





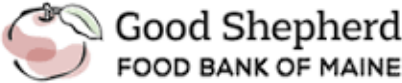



Falmouth Recycling and Energy Advisory Committee (REAC)




“Energy News You Can Use” Volume 4, Issue 2 February 2016 – 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? Drop us a line, we’re happy to help find you answers.

Calendar of Local Green Events- February 2016

Event	Date/Time/Location	Description
<p>Solar Energy in Maine—Where the Sun Does Shine!</p> 	<p>February 3 7:30-10:00am Maple Hill Farm 11 Inn Rd., Hallowell</p>	<p>Is Maine’s public policy delivering the appropriate economic and environmental return on investments in solar energy? The Maine Public Utilities Commission and the Maine Public Advocate are wrapping up stakeholder meetings intended to develop an alternative to net energy billing, with a report that many hope the legislature will use to address barriers to technologies and spur the solar market. There will be a networking breakfast as well as a panel discussion at this event.</p>
<p>South Portland Home & Business Energy Fair</p> 	<p>February 6 10:00am-3:00pm South Portland Community Center 21 Nelson Rd., South Portland</p> 	<p>The City of South Portland is partnering with the Greater Portland Sustainability Council to host a free home and business energy fair in early February. Up to 25 exhibitors will help home and business owners learn about options for solar energy, pellet boilers, heat pumps, insulations, energy audits, green home design, biofuels and rebate programs. Door prizes as well as children’s activities will be available to attendees. For more information, visit this site.</p>

<p>Feeding Maine: Growing Access to Good Food</p>  	<p>February 10 6:00pm Frontier 14 Maine St., Brunswick</p>	<p>In conjunction with a photo exhibit, Maine Farmland Trust and Good Shepard Food Bank will host a community discussion with local panelists about innovative projects that address hunger using local resources. Topics include: rich farmland, skilled farmers and community support. More than 200,000 Mainers are food insecure. The term encompasses hunger and scarcity, as well as a lack of access to food that's fresh and healthy. For more information, click here.</p>
<p>Craft Beer and Maine Agriculture</p>	<p>February 10 6:30-8:00pm Prince Memorial Library 266 Main St., Cumberland</p>	<p>Speaker Jason Perkins, brewmaster at Allagash Brewing Company, will offer insight on what is driving the rapid growth of craft beer brewing and what is the farming potential for local, brewable crops in Maine.</p>
<p>Nature & Birding Talks: Winter Ecology</p> 	<p>February 10 7:00-8:00pm Maine Audubon 20 Gilsland Farm Rd., Falmouth</p>	<p>Do you ever wonder what happens to Maine's wildlife during winter? Doug Hitchcox, staff naturalist for Maine Audubon, will explain the mystery of wildlife winter survival mechanisms and share some compelling stories.</p> <p>Contact Doug Hitchcox at (207)781-2330 x237 for more information.</p>
<p>Great Maine Outdoor Weekend</p> 	<p>February 12-14 <i>Event information on ETA website.</i></p>	<p>The Great Maine Outdoor Weekend returns again for February. The ET Twilight Walk will take place at the rear of their Southern Maine Health Care parking lot. Depending on trail conditions and weather, the group will walk, snowshoe and/or cross-country ski. Bring your own gear! This route includes a view of Beaver Pond. No flashlights or pets, please. For more information, follow this link.</p>
<p>The Maine Home & Remodeling Show</p> 	<p>February 13—10:00am-6:00pm February 14—10:00am-4:00pm Cross Insurance Arena</p>	<p>The 2016 Maine Home & Remodeling Show is the perfect place to get a head start on your home and yard improvement project. With over 180 exhibitors, you will have a chance to discover 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. For more information, click here.</p>

