiency requirements for appliances, and the creation of greater incentives could go a long way toward cutting the U.S.'s wasteful energy use.

For more information: http://www.mckinsey.com/client-service/electric-power-natural-gas/US_energy_efficiency/

EVENTS

1) New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning (OEP) Fall Conference

The OEP's annual conference will be held on October 17th at the Mountain Club on Loon in Lincoln, NH. As the date approaches more details will be available on the OEP website.

Each year, the Local Energy Committee (LEC) Working Group will acknowledge citizen volunteers, municipalities, and officials along with staff throughout New Hampshire for their contribution to the reduction of energy and greenhouse gas emissions. Award categories include Citizen Volunteer, LEC Project, and Municipal/School Employee. This year the recipients of the awards will be announced during the OEP conference. For more information go to: <http://www.nh.gov/oep/>

2) Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency Workforce Education: A National Conference for Educators and Trainers

The organizers of the third national conference on *New Ideas in Educating a Workforce on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency* are pleased to announce that the preliminary program is now available.

This workforce education conference will take place on November 18-20, 2009 at the Marriott Hotel in Albany, New York. Conference sessions are planned for November 19 and 20. On Wednesday, November 18, six

technical workshops will be offered.

With over 60 speakers, this event will offer the most current information on instructional strategies, curricula development, and best practices for training in the renewable energy and energy efficiency fields.

Twenty sessions will cover the latest information on job forecasts and labor profiles, state and federal workforce initiatives, career pathways, training partnerships, model curriculum, standards, and new approaches to training in this rapidly emerging green economy.

Speakers from all corners of the United States will be representing community colleges, training organizations, skill centers, workforce development programs, technical high schools, state and federal government agencies, industry and credentialing bodies.

To view the preliminary program and to register go to:

http://www.meetmax.com/sched/mie1109/~public/conference_home.html?event_id=3120

3) ENERGY STAR Home Exhibit Tour

EPA is partnering with organizations around the country to host free events featuring a custom-built interactive exhibit modeled after an energy-efficient home that will show you examples of the many ways you can save energy, money, and help protect the environment. The ENERGY STAR home will be in Boston on October 24-25, at the Boston Medical Center's annual fundraiser event, Halloween Town, Seaport World Trade Center.

Take a room-by-room tour of the home and learn about ways to save with energy-efficient practices and ENERGY STAR qualified products, such as:

- Lighting
- Electronics
- Home Sealing and Insulation
- Appliances
- Office Equipment
- Heating and Cooling Equipment

While you're there, take the ENERGY STAR Pledge to join in the fight against global warming. And if you've already made energy-efficient changes to your home, inspire others to do the same! Each event will have a "testimonial booth" where you can record your individual energy-saving story about how you have made a positive change for the environment. For more information go to:

http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=globalwarming.tour_welcome_index

4) Northeast Sustainable Energy Association and New Hampshire Sustainable Energy Association Annual Meeting

The New Hampshire Sustainable Energy Association and the Northeast Sustainable Energy Association are joining forces to co-host our annual meetings. Please join us for networking, refreshments, and special guest speaker Jigar Shah.

Date: September 12th

Time: 5:30pm-9:00pm

Location: Merrimack Valley High School

Penacook, NH

There is a \$5.00 suggested donation for non-members who wish to attend this event

Please RSVP by contacting NESEA at 413-774-6051 x 29 or email jvansteensburg@nesea.org

5) New Hampshire Local Government Center (LGC) Annual Conference

NH LGC's 68th Annual Conference will be November 18-20, 2009, at the Radisson Hotel in Manchester, featuring informative sessions covering finance, governance, health and safety, human resources, land use and environment, schools, technology and more.

Events will include honoring outstanding achievements, networking discussions to foster dialogue and inspire new ideas, and the Exhibit Hall will showcase the latest products, services and solutions for your every need.

This is a valuable opportunity to learn how other local governments are rising to their present challenges—and planning for the future. For more information and to register go to:

<http://www.nhlgc.org/LGCWebSite/Calendar/annualconference.htm>

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

1) U.S. Department of Energy - Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

Solar Energy Technologies Program

Solar America Cities-Technical Outreach

Funding: \$10.5M Maximum per Award, 5-Year Performance Period

Open Date: 06/24/2009; Close Date: 10/15/2009

Funding Organization: Solar Energy Technologies Program

Funding Number: DE-FOA-0000086

Summary: This project will provide comprehensive outreach to local governments to help them build sustainable solar infrastructures and expand their solar markets. The project will help accelerate solar energy deployment by proactively addressing the needs of local governments for technical information and guidance, focusing on many areas such as policies and regulations, financial incentives, training, and community engagement. The maximum funding for the first phase of each project, which is 3 years, is \$6 million. Maximum funding for the second phase, which is 2 years, is \$4.5 million.

For more information, see the full solicitation.

Additional Information:

- Go to www.fedconnect.net.
- Click on “Search Public Opportunities.”
- Under “Search Criteria,” select “Reference Number.”
- Enter “DE-FOA-0000086,” then click on “Search.”

2) New Hampshire Municipal Energy Assistance Program

New Hampshire has seen a dramatic increase of resources available to municipalities to assist in energy conservation and efficiency. While the various activities may take different paths, the common goal is reduced energy costs at the municipal and community levels. Among the resources at New Hampshire communities’ disposal is the NH Municipal Energy Assistance Program (NHMEAP), a collaborative effort involving three existing New Hampshire entities, funded through the NH Public Utilities Commission.

