






Falmouth Recycling and Energy Advisory Committee (REAC)

“Energy News You Can Use” Volume 5, Issue 12, December 2017 – Falmouth, Maine

- Winter is coming! Are you ready for the cold? How do you prepare your home for the winter months?
- 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 your Energy and Sustainability Coordinator a shout at kdarling@falmouthme.org with your suggestions!
- Have a question about home energy, or waste diversion? We’re happy to help find you answers.

Calendar of Local Green Events-December 2017

Event	Date/Time/Location	Description
Solar Powered Household Tour—Portland, ME 	December 9 9:00am Bove Residence 91 Penn Ave., Portland	By harvesting our region’s abundant solar resource, Mainers like the Boves are cutting their monthly fuel and electricity bills (and household carbon footprint) with rooftop solar panels, air source heat pumps, and a heat pump water heater. One of ReVision Energy’s solar design professionals will also be at this talk and can assist with any questions. For more information, contact 207-221-6342 or email Brittany at bangelo@revisionenergy.com
Late Fall Native Plant Seed Sowing Workshop 	December 9 9:30-11:30am Maine Audubon 20 Gilsland Farm Rd., Falmouth	Late Fall is seed sowing time in Maine! Most native plants propagate naturally outdoors over the winter, and starting native plants from seed is a fun, economical way to benefit your landscape. This workshop will focus on do-it-yourself seed propagation of native plants. Participants will leave with several seeded pots. For more information, click here .
Portland Greendrinks 	December 12 5:30-8:00pm TBD	Portland Greendrinks is a part of the international Greendrinks network—an informal, volunteer managed social networking group built around a common interest in the natural environment. It occurs on the second Tuesday of each month. Visit their website here to see where the December gathering will be!

<p>E2Tech Winter Networking Reception</p> 	<p>December 14 5:30-7:30pm Cloudport CoWorking Multispace, 63 Federal St., Portland</p>	<p>Join E2Tech and friends at their Annual Winter Networking Reception. There will be local food and drinks, and the opportunity to network with the area’s leading business, environmental, and energy professionals. For more information on this event, follow this link.</p>
<p>The Natural Resources Council of Maine’s Annual Polar Bear Dip n’ Dash</p>  <p>Natural Resources Council of Maine</p>	<p>December 31 9:00am East End Beach, Portland</p>	<p>Be bold in the cold in the East End for the Natural Resources Council of Maine’s Year End Celebration! Walk or run a 5k, plunge into the Atlantic Ocean, or both. Registration will open at 9:00am at the Back Cove parking lot for the 5k. The race will start at 11:00am, and the dip will be at noon at the East End Beach. For more information, follow this link.</p>

Energy News

State Seeks Input on Energy Goals—The Governor’s Energy office is building a roadmap on the 2015 state comprehensive energy plan and has the following objectives: achieve energy and cost savings in residential, commercial, industrial, and transportation sectors; reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions; and support the growth of a robust state and regional energy market and workforce. For more on this effort, read the [full article here](#).

In Windstorm’s Wake, CMP Feels Blow of Critics—A post-mortem of the extensive power outages from the October storm focuses intense scrutiny on the response by Maine Utilities. Rep. Seth Berry, D-Bowdoinham, who co-chairs the legislative committee that handles utility matters, said the storm underscored the need for independent study of CMP’s preparedness. For the full article, [click here](#).

Storm Posed Tough Questions About the Future—Utility regulators will decide on December 12 whether to open an inquiry into Emera Maine’s and CMP’s preparedness. Harry Lanphear, a spokesman for the agency, also said the PUC is waiting for CMP to file a mandatory report that details how much it spent restoring power. CMP says it was as ready as it could be for a storm that caused way more damage than expected. [Follow this link](#) for the full article.

Utility Regulators Reopening Closed Investigation into Scrapped Emera Project—Maine utility regulators plan to open an investigation into a stalled proposal by Emera Maine to build and own a “microgrid” electricity generation project in Hampden. The project is part of a \$12 million plan in Maine and Canada to explore the potential of ultra local, renewable energy supplies. Just why the regulators are revisiting what had been a closed case is, for the moment, a mystery. For the full story, [click here](#).

In Other News...

Portland-Based Cultivating Community gets Grant to Help Farmers—The nearly \$600,000 grant can be used for training, land access and other programs that support farming in Maine. Cultivating Community is the recipient of a Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. For the full story, [click here](#).

Green Consumer Tips & How-To's &

Here are 9 tips to make your Holiday season more sustainable:

1. **Buy local.** There are actually quite a bit of benefits to buying local food and our personal favorite is its smaller environmental footprint. Buying local can potentially cut down on having to purchase packaged, processed foods.
2. **Ditch the disposable dinnerware.** You probably don't know that disposable dinnerware contributes to about a 25 percent increase in household waste during the holidays!
3. **Make recycling easy for your extra family and friends.** If you have bins clearly marked for recyclables and compostables, point them out prior to the festivities.
4. **Send eco-friendly cards.** With so many greeting cards sent over the holiday season all the way into the New Year, try the green route with recyclable paper and cards.
5. **Buy a real tree.** About 33 million trees are sold for Christmas. Rather than send the tree to the land fill after the 25th, try to find a solid waste department that could use your tree for mulch.
6. **Reuse gift bags.** There might be some shame in re-gifting, but reusing a gift bag is acceptable. This helps reduce the amount of wrapping paper and eliminates excess.
7. **Limit your light time.** Christmas lights on your tree and house can use up a lot of energy. Create a lighting schedule so your lights are on during the dusk to bed time only. In the end, this will be more efficient and save you money. If you have trouble remembering to turn off your lights, there are timers available to do the clockwork.
8. **Give green gifts.** Encourage being eco-friendly by sharing the power to conserve with a gift that gives back. About 40 percent of battery sales are during the holiday season, so consider buying rechargeable batteries to reduce battery waste.
9. **Spread seasonal cheer with service.** If you're looking for a good project for the family, search for local opportunities to lend a hand

Did You Know...

... that the state of Maine has the fifth highest energy expenditures per person in the United States?

... that Maine is the most forested state in the nation, and that tree branches falling on local electric lines are the leading cause of power outages?

... that home clothes dryers put about 32 million metric tons of climate-changing pollution into our atmosphere annually?

... that Cultivating Community's farmer trainings have helped create 52 farm businesses in Maine? It estimates that the new \$597,252 grant will generate 30 more while supporting 12 beginning farmers and providing services for up to 490 others, according to a news release from U.S. Rep. Chellie Pingree.

...that Maine's national monument will likely draw almost 15,000 visitors by the end of the year? That is more than four times the number of people who visited during its abbreviated first season.

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.