<p>Reading the Landscape: Local Environmental History Insights into Permaculture</p> 	<p>February 18 6:30-8:30pm The Resilience Hub 224 Anderson St., Portland</p>	<p>Learning to read our local landscapes is one of the foremost skills called for by the “observe and interact” permaculture design principle. At this potluck supper and guest lecture event, USM Professor Rob Sanford will share his learnings through lecture and images, about reading the rural landscape from the perspective of interpreting environmental history through visual (non-intrusive) examination. This session will help you see the world around you in a very different way! Although the event is free, space is limited so please honor your RSVP. Follow this link to register.</p>
<p>Gorham Home & Business Energy Fair</p>  	<p>February 27 10:00am-3:00pm Greater Falls Elementary School 73 Justice Way, Gorham</p>	<p>The town of Gorham is partnering with the Greater Portland Sustainability Council to host a free home and business energy fair in late February. Up to 25 exhibitors will help home and business owners learn about options for solar energy, pellet boilers, heat pumps, insulations, energy audits, green home design, biofuels and rebate programs. Door prizes as well as children’s activities will be available to attendees. For more information, visit this site.</p>

Energy News

CMP Under New Ownership in Iberdrola Merger—Central Maine Power has a new U.S. based parent company called Avangrid, but utility officials say its local customers will not see any difference in service. Avangrid merges Iberdrola’s U.S. companies, including CMP, electric utilities in New York and a wind-energy company called Iberdrola Renewables, with Connecticut-based United Illuminating, which operates electric utilities in Connecticut and gas companies in western Massachusetts. One industry observer says the merger is part of a larger trend among utilities that want to hedge against raising interest rates and energy market volatility by diversifying their assets. To read more, [click here](#).

Belfast Kicks Off the New Year with More Solar Power—the City of Belfast recently installed 396 photovoltaic solar panels on the site of their capped landfill. The new 122 kilowatt solar array on their landfill, combined with the 45.9 kilowatt solar array on their fire station installed last year, is expected to provide nearly twenty percent of the electricity load for the city’s 11 municipal buildings. To read more, follow [this link](#).

Federal Renewable Energy Tax Credits Extended 5 years—On December 15, 2015, the U.S. Congress approved an extension of the Residential Renewable tax credit, originally set to expire at the end of 2016, for another five years. The tax credits enable homeowners and small businesses to claim 30% of the cost of solar, small wind, fuel cell and geothermal systems against their taxes. Visit [The U.S. Department of Energy](#) for more information.

Green Consumer Tips & How-To's

Windows and Energy: No Panes, No Gains

Windows waste a lot of energy and money; even newer ones that you may think are really efficient. Experts say as much as 25% of your home's heat can escape through leaky windows. Here are simple things you can do to make your existing windows save energy and keep your home a little cozier:

- Install weather-stripping—storm doors and windows should have weather-stripping on all moveable joints
- Use stretch-seal, heat-shrink plastic sheeting—kits for windows are an inexpensive and easy way to seal warped or single-glazed windows
- Use window quilts or shutters—use these over your windows to keep the cold out in the winter and the heat out in the summer. An uninsulated drape can cut window heat loss by one-third. An insulated drape can reduce it by half.
- Remove, clean, and store window air conditioners—if it isn't possible to remove the air conditioner, wrap the unit with a thick layer of fiberglass insulation and seal it with plastic sheeting and duct tape to keep out moisture.
- Don't try to seal cracks in the glass—instead, replace the entire window pane.



Spread and share love

Buy local flowers, send e-cards, and donate to your local food pantry.

Did you know...?

...that ecomaine has an *eco-Excellence Award*? Nominate yourself, a local business or school for the 2016 eco-Excellence Award to recognize your community's shining green stars in environmental sustainability. [Click here](#) for nomination information; the deadline is February 12.

...In the average home, 75% of the electricity used to power home electronics is consumed while the products are turned off? The average desktop computer idles at 80 watts, while the average laptop idles at 20 watts. A Sony PlayStation 3 uses about 200 watts and nearly as much when idling. Idle power consumes more electricity than all the solar panels in America combined.

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.