

Falmouth Recycling and Energy Advisory Committee (REAC)




"Energy News You Can Use" Volume 5, Issue 3, March, 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? 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—March, 2017

<i>Event</i>	<i>Date/Time/Location</i>	<i>Description</i>
Environmental Challenges Facing Maine at the State & Federal Levels  Natural Resources Council of Maine	March 1 6:30-7:45pm Topsham Public Library 25 Foreside Rd., Topsham	Join NRCM Senior Director of Advocacy Pete Didisheim for a presentation about the most significant environmental issues under debate in the Maine Legislature, including solar energy, mining regulations, protection of Maine's forests, and food recovery and recycling bills. The presenter will also share his views on how the current political climate will affect Maine's environmental policies. Follow this link for more event information.
E2Tech Energy Policy Forum—(rescheduled date) 	March 3 8:00-11:00am Governor Hill Mansion 136 State St., Augusta	What are the most important energy challenges facing Maine? What problems are we trying to solve and how do policy makers craft solutions to address the most critical issues? What are our energy goals? Panelists will provide their thoughts on Maine's greatest energy challenges and ask attendees their potential policy solutions. Click here to register.
Saco Home Energy Fair 	March 4 10:00am-3:00pm Thornton Academy 438 Maine St., Saco March 18 10:00am-3:00pm Colby College, Waterville	Free to the public! 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 and more. Follow this link for more information.

<p>Rewilding: Wildlife Friendly Back Yards</p>  <p>Adult Education^{MAINE} <i>Learning for Work and Life</i></p>	<p>March 9 6:00-8:00pm Scarborough High School 11 Municipal Dr., Scarborough</p>	<p>Learn ways to transform your backyard to sustain wildlife using native plants, water elements, habitat restoration, and food sources. Native plants feed native birds either directly or indirectly by supporting insects that birds eat. Studies have shown that even a modest increase in the native plant cover on suburban properties greatly increases the diversity of insects, birds and other animals that use the landscape. Grab your neighbor and friends, and amplify your impact by creating essential wildlife corridors in your neighborhood. Visit Scarborough Adult Learning Center for more information and to register.</p>
<p>Sustaining Remote Places: The Business of Marine Renewable Energy</p>  <p>Gulf of Maine Research Institute <small>Science. Education. Community.</small></p>	<p>March 9 7:00-8:00pm Gulf of Maine Research Institute 350 Commercial St., Portland</p>	<p>This event is the second session of the Gulf of Maine Research Institute's (GMRI) Spring 2017 <i>Joan M. Kelly Sea State Lecture Series</i>, "Motion of the Ocean." Throughout the series, their speakers reflect on the many ways water moves—predictably and unpredictably—and how communities respond. This talk on March 9 will be delivered by President and CEO of Ocean Renewable Power Company, Chris Sauer. This is a free event, but register early; seating is limited. Follow this link for more information.</p>
<p>The New Forest Economy— Biobased Power, Products & Fuels</p>  <p>E2TECH GrowSmart MAINE</p>	<p>March 24 7:30-11:30am Maple Hill Farm 11 Inn Rd., Hallowell</p>	<p>Maine's forest products industry has been declining for years, forcing closure of six pulp and paper mills in the last three years, and reductions in workforce in others. E2Tech and GrowSmart Maine are bringing together key players in Maine's biomass/biofuels, byproducts, and community development worlds to discuss both policy and the economic development challenges and opportunities in Maine's new forest economy. For more on this event and to register follow this link.</p>
<p>2017 Maine Sustainability & Water Conference</p>  <p>1865 THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE</p>	<p>March 30 Augusta Civic Center 76 Community Dr., Augusta</p>	<p>The conference was launched in 1994 by the Senator George J. Mitchell Center at the University of Maine with the primary focus on Maine's central challenges—the future of its water resources. Since then, the conference has expanded its focus to encompass a wide range of sustainability challenges facing Maine, including issues related to climate change, energy futures, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, tourism, and municipal planning. For more information, and to register, please follow this link.</p>

Energy News

State's Largest Rooftop Solar Array in Hebron—the rooftop of Hebron Academy's Athletic Center now houses a 266.75 kilowatt solar energy system. The 970 solar electric panels are helping the Academy get closer to their goal of making the campus "net zero." Read the full article [here](#).

Maine Utility Saved 100 Million Gallons of Water in 2016—Maine Water says it pumped and treated 100 million fewer gallons of water in 2016 than it did in the previous year. The utility says it was able to provide the same level of service to customers despite pumping and treating less water. Read more by clicking [this link](#).

Vision for Bioenergy Parks Offers Lifeline to Maine's Forest Products Industry—a development group that has restarted two power plants hopes to transform Maine's old paper mill and biomass assets into a new wood-based economy. This vision is in the early stages, and it's too soon to know if organizers can assemble the mix of money, applied technology and business outreach needed to create such a grand transformation. But there are reasons for cautious optimism: investment in Maine is being sought, and similar projects have gained ground in Europe. Read the full article by [click here](#).

