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## First NH Local Energy Solutions Conference Highlights Town and Community Progress



Senator Shaheen speaks to 300 at 1<sup>st</sup> Local Energy Committee Conference, June 20, 2009, in Concord, NH

CONCORD - The first annual Local Energy Solutions Conference Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, brought 300 people here from towns in all ten New Hampshire counties as well as Maine, Vermont, and Massachusetts.

Participants came to discuss how to reduce energy use through local and municipal actions while saving money and helping to fight climate change. The conference was organized by the NH Local Energy Committee Working Group, spearheaded by Clean Air-Cool Planet, the leading nonprofit finding and promoting solutions to climate change.

Participants learned about the intent of federal stimulus dollars directly from the state Office of Energy and Planning. Eric Steltzer, Energy Policy Analyst at OEP, used the conference to announce the agency's plans for ARRA funds which will include issuing a Request for Proposals for statewide inventories and energy planning services.

Steltzer's presentation was part of a plenary session featuring panelists representing state agencies, utilities and the public and nonprofit sector. Topics covered the complexities and specifics of funding opportunities for local level energy efficiency and renewable energy measures.

"The size of the audience on a June Saturday already filled with graduations, weddings, farmers markets and little league playoffs is evidence that people are serious about local solutions to local energy challenges," said Roger Stephenson, vice president for programs at Clean Air - Cool Planet.

"The conference was organized to help towns measure and manage their energy use. Not only did local energy committee volunteers attend, but also volunteers serving on their local budget committee; police officials; city councilors, selectmen and town employees attended."

Speakers and small-group sessions focused on how local government and Local Energy Committees can make efficient changes in buildings, transportation, and energy use. Professionals lent expertise to attendees about renewable energy, insulation; experienced volunteers spoke on forming and running an energy committee, taking an inventory of your town's energy use, and many other timely, practical tools and best practices.

Local energy committees shared both their successes and obstacles while gaining insights into suggested next steps toward reducing local energy consumption. The Local Energy Committees are largely the result of climate resolutions on the 2007 town-meeting warrants in New Hampshire.

The resolution campaign was organized by the Carbon Coalition, a program of Clean Air-Cool Planet. Dozens of committees, as well as the Carbon Coalition Local Energy Working Group organized to support them, have been formed since. The conference was a positive indication for the future of the local energy committee movement as well as the field of energy efficiency and renewable energy implementation, organizers noted.

Conference photos and presentations can be found at [carboncoalition.org/conference](http://carboncoalition.org/conference). For more information on the conference, please contact Julia Dundorf at [jdundorf@cleanair-coolplanet.org](mailto:jdundorf@cleanair-coolplanet.org) or (603) 422-6464 ext. 114.

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