

Falmouth Recycling and Energy Advisory Committee (REAC)

“Energy News You Can Use” Volume 3, Issue 1 January 2015 – Falmouth, Maine

- With oil prices dropping, and many heating options now on the market, it can be difficult deciding what fuel or fuels to heat your home with. I just recently moved into a new home, and we heat with a combination of oil and wood pellets. How are you heating your home, and have you found savings in combined fuel options?
- Have you had an energy audit or assessment done through Efficiency Maine or independently? Drop us a line at reac@falmouthme.org and share your home energy story with us!
- Any ideas or suggestions on how Falmouth can be greener? More sustainable? Use less energy? We'd love to hear your thoughts, and ways in which *you* live sustainably, give us a shout!

The Second Annual 2015 Home Energy Fair is almost here!

Mark your calendars for the Second Annual 2015 Home Energy Fair! We have changed the location to the LEED certified Elementary School and will be having tours of the facility. Did you know that the building's heat and hot water demands come primarily from a wood boiler? How about that they collect rain water to flush their toilets? Make sure to get a tour and learn more!

This year we plan on having more energy vendors to provide plentiful information to help you tackle your home energy projects and get you on your way to reducing your heating costs and impact on the environment. Want to know more about solar power, geothermal, or maybe natural gas? We'll have experts to answer any and all of your questions at the Home Energy Fair on **Saturday, January 24th from 10:00am-3:00pm at the Elementary School.**

*Bring your family and friends for a chance to win door prizes from exhibitors and local businesses!
Admission is free, and children's entertainment will be provided!*



Thank you for joining us in 2014—we look forward to seeing you in 2015!

Single-Use Plastic Bag Update

REAC has prepared a report with a recommended policy regarding the use of single-use plastic bags for the Falmouth Town Council. The committee will report their findings and recommendations on Monday, January 12th. The Council is likely to vote on the matter in June of 2015. We have also created an online survey, which you can complete by [following this link](#).

Calendar of Local Green Events- January 2015

| Event | Date/Time/Location | Description |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Green Eggs Breakfast Forum— Green Building Case Study: KVCC Sustainable Agriculture Facility</p>  | <p>January 7 7:30-9:30am Maine Audubon Gisland Farm Education Center, 20 Gisland Farm Rd, Falmouth</p> | <p>Green Eggs is the U.S. Green Buildings Council—Maine Chapter’s monthly breakfast forum featuring speakers and topics relevant to green buildings. This forum will feature the new sustainable agriculture building at Kennebec Valley Community College, a product of a holistic and integrated design process. Architects, engineers and interior designers worked closely with facilities to raise the bar on what a community college building can be. Come out to learn more!</p> |
| <p>Solar Open House— St. Ansgar Church</p>  | <p>January 10 9:00-10:30am St. Ansgar Lutheran Church 515 Woodford St, Portland</p> | <p>Join ReVision at the St. Ansgar Church in Portland to get answers to questions such as: How much do these solar systems cost? What can I expect for my return on investment? What are the available incentives for solar energy systems? And how do they perform in the Northeast climate? Come talk to folks in the community who are saving with solar power and learn more about ReVision’s exclusive <i>Own Your Power</i> solar financing program!</p> |
| <p>Energy Savings: There are Options</p>  | <p>January 14 11:30am-1:00pm Southern New Hampshire University 10 Tibbetts Dr, Brunswick <i>Auditorium on the 2nd floor</i></p> | <p>This past winter was extremely challenging for energy markets. Record cold temperatures and natural gas withdrawals increased pressure on electricity prices. As a result, energy prices are more volatile than we have seen in several years. Some of Maine’s prominent energy market organizations have teamed up to explain the volatility of the New England market, forces affecting prices, and steps businesses can take to ensure long-term budget stability. All attendees will be entered to win a \$100 Power Basket! Follow this link to register for this event.</p> |

