The Local Climate

Cutting Carbon Pollution in Northeast Communities

Third Edition | November 17, 2005 | Clean Air-Cool Planet

IN THIS ISSUE:

WELCOME to the third edition of THE LOCAL CLIMATE - a special edition in which we are asking you to **tell us what's happening in your community**. Our community global warming solutions database is the only place to find out about local climate action throughout the Northeast; **please visit our website** (www.cleanair-coolplanet.org/for_communities/your_community/community_index.php) and update your community info. If you don't see your community, please add it so we can have you **ON THE MAP**!

Portland, ME, launches "roundtable" *and* starts new trend using renewable energy for holiday lights

On October 28, CA-CP helped Portland, Maine, launch its new Global Warming Roundtable, a city-wide group of stakeholders committed to lowering Portland's global warming pollution. The group plans to collaboratively develop a LOCAL ACTION PLAN that will serve as a roadmap for Portland's global warming efforts.

At this first meeting, several ideas for partnerships and projects emerged – including having Portland light its Holiday Tree at Monument Square with **GREEN POWER THIS HOLIDAY SEASON**. CA-CP, the Maine Energy Investment Corporation and *Native*Energy helped the City arrange the deal – so stay tuned for the greenest tree in Maine!

Want to learn how to get a green powered holiday tree in your community? Contact Bill Burtis, communications manager at CA-CP, at 603-422-6464, x105 or bburtis@cleanair-coolplanet.org for more information.

Stamford, CT, investigates greening downtown development

More than 90 people attended a forum in Stamford in October on high-performance buildings, co-organized by the Business Council of Fairfield County, the City of Stamford, and Clean Air-Cool Planet. Highlights of the event, **sponsored by UBS**, included the announcement by Stamford Mayor Dannel C. Malloy of a proposed new Energy Improvement District; Bob Fox from Cook + Fox Architect's stunning presentation on the Bank of America's LEED design and construction project in Manhattan; and a powerful panel of experts on residential and commercial development .

More at www.cleanair-coolplanet.org/Stamford.php.

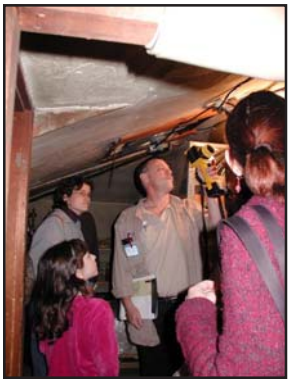
COOL PLANET
CASE STUDY: **Community Solutions to Global Warming**

THE KYOTO PROJECT: NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Achievement:
The **Newton Green Decade Coalition's Kyoto Project** educates Newton homeowners about energy savings and helps them create individual climate action plans. Energy audits have been completed by 75 households and 48 have created their own climate action plans through participation in the Project.

Community Profile:
Newton, Massachusetts, is a city of more than 80,000 people located eight miles outside of Boston. In 1999, Newton joined the Cities for Climate Protection campaign, and is now looking at energy efficiency as one means of meeting its greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets of 7 percent below 1990 levels by 2010, as stated in the Newton Energy Action Plan.

Project Overview:
The Kyoto Project facilitates professional energy audits of individual homes, ideally using a blower door and an infrared camera to detect air leaks and inefficiencies. Auditors provide recommendations for energy efficiency upgrades and help identify opportunities for energy and financial savings through utility incentives and rebates.



These auditors, provided by the local utility, can also recommend licensed contractors experienced with energy-saving renovations to Kyoto Project participants. After audits have been completed and recommendations implemented (at the discretion of the homeowner), Kyoto Project staff recommend that the auditor return with equipment to quantify the amount of energy saved. Often, rebates are available to offset the costs of the special tests used in this process, and/or it can be can be subsidized on a sliding fee scale.

The Kyoto Project educates the larger community as well. Staff members lead group workshops on energy audits in city-owned historic homes where attendees witness air leaks using the infrared camera and blower door, and learn ways to minimize inefficiencies. They present information on their programs to Newton residents at city events, farmers' markets, schools, churches, and through local newspapers, and have offered tours of solar-powered and energy-efficient homes as well. The Kyoto Project also lends Watt meters, books and other materials to Newton residents who want to improve their home's energy performance.

Learning the A-B-C's of energy savings.

Project Initiator & Partners:
The Kyoto Project was created in 2001 by the Newton Green Decade Coalition (GDC) Energy Committee to help the City of Newton meet its GHG commitments. The GDC is a community group that helps households, businesses and institutions in Newton improve their environmental performance and financial bottom-line.

This project is made possible with the help of several partnerships. The City of Newton has provided space to the GDC to conduct workshops. Several utilities were helpful in initiating the project as well, including NSTAR, which contributed $3,000; Keyspan, which donated contractors for some of the workshops; and CSG and Honeywell Utilities Solutions, who have also consulted for the project.

