

Falmouth Recycling and Energy Advisory Committee (REAC)



“Energy News You Can Use” Volume 5, Issue 2 February, 2017 – Falmouth, Maine

- 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 your Energy and Sustainability Coordinator a shout at kdarling@falmouthme.org with your suggestions!
- Have a question about home energy, or waste diversion? Drop us a line, we’re happy to help find you answers.



➤ **REAC is looking for one more member!**

Contact Ellen Planer, eplaner@falmouthme.org Town Clerk to get an application, or fill out the online board and committee volunteer application [here](#).

Calendar of Local Green Events-February, 2017

Event	Date/Time/Location	Description
Solar Open House, Falmouth 	February 4 9:00-10:30am Kidder Residence 96 Ledgewood Dr., Falmouth	Come join Falmouth resident, Tyler Kidder at her solar and heat pump open house on Saturday, February 4. Starting at 9:00am, there will be a brief presentation followed by Q&A and a tour of her systems. A ReVision Energy representative will be available to discuss current trends and incentives for solar power, including the emergence of community solar as well as heat pump technologies and how these can save you energy and money.
South Portland Home Energy Fair 	February 4 10:00am-3:00pm South Portland Community Center 21 Nelson Rd., South Portland	Did you miss the Falmouth Home Energy Fair, but are still interested in the event? Good news! Next up is South Portland. Learn about ways to use renewable energy, and make your home or business more energy efficient. Exhibitors will teach you about solar energy, heat pumps, pellet boilers, energy audits, efficiency measures, weatherization, financing options and more! For more information on the entire series of Home Energy Fairs, follow this link .

<p>Maine Environmental Sustainability Network (MESN) Monthly Networking Event</p> 	<p>February 8 8:00am-12:00pm Maine Audubon Center 20 Gilsland Farm Rd., Falmouth</p>	<p>MESN is Maine's preeminent network for sustainability professionals, green businesses and community leaders. Each month they hold a networking session in Falmouth that includes time to connect with colleagues and participate in panel discussions on current topics. This month's topic: <i>Environmental Sustainability in the Legislature—What's Ahead?</i> Panelists include: Pete Didisheim, Advocacy Director, Natural Resources Council of Maine; Jen Gray, Staff Attorney, Maine Audubon; and Beth Ahearn, Program Director, Maine Conservation Voters. For more information, follow this link.</p>
<p>Film Showing of the Documentary "Tapped"</p> 	<p>February 10 6:00-8:00pm Yarmouth High School 286 West Elm St., Yarmouth</p>	<p>Yarmouth High school students and Sierra Club student members are screening the documentary "Tapped". The film examines the role of the bottled water industry and its effects on our health, climate change, pollution, and our reliance on oil. The documentary is well structured and presents an overwhelming amount of evidence which will change the way anyone thinks about bottled and municipal water.</p>
<p>Playing Matchmaker—Aligning Energy Challenges with Compatible Policies</p> 	<p>February 16 8:00-10:00am Bangor Savings Bank 5 Senator Way, Augusta</p>	<p>What are the most important energy challenges facing the state of Maine? What problems are we trying to solve and how do policy makers craft solutions to address the most critical issues? Maine's largest end-use for energy, and biggest consumption of oil, is in the transportation sector. Yet, we have no coordinated policy on reducing oil use or developing alternative fuels, vehicles, or infrastructure programs. To read more, and to register for this event, follow this link.</p>
<p>Maine Home, Gardening & Remodeling Show</p> 	<p>February 18-19 Saturday—10:00am-5:00pm Sunday—10:00am-4:00pm Cross Insurance Arena 1 Civic Center Sq., Portland</p>	<p>There will be over 180 exhibitor booths showcasing the latest products and services for your home in areas such as building and remodeling, kitchens and bathrooms, outdoor living, green living, décor and more! Take advantage of the Seminar Series and learn about a variety of topics that can save you money and time. There will also be a cooking series featuring some of Maine's top chefs. For more information on this two day event, click here.</p>

<p>Portland's Sustainability Series: Leading Conversations of Maine's Changing Climate</p> 	<p>February 22 5:30-6:30pm Portland Public Library 5 Monument Sq., Portland</p>	<p>The Portland Sustainability Series presents a diversity of speakers to share different aspects of the work moving Maine to greater endurance and sustainability. This event will feature Paul Mayewski, Director of the UMaine Climate Change Institute, will describe how data is gathered on climate change, and how analysts have thought about this data and analyzed it to understand past, present, and future climate change impacts. For more information, follow this link.</p>
<p>Edible Suburban Landscaping</p>  <p>Scarborough High School Scarborough Public Schools</p>	<p>February 27 6:30-8:30pm Scarborough High School 11 Municipal Dr., Scarborough</p>	<p>Come learn how to create a landscape around your home that's not only aesthetically beautiful, but produces delicious fruits and vegetables too! Discuss the selection and planning process, and enjoy presentations showcasing images of formal to informal styles of landscaping, and the variety of species possible. Students will go home with seeds of several rare edible landscape plants. To read more on this event, click here.</p>