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| <p>74th Annual Agricultural Trade Show</p>  | <p>January 13—9:00am-5:00pm January 14—9:00am-8:00pm January 15—9:00am-3:00pm Augusta Civic Center 76 Community Center, Augusta</p> | <p>The 74th Annual Agricultural Trades shows is a three day event featuring a wide range of agricultural exhibitors, meetings, learning seminars and activities. The event is sponsored by the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conversation and Forestry, and really has something for everyone! Admission is free and open to the public. For full event details visit: www.getrealmaine.com</p> |
| <p>Maine's Energy Policy 2015</p>  | <p>January 21 7:30-10:30am Maple Hill Farm, 11 Inn Rd, Hallowell</p> | <p>Governor Paul LePage has placed energy cost reduction at the top of his agenda for his second term. He will also have the opportunity to appoint two new Commissioners to the Maine Public Utilities Commission. E2Tech has invited government and business leaders to discuss energy policy issues, potential legislation, including those proposals, programs, and actions that will be critical to Maine's energy future and investments in natural gas, renewable energy, and electricity transmission and distribution. Follow this link to register for the event.</p> |
| <p>Solar Open House—Falmouth!</p> | <p>January 24 9:00-10:30am 96 Ledgewood Dr, Falmouth</p> | <p>Join ReVision at Falmouth resident, Tyler Kidder's home. Tyler works as the Assistant Director for Sustainable Programs at USM, and has been working to reduce her carbon footprint in her own home. Tour the Kidder's home to learn more about their solar energy system and their air source heat pump! The home owner also did extensive insulating and air sealing in the roof and basement plus mechanical ventilation; all with a loan from Efficiency Maine. For more information on the open house, contact ReVision at (207)221-6342</p> |
| <p>Second Annual Falmouth Home Energy Fair!</p>  | <p>January 24 10:00am-3:00pm Falmouth Elementary School 58 Woodville Rd, Falmouth</p> | <p>REAC will be hosting this year's Energy Fair at the LEED certified Elementary School. A variety of heating professionals will be exhibiting and admission is free!</p> |

Unable to attend Falmouth's Home Energy Fair on January 24th? As part of a regional effort, Falmouth's Sustainability Coordinator is working with the Greater Portland Sustainability Council to coordinate two other fairs close by—one on February 28th, and the third on March 14th. Locations and dates to follow.

Energy News

Study: Clean energy to be \$1.9B industry in Maine by 2023—Pew Clean Energy Initiative, a nonprofit that aims to shape public policy through research in the areas of the environment, economic policy and health, hosted an event and panel discussion at UMaine in Orono in mid-December, to present findings of a report highlighting eight states in its “Clean Economy Rising” initiative. The report showcases Maine for having the highest renewable portfolio standard in the country, calling for 40% of the state’s local electricity supply to come from renewable sources by 2017. The report notes that Maine as of 2013 has 13 wind developments contributing to 431 megawatts of capacity, with another 1.3 gigawatts of capacity in various stages of planning. The report also states that Maine’s 1:8-scale VoltturnUS prototype became the first offshore floating wind turbine connected to an electric grid in the U.S; spending about a year floating off the coast of Castine. [Follow this link](#) to read the full article.

Maine lagging behind in solar energy—the Natural Resources Council of Maine said Maine installed less than 1MW of solar panels in the last quarter of 2014, while New Hampshire installed more than twice that amount. NRCM credits the lag to the lack of specific policies to reduce barriers and costs for homeowners or business investments. Officials said Maine is the only New England State without policies regarding solar panels. Good news is, in the 2014 session, the Maine legislature passed a bill to study the value of solar energy.

Global Consumption of ‘world’s dirtiest energy’ continues to rise—Global coal consumption rose 3 percent from 2012 to 2013. According to analysis, the world’s coal supply is getting “dirtier” as continued demand and lower prices create markets for coal with lower energy content. Emerging economies such as China and India are primary drivers of increasing coal consumption. Coal demand in China has almost tripled since 2000; in contrast, the United States has decreased its coal use while becoming increasingly reliant on domestic oil and natural gas production. Read more [here](#).