New Hampshire municipalities are invited to take advantage of this free service and apply to the Municipal Energy Assistance Program. The purpose is to provide a guided (and staffed) step-by-step process to help up to 48 New Hampshire communities become project-ready. This effort will set the ground work for future technical assistance through Regional Planning Commissions and other agencies, and for gaining access to funding through state and federal programs for implementation projects. Main aspects of the program include:

- **Energy Inventory**
- **Building Audits**
- **Policy Audits**
- **Energy Assistance and Counsel**

Applications for this program are due on September 25th. If you have any questions about the project or application process, please call or email Christa Koehler, AICP at ckoehler@cleanair-coolplanet.org or 603-570-7508.

3) Grant Opportunity from New England Grassroots Environmental Fund (NEGEF)

NEGEF offers an opportunity for Local Energy Committees to request up to \$2,500 in support of local energy work in your town. NEGEF’s small grants program is designed to help community volunteer groups achieve broader community involvement in their environmental projects.

Through its Energy/Climate Action program, NEGEF has already funded 20 of New Hampshire’s local energy committees. Funding can be used for a wide range of needs, from local energy audits to home weatherization or local energy fairs but should be tied to a community-based strategy to create robust local energy systems while engaging more neighbors in this work.

You are encouraged to contact New Hampshire program officer Bart Westdijk for more information at bart@grassrootsfund.org or 802 223 4622. Feel free to run any upcoming projects by him for feedback or share a draft application for comments.

Please find application materials on NEGEF's website. Contact NEGEF staff if you have any problems with the application. <http://grassrootsfund.org/>

TIP OF THE MONTH

1) OCTOBER IS ENERGY MONTH - Order materials for your Energy Fair from ENERGY STAR

October is Energy Month, and many communities are planning their Energy Fairs and outreach events. For free brochures, pamphlets and posters on energy efficiency, including a brand new Lorax activity book for kids, go to: <https://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=publications.showPublications>

TOOLS /TRAINING

1) Massachusetts Municipal Association Offers Free Energy-Saving Seminars

More than 40 Massachusetts communities have hosted free home energy-saving seminars for residents throughout the state, and the MMA is continuing to accept new hosts.

The energy-savings presentations discuss cost-effective investments, do-it-yourself solutions, cost-reduction, the Energy Star rating system, and home audit information.

Host communities may choose any one of the following four available seminars:

- “Introduction to Home Energy Savings” provides simple steps to reducing the use of electricity, water, and heat; do-it-yourself techniques for basic home sealing and heating; and resources for financing home audits and alterations.
- “Home Energy Savings for Renters” provides tenant-specific information on basic home energy savings.
- “Home Energy Savings for Retirees” provides information specifically designed for seniors.
- “Weatherizing Your Home for Ultimate Savings” stresses the importance of reducing heat usage by providing do-it-yourself sealing techniques; tips on hiring a contractor for in-depth alterations; and resources for home audits and financing alternatives.

Host communities are expected to secure a meeting location; help with set-up; and assist in publicizing the workshop through Web sites, e-mails, networking, flier distribution, and media outlets.

There is no cost to the host community. These MMA seminars are provided with support from Neptune LNG LLC, a subsidiary of GDF SUEZ Gas North America.

For more information or to request a seminar in your community, go to: <http://mma.org/public-works-energy-utilities/3500-mma-offers-free-energy-saving-seminars>

2) ENERGY STAR Webinars

- **ENERGY STAR for Entertainment Update Webinar**
Featuring Partner Success Stories
September 23, 2009
1:00 pm Eastern Daylight Savings Time

Earlier this year, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) launched the ENERGY STAR program for the entertainment sector, providing energy management strategies and resources to facilities such as stadiums, convention centers, museums and theaters.

On Wednesday, September 23, 2009 the second in a series of webinars to learn about sector resources and useful techniques to demonstrate and communicate your environmental commitment and success to senior management, staff and visitors will be offered. You also will hear how other entertainment venues have leveraged ENERGY STAR to make significant energy reductions and offset carbon emissions.

Who Should Participate?

Current ENERGY STAR for Entertainment partners as well as other interested venue owners and operators of buildings such as stadiums, arenas, convention centers, theaters and museums, as well as entertainment related associations.

Please go to the following link to register for this session:

<https://energystar.webex.com/energystar/k2/j.php?ED=125016447&UID=1087669422&FM=1>

Once you have registered, you will receive an email confirming your registration, and providing you with additional information on how to join the session.

- **Portfolio Manager for State and Local Governments**

Session date: Thursday, September 17, 2009

Starting time: 2:00 pm, Eastern Daylight Time

Duration: 1 hour

Presenters: Colin Dunn

Description: Colin Dunn will be discussing benchmarking in Portfolio Manager for state and local governments. A live demonstration will follow.

For more information and to register for this webinar go to:

<https://energystar.webex.com/mw03051/mywebex/default.do?siteurl=energystar&service=7>

- **Portfolio Manager for Houses of Worship**

Session dates: September 17, 24 and 29, 2009

Starting time: 11:30 am, Eastern Standard Time

Duration: 1 hour

Presenters: Collin Dunn

Description: The nation's 370,000 houses of worship spend \$3 billion on energy each year on energy.

An ENERGY STAR qualified facility uses less energy, is less expensive to operate, and causes fewer greenhouse gas emissions than a non-qualified facility. Cutting energy use by just 10% in the nation's houses of worship would save \$315 million for congregations' other priorities. Colin Dunn will be discussing benchmarking in Portfolio Manager. For more information and a complete list of ENERGY STAR webinars go to:

<https://energystar.webex.com/mw03051/mywebex/default.do?siteurl=energystar>

All 151 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>. and scroll down on the right hand navigation bars.)

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.

