

Cambridge Climate Protection Action Committee

CPAC BULLETIN

February 2014

MEETING: The next meeting of the Climate Protection Action Committee is scheduled for February 13, 6:00 pm, City Hall Annex, 344 Broadway. The meeting is open to the public. The [agenda](#) will be posted on the Community Development Department website. The featured topic this month is the Massachusetts renewable energy policy landscape, presented by Dwayne Breger, Director of Renewable & Alternative Energy Development, MA Department of Energy Resources.

EVENTS & MEETINGS

- **SILA: Staged Reading & Panel** – February 12, 5:30 pm, House of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 136 Irving Street. [SILA](#) is a play about climate change in the far north of Canada. The staged reading will be Catalyst Collaborative@MIT. The reading will be followed by a panel discussion with Robert Jaffe, MIT; Chantal Bilodeau, playwright; and Naomi Oreskes, Harvard. [Register here.](#)
- **American Energy Data Challenge/Hackathon** – [American Energy Data Challenge “Apps for Energy II” Hackathon](#), February 15 & 16, Cambridge. This is a contest to develop web and mobile apps using the US DOE energy API's. Competing teams are eligible for cash prizes. Sponsored by [hack/reduce](#) and the [U.S. Department of Energy](#).
- **GreenPort Forum** - February 18 at 7:00 pm, Cambridgeport Baptist Church, 459 Putnam Avenue (corner of Magazine & Putnam). KindThread: Resource Sharing for Cambridgeport; a discussion with its founders. A presentation and dialogue with the founders of KindThread, a new startup now launching in Cambridgeport. KindThread is an online pay-it-forward platform, designed to help bounded communities share their resources -- their time, skills, and goods. With KindThread, you can either post an "offer" (something you are willing to do for someone in the community) or a "request" (something you need help with). If someone offers to help you out, you *pay it forward* and offer to help someone else, creating threads of kindness running through your community.
- **MIT Energy Conference** – February 21-22, Cambridge & Boston. [To register, click here.](#)
- **Local Environmental Action 2014** – March 2, Northeastern University. This is the joint conference sponsored by Mass Climate Action Network and the Toxics Action Center. [To register, click here.](#)
- **BuildingEnergy 2014** – March 4-6, Seaport World Trade Center, Boston. The annual conference and exposition of the Northeast Sustainable Energy Association. [To register, click here.](#)
- **Mass. Land Conservation Conference** – March 22, Worcester Technical High School, One Skyline Drive. Annual conference of the Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition. The conference includes climate change-related sessions. [To register, click here.](#)
- **Biopharma Sustainability Roundtable** – March 26 & 27, The Catalyst at Tech Square, Cambridge. Sponsored by Meridian. [Click here for information.](#)
- **CERES Conference** – April 30 – May 1, 2014, Westin Waterfront Hotel, Boston. For more information, [click here.](#)
- **Local Solutions: Northeast Climate Change Preparedness** – May 19 to 21, 2014; Manchester, NH. A networking and training conference for public and private stakeholders. The third day of the conference is an educators summit. [Register here.](#)

- **Friends of Alewife Reservation Walks** - Wildlife walks sponsored by [FAR](#) impart the history and background to the DCR's Alewife Reservation, a rare urban wild in Cambridge. The walks are led by a professional wildlife assessor, Dave Brown. Tours last 2 hours. To prepare for the tour, or to get a "Virtual Tour", [click here](#).
- **Green Streets** – This initiative encourages people throughout Cambridge (and Somerville and surrounding cities and towns) to use a green form of transportation (transit, bicycle, walk, skate) on a designated day of the month and to wear a green-colored item of attire. The goal is to make Cambridge and neighboring cities safer, quieter, and friendlier for pedestrians and cyclists, and to minimize the use and impact of cars. Generally, the designated day is the last Friday of the month. Check the [Cambridge Green Streets Initiative website](#) for more info and incentives.
- **350.Org** - 350 Massachusetts is a volunteer-led, campaign-focused initiative connecting and organizing a strong grassroots coalition to address climate change and build a just and secure future beyond fossil fuels. Meetings are held every two weeks. All meetings are held at First Church Cambridge, 11 Garden Street, Cambridge, MA and begin at 6PM for potluck and networking, with the general meeting and working groups at 7PM. More info at www.350MA.org.
- **Green Cambridge** - Green Cambridge is a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization and a founding chapter of the Massachusetts Climate Action Network (MCAN). Green Cambridge works to create a more sustainable Cambridge, and to protect the environment for the health and safety of all. Green Cambridge meets monthly at the Eastern Bank community room in Harvard Square, usually on the first Thursday of every month at 6:30pm. All are welcome and invited to attend! For more information and a listing of community events, please visit: <http://www.greencambridge.org/>

