

Cambridge Climate Protection Action Committee

CPAC BULLETIN

May 2011

MEETING: The next meeting of the Climate Protection Action Committee is scheduled for Thursday, May 12, 6:00 pm at City Hall Annex, Second Floor. The agenda will be posted on the [CPAC webpage](#).

EVENTS & MEETINGS

- **Climate Change Week** - Cambridge Climate Change Week, endorsed by the City Council, begins May 13 and focuses on what we can do, as individuals and as a community, to prevent climate change. Events have been organized by citizens and community organizations. For details of each event, see the [Climate Change Week website](#).

FRIDAY, May 13

- **Film on water rights: "The Water Front"**, 5:45 PM at 3 Church Street, Harvard Square.
- **Cambridge Forum: "Is Green Consumption a Solution?"** with Heather Rogers, author of *Green Gone Wrong*, hosted by Dr. Timothy Weiskel, 7:30PM at First Parish Church, 1446 Mass. Ave.

SUNDAY, May 15

- **Green Homes Bike Tour**, 10AM-2:30 PM, starting at Danehy Park.
- **Watershed Walk at Alewife Reservation**, 10AM-12 PM at starting at kiosk behind Alewife MBTA station.
- **Mini Green Film Festival**, 5:30PM *Plan B*; 7:30 PM *Food, Inc.*; 9:30PM *Winged Migration*, at the Brattle Theatre.

MONDAY, May 16

Smarter Living - 2000 Watt Society Exhibit, all week at Cambridge Public Library – Main Branch.

TUESDAY, May 17

- **Smarter Living - Local Experts on Sustainable Living**, 6 PM at Cambridge Public Library – Main Branch.
- **Witnesses of Climate Change Tell Their Stories**, 7-9 PM at Harvard NW Science Bldg., 52 Oxford St. B-103.

THURSDAY, May 19

- **City Sprouts Open Garden**, 4:30-6:30 PM at Cambridgeport School, 89 Elm Street.
- **TROMP Traffic Tutorial on Traveling Responsibly**, 5-7 PM at Central Square.
- **HEET Vampire Hunt & Efficiency Ware Party**, 7-9 PM at First Church Congregational, 11 Garden Street.

FRIDAY, May 20

Fred Small Concert, 7:30 PM at First Parish Church, 1446 Mass. Ave.

SATURDAY, May 21

- **Urban Gardening Seminar**, 10-11:30 AM at Cambridge Public Library – Main Branch.

- **Climate Week “ActionFest” - a Green Fair**, 12-3:30 PM at Cambridge College, 1000 Mass. Ave.

Sponsors and participants include: Green Decade/Cambridge, Cambridge Community Foundation, First Parish Unitarian Universalist in Cambridge Climate Justice Task Force, Cambridge Climate Emergency Action Group, Greenport, Friends of Alewife Reservation, HEET, Cambridge Energy Alliance, TROMP, CREATE, GreenStreets Initiative, City Sprouts, Swissnex Boston, and more.

- **Smarter Living Expo** – May 17, 6:00 to 8:30 pm, Cambridge Public Library, Teen Lounge. Swiss and US building experts will address the challenges of sustainable buildings. Speakers include Heinrich Gugerli, Head of the Sustainable Building Group for the City of Zurich; Stephanie Horowitz, Principal of ZeroEnergy Design; Chin Lin of HMFH Architects; and Meredith Elbaum of Sasaki Associates. The events will feature the Smarter Living – 2000 Watt Society exhibit. For more info, contact Sabine Ledermann at sabine@swissnexboston.org or 617-876-3079, x120. Space is limited, so please register. Sponsored by Swissnex Boston.
- **MassINC Forum on 80% Challenge Report** – May 19, 5:00 to 6:30 pm, City Year Headquarters, 287 Columbus Avenue, Boston. For details about the forum and to register, see the MassINC website. See item about the report below.
- **Our Changing Climate Talk** – Sunday, May 22, 1:00 to 3:00 pm, Maynard Ecology Center, 650 Concord Ave. (basement of Neville Place). “Building a Citizen’s Movement to Address the Greatest Challenge of our Time - Our Changing Climate - and in the Process Building Community”, talk by Ileana Jones, a retired science teacher and a member of The Climate Project and the Citizens Climate Lobby. She will use slides to illustrate her talk and you will have an opportunity to take action on this most vital issue by participating in the Million Letter March. Please bring either your laptop or pen and paper. Please register for the event by emailing Elizabeth Wylde at friendsoffreshpond@yahoo.com or call 617-349-6489 and leave your name and phone number. Important information on parking will be given to you when you register.
- **May is GoGreen Month** – A month-long celebration of transportation options, recycling, and energy conservation. Events include Bike Week celebrations, commuter appreciation days, transportation fairs, the GoGreen Awards, Cambridge Energy Alliance events, and other activities. For a calendar events, click [here](#).
- **River Monitoring & Climate Change** – May 18 & 19, Doyle Conservation Center, Leominster. Conference presented by the Massachusetts Rivers Alliance in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game.
- **New England Energy Efficiency Conference & Expo** – May 19, Gillette Stadium, Foxborough. Hosted by NSTAR and National Grid. See the conference website. Fees apply.
- **2011 GoGreen Awards** – The 2011 GoGreen Awards will be presented at an event on Thursday, May 26, 8:30 AM to 10:00 AM, Swissnex Boston/Consulate of Switzerland, 420 Broadway. The City will present the annual awards recognizing action by businesses and organizations to make Cambridge a more sustainable community. Please RSVP to Rosalie Anders at randers@cambridgema.gov or 617-349-4604.
- **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.