Maine's Coastal Waters are Unhealthy from Carbon, Acidity. Are Seaweed Gardens the Answer?—Seaweed cultivation has been promoted in recent years in Maine as a way to produce local nutritious food and to boost the coastal economy. Now, seaweed harvesters say their industry provides another benefit: environmental protection, in the form of improving water quality. To read the full article, [follow this link](#).

Maine Lawmaker Proposes Ban on Wind Turbines near Monhegan—a bill submitted by Senator Dana Dow of Damariscotta would prohibit a wind energy test area within 10 miles of the island. Read more by [clicking here](#).

Alabama Company Buys Closed Biomass Power Plant in Northern Maine—a shuttered, 24-megawatt power plant fueled by wood chips in Penobscot County is expected to come back online by the end of June, bringing an estimated 300 jobs to the area. Follow [this link](#) for the full article.

Portland, South Portland to Create Largest Municipal Solar Farms in State—the City Councils of Portland and South Portland unanimously approved contracts on February 22 with Portland-based ReVision Energy to create two of the state's largest municipal solar farms on each city's former landfill. For the full article, follow [this link](#).

Green Consumer Tips & How-To's

Weatherization Myths and Facts—Provided by Efficiency Maine

- **MYTH #1: The solution for ice dams is to call a roofer.**
FACT: Ice dams aren't a roofing problem. Ice dams form when attics are unintentionally heated by air leaks and/or insufficient insulation. This causes snow on the roof to melt, and freeze on the eaves, creating ice dams. You can reduce the risk of ice dams by sealing attic air leaks and adding insulation.
- **MYTH #2: The solution for frozen pipes is to call a plumber.**
FACT: Though a plumber can repair frozen pipes, weatherizing is the best way to avoid having them freeze in the first place.
- **MYTH #3: It's easy to tell where my home is losing energy.**
FACT: Many homeowners think the biggest air leaks are around windows and doors. While these leaks can be significant, most air leaks are hidden from view, passing through floors and ceilings, around chimneys, pipes, ductwork etc. A Participating Energy Advisor, using specialized equipment and a computer model, can identify and quantify the extent of your energy loss.

- **MYTH #4: A boiler without a storage tank is efficient because you're not storing hot water.**
FACT: With the exception of modern, on-demand water heaters, tankless water heating systems are the least efficient.
- **MYTH #5—The best way to deal with uncomfortably hot rooms is with an air conditioner.**
FACT: With professional weatherization you can often address the source of discomfort without using energy-draining air conditioners. Professional weatherization cannot only keep rooms warmer in the winter, but can also keep them cooler in the summer.
- **MYTH #6: Newer homes don't need weatherization.**
FACT: Houses built before June 2010 were not subject to any state energy efficiency building codes. Therefore, the age of a home is not necessarily a good indicator of energy efficiency.
- **MYTH #7: A dehumidifier is the best solution for everything from damp basement to mustiness.**
FACT: A Participating Energy Advisor can identify moisture sources and recommend way to reduce moisture in your home without using energy-draining dehumidifiers.
- **MYTH #8: Making your house too airtight is dangerous. Houses have to breathe.**
FACT: While houses do need fresh air, most homes have more air leaks than necessary. Even worse, incoming air usually enters homes through basements, garages, and crawl spaces, which can compromise air quality. Controlling the flow of air in your home can save energy and improve air quality, too.
- **MYTH #9: A humidifier is the best way to keep your home comfortable during a dry Maine winter.**
FACT: Air leakage is the most common cause of excessive dryness. When cold air enters the house and is heated, the relative humidity is significantly reduced. Air sealing can help keep your home at a comfortable humidity level, without the need for a humidifier.
- **MYTH #10: Historic home can't be weatherized.**
FACT: The important thing to remember is that a trusted professional makes all the difference. Efficiency Maine Participating Energy Advisory are certified by the Building Performance Institute (BPI) to identify energy-saving opportunities while still preserving the integrity and character-defining features of older homes.

Did you know...?

....that spider webs are often indicators of where there are airflow/drafts in basements or crawlspaces?

...that minimal air sealing can reduce heating costs in the typical Maine home by 15%? More aggressive air sealing can reduce heating needs even more.

...that since January of 2016, the Bigelow Laboratory for Marine Sciences in Boothbay has been studying the effect of kelp growth on surrounding carbon levels at the Ocean Approved seaweed farm off Great Chebeague Island in Casco Bay?

...that ecomaine has a School Recycling Grant program, and Falmouth Elementary was one of the 12 schools who received funding in 2017? They used the money to install a water bottle filling station. Way to go FES!

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.