Energy News

Talking Trash: Portland Seeks Bids for Solid Waste Services—Bids on requests for proposals to privatize solid waste collection were scheduled to be opened Tuesday, Jan. 10, and on Jan. 18 bids to provide 25,000 wheeled and lidded carts to collect and store recyclable items were scheduled to be opened. To read the full article, [click here](#).

Taking Out (Less) Trash—the city of Biddeford is one step closer to enacting curbside collection of unused food waste as the city's Solid Waste Management commission (SWMC) is in the final stages of preparing a request for proposals for vendors to implement a curbside composting program. The City Council unanimously voted in October to approve a recommendation by the SWMC to pursue an exclusive agreement with a qualified vendor to collect, transport and compost food waste from residential properties within the city. To read more, [click here](#).

Augusta Could Generate Electricity using Methane from Hatch Hill Landfill—the City already captures, and burns off with a flare, methane gas produced at the landfill. But now, City officials are proposing to add electrical infrastructure that could lead to methane produced by decomposing garbage at Hatch Hill landfill being used to produce electricity. To read more, follow [this link](#).

National Groups Join legal Battle to Lift South Portland Tar Sands Band—National oil and business groups are worried a South Portland ban on loading crude oil onto ships will prompt other local governments to make rules that effectively block importation of oil harvested from abundant shale deposits in Canada. The controversial ordinance has caught the ire of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and various oil industry groups that last month filed a brief in support of a federal lawsuit seeking to strike down the city's Clear Skies Ordinance as a violation of the U.S. Constitution and other federal laws. For the full article, [click here](#).

Portland Food Council to Focus on Viability, Sustainability—Organizers say the new Portland Food Council is a holistic way for the city's food community to connect and make sure that people have access to enough good food and that food isn't wasted, while focusing on sustainability. The Council, which includes 13 members, evolved from

an initiative called Healthy and Sustainable Food Systems in 2012, with a goal of 50% of food in the city's schools being locally grown. Now, the Portland Food Council has broadened its scope and plans to "shape food policy (in order to) create resilience, sustainability and vibrancy in Portland's food system". To read more, [click here](#).

Portland-Area Metro had Record-Breaking Ridership in 2016—the bus service said it had 1.8 million riders last year, a 15 percent increase from 2015. That year marked the highest ridership in 30 years, according to Metro. Metro plans a new route to connect Portland to Westbrook and Gorham with a limited-stop express service in conjunction with a transit pass program for University of Southern Maine Students. Depending on grant funding, that service could be launched in 2018. Metro also plans to extend the Breez service to Brunswick. The Brunswick Town Council is expected to vote on the extension at a meeting next month. The service also plans to install 15 lighted bus stops across the region this year and start an electronic fare collection system in 2018.

New Community Solar Farm in Bar Harbor—after three years, Bar Harbor officials have unveiled a new community solar farm. The new solar panels were placed on top of buildings at public works. Panels directly on top of public works powers the whole public works operation including the water company, sewer company and the highway department. The second set of panels is on top of the pole barn next to public works. Those are owned by local businesses and residents who use the solar electricity to power their needs. For the full article and video, [click here](#).

Green Consumer Tips & How-To's

- Shorten showers—simply reducing that lingering time by a few minutes can save hundreds of gallons of water per month for a family of four.
- Increase ceiling insulation—if your ceiling is uninsulated or scantily insulated, consider increasing your insulating to up to R-38 to reduce heating costs by 5-25%
- Remove cover plates around electrical outlets and place foam outlet insulators around them before returning the cover plate. These small investments will pay off as long as you're in your home.
- Despite the freezing temperatures outside, the sun's rays will still bring some heat into your home. They're free, so take advantage of them—the added heat will reduce how much your furnace needs to run.

Did you know...?

...that showers account for 2/3 of your water heating costs? Cutting your showers in half will reduce your water heating costs by 33%

...that 7-12% of a home's heat loss occurs around windows and doors? Did you also know some weather-stripping should be replaced every few years because of wear?

...that the Maine Public Utilities Commission has issued a decision on customer net energy billing? The Commission approved revisions on January 31, 2017 to Chapter 313, the Customer Net Energy Billing Rule. Please follow [this link](#) for a detailed explanation of the major components of this decision made by the PUC.

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.