NEWS

- **Net Zero Task Force Launched** – The Getting to Net Zero Task Force held its first meeting on January 28. The task force, appointed by City Manager Richard Rossi, will develop recommendations on how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the built environment; improve energy efficiency and conservation in existing and new buildings; support renewable energy generation both on- and off-site; and address best practices to engage and educate users and influence occupant behavior. The [project webpage](#) has been posted, where interested people can sign up for the task force mailing list and view documents and news.
- **K2C2 Reports Issued** – The Community Development Department issued the [final reports of the K2C2 Planning Study](#) conducted in 2011-2013. Separate reports are available for Kendall Square and Central Square. The reports discuss opportunities to improve sustainability in the two areas and make recommendations for projects subject to special permit requirements. The reports recommend raising the green building requirement under Article 22 of the Zoning Ordinance to LEED Gold; requiring cool roofs to be installed on new construction; requiring feasibility studies for connecting to the district steam system where appropriate; and development of an eco-district in Kendall Square.
- **Mapdwell Solar Tool Expanding** – The Mapdwell Solar System is expanding. The Massachusetts Audubon Society sponsors the solar PV tool for the [town of Wellfleet](#). The tool was also recently launched in [Washington, DC](#). The solar tool, developed and piloted in Cambridge, is an interactive map that enables users to estimate their rooftop solar photovoltaic potential and assess the financial feasibility of a system. The tool was created by Mapdwell based on the methods of the Sustainable Design Lab at MIT. The City of Cambridge was the first client. The solar tool has been called the most accurate solar map in the country by [Smithsonian Magazine](#). The Mapdwell Solar System also made the list of [“The Most Amazing, Beautiful and Viral Maps of the Year”](#) for 2013 by the Wired MapLab.
- **Governor Begins Preparing Massachusetts for Climate Change** – On January 14, Governor Deval Patrick announced a broad set of climate change preparedness initiatives for Massachusetts. Patrick said

"I believe that we have a generational responsibility to address the multiple threats of climate change. Massachusetts needs to be ready, and our plan will make sure that we are." The Governor announced a \$40 million municipal resilience grant program to help cities and towns harden energy services at critical sites by using clean energy technology. The grants will be funded by the Alternative Compliance Payments under the Renewable Portfolio Standard program. The Governor also announced several other steps which will be implemented through the state budget process, including a statewide vulnerability assessment for transportation facilities; a \$10 million investment in critical coastal infrastructure and dam repair; more resources for local boards of health, disease vector monitoring, and water supply protection; and establishment of a state climatologist position at the UMass Amherst Northeast Climate Science Center. [[Governor's press release, 1/14/14](#)]

- **2013 Fourth Hottest On Record** – According to the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\)](#), 2013 tied 2003 as the fourth warmest year globally since recordkeeping started in 1880. The combined annual global land and ocean surface temperature was 1.12 degrees Fahrenheit above the 20th century average of 57 degrees F. 2013 was the 37th consecutive year that the yearly global temperature was above average. The current warmest year on record was 2010. Including 2013, nine of the ten warmest years in the 134-year period of records have occurred in the 21st century. Only one year in the 20th century -- 1998 -- was warmer than 2013.
- **Smart Meters in Our Near Future** – The Department of Public Utilities issued an order to public utilities to develop grid modernization plans, including deployment of advanced meters within three years. The purpose of grid modernization is to use smart meters, communications networks, and new data management systems to give customers greater choice about their energy use and real-time information to enable utilities to respond better to storms. Grid modernization will also enable easier adoption of clean energy technologies and to use targeted electricity rates for electric vehicles. [[Peregrine Energy Group, January 2014](#); [EOEEA Press Release, 12/23/13](#)]
- **Commercial Organics Waste Ban Finalized** – The Commonwealth's statewide ban on commercial food waste disposal from going to landfills and incinerators has been finalized. It will go into effect on October 1, 2014. The ban, which will be enforced by the Department of Environmental Protection, will require entities that dispose of at least one ton of organic material per week to donate or re-purpose the useable food. Any remaining food waste will be shipped to an anaerobic digestion facility to be converted to clean energy, or sent to composting and animal feed operations. Food materials and organics make up about 25% of the current waste stream. Residents and small businesses are not included in the ban. The Commonwealth estimates about 1,700 businesses and institutions, including supermarkets, universities and colleges, hotels, hospitals, nursing homes, restaurants, and food service and processing companies will be affected. The Patrick Administration is concurrently working to help site composting and anaerobic digestion facilities. The disposal of organic waste can result in greenhouse gas emissions, depending on conditions in the disposal facility. [[EOEEA Press Release, 1/31/14](#)]

RESOURCES & IDEAS

- **Jobs** – Harvard Green Building Services: [Building Energy Analyst](#). CERES: [Coordinator, Policy Program](#); [Associate, Policy Program](#); [Vice President, Climate & Energy Programs](#).
- **CZM Sea Level Rise Guidance** – The Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management released guidance on how to consider sea level rise in planning. The document is titled [Sea Level Rise: Understanding and Applying Trends and Future Scenarios for Analysis and Planning](#).
- **IPCC AR5 Working Group I Report** – The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has issued the [report of the fifth Assessment Report of Working Group I](#) concerning the physical science basis for the IPCC report.