Green New Year’s Resolutions

Save money without spending a dime—unplug electronic equipment you aren’t using; turn off lights, lower your heat and wear a sweater. Try switching from chemical cleaners to homemade baking soda and vinegar combos—which can save you a lot of money each year.

Save money by investing in efficiency—sometimes you have to spend money to save, but you still don’t have to spend much, and will be saving a lot over time. Energy monitors can show you where your home is wasting energy, while a programmable thermostat can save as much as 15% on your energy bill.

Cut clutter—let’s admit it, we all have too much stuff! Unclutter and update your closet by hosting a clothing swap, and get rid of your junk mail—less waste, fewer landfills, and eventually less energy spent on the production of a whole lot of unnecessary junk.

Get involved—join a community supported agriculture program, and in exchange for a few hours work, or a few bucks per week, you’ll have fresh vegetables all summer. Volunteer with other groups—the key is matching your interests and talents with the right organizations.

Organize your office—filling documents electronically and using a scanner and paper shredder tandem means a huge drop in wasted paper. Whether in your work or home office, this is a perfect chance to go paperless.

Learn to recycle something new—computers, DVD players, TVs, CFLs and cell phones all can and should be recycled. You don’t have to go far! The Falmouth Transfer station takes all these items and many more.

Did you know....?

...that transportation is the second-largest source of CO₂ emissions, according to the EPA? Although the Obama administration recently finalized a 54.5 MPG fuel efficiency standard, the best zero-carbon option is to walk or bike. Try to make an effort to commute another way once a week. Ridesharing is not only better for the environment, but it's also nice to have company on your ride to work!

...that over 1 million plastic bags are consumed per minute worldwide? Considering the fact that the petroleum used to make 14 of those bags could drive a car for a mile; that is a lot of wasted energy and pollution. For 2015, break the habit if you haven't already, and make a serious effort to use only reusable shopping bags.

...that, according to the Clean Air Council, American office workers use about 500 disposable cups *per person* per year? If everyone invested in good quality reusable mug, this number could be reduced significantly.

...that 1.5 million barrels of oil are used each year to make plastic water bottles? Trade your bottled water habit for an at-home filtering pitcher; pair it with a reusable bottle made of glass, aluminum or recycled plastic. With bottled water no longer on your shopping list, you could save up to \$1,000 this year.

...that Maine is the most heavily forested state in the nation? Maine generates about 2 million kilowatt hours of electrical power from biomass. That's a quarter of the electricity generation in the state and the most per capita of any state.

...that Maine's onshore and offshore wind resource is capable of powering nearly 47 times the state's electricity needs? [Read more here.](#)

REAC'S Mission: The Town of Falmouth Energy and Recycling Advisory Committee advises the Falmouth Town Council on matters relating to the town's solid waste recycling program, energy efficiency and other related matters deemed appropriate by the Council. Duties shall include but not be limited to the following: (1) Endeavor to save local taxpayer dollars through increased energy-efficiency of municipal facilities and operations; (2) Prioritize the ad hoc Falmouth Green Ribbon Committee's 2010 recommendations that the Council wants to pursue; (3) Educate Falmouth residents and businesses about energy-efficient, waste-reducing, clean energy opportunities and choices; (4) Enhance and promote the town's recycling program; (5) Promote the use of clean, renewable energy sources in Falmouth's public and private facilities through education and outreach; (6) Work with surrounding communities on potential regional energy efficiency and clean energy strategies; (7) Monitor new developments and options in the fields of energy and waste management as technologies evolve and change; educate the public and advise the Council on same; (8) Research and report policies to accomplish the above goals and/or other related goals deemed appropriate by the Town Council.