Costs & Financing

The Newton Green Decade is primarily staffed by volunteers. A generous GDC member funds one Kyoto Project staff person for 20 hours per week, and several volunteers have invested significantly in this project. NSTAR Electric and other utilities have supplied high-level auditors for several of the workshops. The project website is maintained by the Green Decade Coalition free of charge. The Kyoto Project will seek private foundation grants as well as funds from utilities and the Department of Energy Resources to expand its operations in coming years.

Benefits:

About 18 tons of global warming pollution per year have been eliminated so far through the Kyoto Project efforts - quantified in the dozen participant case studies completed to date by the project. Individual household savings from energy conservation have ranged from $450 to $3,000 annually, with efficiency gains ranging from 2 to 27 percent.

Challenges:

The cost of each audit is a huge barrier to the Kyoto Project's wide implementation: a quality home energy audit by a professional usually runs around $1,000. (Though utility home energy audits are free, they do not routinely include an infrared and blower door test recommended by the Kyoto Project.) Some of the Kyoto Project's participants have paid "out of pocket," while other audits have been free or partially subsidized.

Beyond the audits, efficiency renovations can have an up-front cost in the thousands of dollars, keeping them out of reach for many despite future savings on energy bills. What's more, many contractors don't have adequate experience in this field, and high-quality analysis, installation and follow-up can be difficult to come by.

LESSONS LEARNED IN THE KYOTO PROJECT

There is a clear lack of public knowledge about home energy audit availability and long-term energy savings potential.

A simple analysis of utility bills is not enough to motivate homeowners to adopt broad energy efficiency measures; the hard data obtained with initial blower door and infrared tests does more to help precipitate action.

Follow-through is quite important. "Post-" infrared and blower door tests are imperative to demonstrate the results and ensure quality control for the work completed.

Future priorities:

The Kyoto Project has begun exploring ways to work with the new Commissioner of Inspectional Services to offer information about weatherization options to remodeling permit-seekers in Newton. The project's long-term goal is to create a database of completed weatherization projects, the contractors that undertook them, and the measured energy savings of each project. This will create a framework for consumers to choose their projects and professionals based on performance.

CONTACT: To learn more go to http://www.greendecade.org/kyoto/index.html or contact Paul Eldrenkamp at paul@byggmeister.com, 617-527-7871.

Thanks to former CA-CP intern Jennifer Baldwin for developing this case study.

Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC) funds CA-CP program to boost renewables on MA state campuses

In conjunction with the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs State Sustainability Program, CA-CP received a generous grant from the MTC to boost renewable energy on several community and state college campuses throughout Massachusetts. We will be helping college administrators and facility directors create new clean energy installations and promote existing installations, working with educators, students and the surrounding communities. To learn more, contact Lauren Miller, new Campus Program Associate at CA-CP: (617) 259-2083.

MASSACHUSETTS TECHNOLOGY COLLABORATIVE

MTC also recently announced new financial incentives for large renewable installations, and began the second block of their Small Renewables rebate program. For more info on incentives in Massachusetts, visit www.masstech.org.

Mayor Menino unveils Boston City Hall's "green roof"

Boston city officials, Mayor Menino and architects consulting on the project were all present for a September ceremony showcasing the first phase of a new roof for Boston's City Hall: modular pre-grown gardens installed on the building's eigth and ninth floor terraces. More gardens and other aesthetic additions are also planned.

The $30,000 project, funded in part by the Boston Redevelopment Authority, Skanska USA, and the Kendall Foundation, is meant to be both an amenity for building inhabitants and a "living laboratory" for green roof development and maintenance.

Said Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino, "I am determined to make the City of Boston a leader in green technology. Not only will it keep us on the cutting edge; it also just makes good sense – for our budgets and for our environment. Today more than ever, we have to be creative and innovative when it comes to environmental issues and energy efficiency."

(Courtesy of the BRA: www.cityofboston.gov/bra/press/PressDisplay.asp?pressID=285)

NYC sets green standards for public buildings

On October 3, Mayor Bloomberg signed New York City Council bill "Intro 324A," mandating that municipal building projects receiving more than $10 million in city funds be built to "high performance" standards.

The bill sets green building standards for the construction and renovation of many building projects paid for with city capital funds. These standards will ensure that site planning, energy and water efficiency, the use of renewable energy, and conservation of materials and resources are incorporated into these projects. The city owns approximately 1,300 buildings and leases more than 12.8 million square feet of office space, and this legislation will affect approximately $12 billion in construction, including $5 billion in new schools, over the city's 10-year capital plan.

For more of the latest on local global warming leadership go to
www.cleanair-coolplanet.org/for_communities.

For more info & assistance in your community, please contact:

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