- **Densification & Carbon Footprints** – The [Cool Climate Network](#) at the University of California at Berkeley issued interesting findings about greenhouse gas emissions and population density (hint: not what you think). The network also mapped the 2013 household carbon footprints for nearly every U.S. zipcode. [[The Atlantic Cities, 1/7/14](#)]
- **Polar Vortex & Climate Change** – If you are wondering how the polar vortex affects our weather and what it's relationship is to climate change, [click here to see a good video explanation](#).
- **Getting to Net Zero Status Report** – The New Buildings Institute has issued [2014 Getting to Zero Status Update](#), which surveys the zero net energy and ultra-efficient buildings across North America.
- **LBL Roof Study** – The Heat Island Group at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory has a [new report comparing the economic costs and benefits of green, white, and black flat roofs](#). One of the findings of the report is that white roofs are three times more effective at countering climate change than green roofs.
- **HUD CHP Guide** – The U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development has a [new guide on combined heat and power's role in promoting reliability and resiliency](#), including in multi-family residential buildings.
- **C40 Survey** – The C40 Cities Group led by former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg surveyed its members on the number of programs and initiatives they are implementing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change over the past two years. [The report is here](#). [[The Atlantic Cities, 2/5/14](#)]
- **Cambridge Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment** – The City is working on preparing a vulnerability assessment that will serve as the foundation for a climate change preparedness plan that will follow. The [project webpage](#) provides background information and documents from meetings. Interested people can send an email to jbolduc@cambridgema.gov to be placed on the project email list.
- **Cambridge Solar Map** – The [Cambridge Solar Tool](#) provides a web-based interactive tool to find out the potential for installing solar photovoltaic systems on rooftops in the city. The tool also evaluates the financial feasibility of installations and makes comparisons to alternative investments. The tool is designed by Modern Development Studio and based on the research of the [MIT Sustainable Design Lab](#) led by Dr. Christoph Reinhart. The City's [Cambridge Energy Alliance](#) program can assist interested property owners with finding installers and understanding the financial aspects.
- **Opt Out of Unwanted Mail** - Do you get unwanted mail from retailers, credit card companies, or cable/phone companies? You can opt out of mailings from over 4000 companies with Catalog Choice and help reduce waste. For example, you can stop getting weekly circulars from Global Direct, they will honor opt-out requests, so add them to “your choices”. Just register for FREE at <https://cambridge.catalogchoice.org> to create an account to start cleaning out your mailbox. To date, over 3700 Cambridge residents have signed up and opted out of nearly 25,000 different unwanted mailings!
- **Check Out Watt Meters at the Library** – Cambridge residents can borrow a “kill-a-watt” meter from the Main Public Library to measure how much electricity their home appliances and devices use. The meters come with a guide on how to use them and information on how to save energy. The meter kits and guide were developed by the [Sprouts of Hope](#) group based at the King Open School.
- **MBTA Rider Tools** – The MBTA has a number of [rider tools](#) that help riders to anticipate arrival times of buses, subways, and commuter trains and to receive alerts of delays. These tools can be used on iPhones, Android phones, text messages, emails, and the Web. There is also a trip planning tool.
- **NSTAR Green** – Residential and small business electric customers of NSTAR can opt to purchase renewable electricity generated by wind energy farms. To sign up for the service, visit the [NSTAR website](#).

- **Cambridge Energy Alliance** – The [Cambridge Energy Alliance](#), a program of the City of Cambridge Community Development Department helps residents, businesses, and organizations to obtain energy efficiency and renewable energy services. You can sign up for energy audits and ask questions through the energy advisor service.
 - **Sustainable Business Leader Program** - SBLP is a comprehensive certification program that supports local businesses in improving their environmental business practices and reducing their carbon footprint. For more information please visit the [SBLP website](#) or email to katrina@sbnboston.org.
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About the CPAC Bulletin:

The Climate Protection Action Committee (CPAC) is a City of Cambridge advisory body appointed by the City Manager to assist in the implementation of the Cambridge Climate Protection Plan. Please forward this bulletin to other interested people. Anyone who would like to be added to the email distribution list should contact John Bolduc at jbolduc@cambridgema.gov or 617-349-4628. For more information about Cambridge climate protection activities, see <http://www.cambridgema.gov/climate>. Recent issues of the CPAC Bulletin are posted on the webpage.