NEWS

- **CEA Air Conditioner Swap Program** – The Cambridge Energy Alliance, with funding from the City's Energy Efficiency & Conservation Block Grant, is conducting a window air conditioner swap program for residents. Participants will receive a voucher for \$125 to be used to purchase an Energy Star rated window air conditioner from a participating Cambridge retailer in exchange for turning in an old, inefficient unit. For details on how to participate, see the [CEA website](#).
- **New 0% Commercial Efficiency Financing** – NSTAR is rolling out a new zero percent loan for energy efficiency projects at commercial properties, including 5+ unit multi-family buildings and non-profit properties. The loans will range in size between \$5,000 and \$100,000 for terms up to 7 years. Participating banks include East Cambridge Savings Bank, Eastern Bank, and Century Bank. For more information and the loan application form, see the [Mass Save website](#).
- **Massachusetts Attitudes About Climate Change** – An opinion survey of Massachusetts residents conducted by MassINC and sponsored by the Barr Foundation found that 77% of respondents believe that global warming has “probably been happening” and 59% of all respondents see it as being at least partially caused by human pollution. Only 42% of the state's residents say global warming will have very serious consequences for Massachusetts if left unaddressed. The 18 to 29 age group is more likely to believe global warming is appearing and caused by humans compared to the 60+ age group. African-American (56%) and Latino residents (69%) are more likely than white residents (40%) to believe global warming will be a very serious problem if left unaddressed. The MassINC report, titled [The 80 Percent Challenge: What Massachusetts must do to meet targets and make headway on climate change](#), contains many other findings. MassINC will hold a forum about the report on May 19, 5:00 to 6:30 pm at the City Year Headquarters, 287 Columbus Avenue, Boston. To register, click [here](#). [[MetroWest Daily News, 4/14/11](#)]
- **Pay Now or Pay Later** – The American Security Project issued a state by state assessment of the costs of climate change titled [Pay Now Pay Later](#). The report argues that the costs of inaction are greater than the costs of transforming to a clean energy economy. The assessment projects that climate change could cost Massachusetts \$9 billion in Gross Domestic Product and nearly 38,000 jobs between 2010 and 2050. The American Security Project is a bipartisan public policy and research organization focused on national security issues. The group's board is chaired by Gary Hart and includes retired military officers and political and business leaders.
- **State Organics Task Force** – The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection has established a task force on Building Organics Capacity to help develop recommendations for overcoming barriers to siting and development of additional anaerobic digestion, composting, and recycling capacity in the Commonwealth. Development of the capacity to process organics is necessary for communities like Cambridge to be able to consider services such as curbside collection of food waste. Background documents and meeting notes are available on the [Task Force webpage](#). The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for May 20, 9:30 am at DEP Headquarters, 1 Winter Street, Boston.

RESOURCES & IDEAS

- **Green Collar Jobs** – The [Green Collar Association](#) is a useful resource on green jobs, including a robust national green jobs listing that is sortable by state.
- **New Generation Energy Internships** – NGE is seeking summer interns to assist with community outreach and social media marketing. For internship descriptions and the application process, see the [NGE website](#).
- **Green Boston Blog** – Northeastern University professor Joan Fitzgerald, and author of Emerald Cities: Urban Sustainability & Economic Development, has created a [Boston Green blog](#) as part of her Emerald Cities Collaborative.

- **PlaNYC Update** – New York City has updated its comprehensive sustainability plan, [PlaNYC](#). The updated plan has 132 initiatives and over 400 milestones for December 31, 2013.
- **Foam Insulation Issues** - Issues about some insulation materials have arisen over their relative global warming contributions and toxicity. It's a complicated issue. [Environmental Building News](#) has posted an article about insulation and lifecycle contributions of greenhouse gas emissions, which is available without subscription. EBN has also posted a [global warming potential calculator tool](#) to help compare various insulation materials. The [US EPA](#) has issued an action plan on some foam insulation chemicals. Note that this does not necessarily mean they have decided the risks are significant, but the agency is investigating and evaluating. [[Environmental Building News, 5/4/11](#)].
- **2011 Boston Climate Progress Report** – The City of Boston has issued a [progress report](#) on its Climate Action Plan.
- **Solar Energy Increases Home Values** – Lawrence Berkeley Lab has issued a report titled [The Effects of Residential Photovoltaic Energy Systems on Home Sales Prices in California](#). The report, based on a large dataset, found strong evidence that California homes with PV systems have sold for a premium over comparable homes without PV systems. Most homes sales price premiums were near \$5.50 per watt (of PV system size) which corresponds to a homes sales price premium of about \$17,000 for a 3.1 kilowatt system. That premium is comparable to the investment the homeowners have made to install their PV system.
- **EPA Climate Science Education Site** – The US EPA has created a web-based [Student's Guide to Global Climate Change](#), which provides educational resources for students and teachers.
- **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** – Residents, businesses, and organizations can indicate their interest in the services of the [Cambridge Energy Alliance](#) by going to the website and registering. No obligation is implied. Those who register will receive an email in response with a telephone number to call to schedule an energy audit.
- **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.
- **Cambridge Businesses Composting** – Currently 62 businesses and organizations have signed up for the Department of Public Works commercial organics collection service. Restaurants, hotels, florists and others are diverting about 20 tons of food and other organic waste to composting daily, and saving money and reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the process. Interested businesses and organizations can contact Save that Stuff, the City's contractor, for more information at 617-241-9998 or adam@savethatstuff.com.
- **MCAN Low Carbon Living Program** – The [Massachusetts Climate Action Network](#) works with its local member organizations to develop teams of 5 to 8 households to assess their household carbon footprints

and undertake actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The program is based on the Low Carbon Diet workbook and involves 3 to 4 meetings.

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.