



## **Network News**

Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network Newsletter April 2010 Vol 2, Issue 3

### **In This Issue**

Member News and Updates

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In The News

Earth Day

### **Network Meeting**

**Date:** Wed May 12, 2010

**Time:** 9:00-12:00

**Location:** Hampshire Co. Northampton Senior Center 67 Conz Street, Northampton, MA 01060

#### **Meeting Agenda:**

**9:00-** Network Business:

Logo

Skills Bank

Membership Drive

**10:00-** EPA Funded

Deliverables

Updates:

Indicators

Decision Support

Tool Art of

Sustainability **11:00-**

Formal Networking **11:30-**

Informal networking &

light lunch

**12:00-** Adjourn

### **Quick Links**

[Pioneer Valley Sustain. Network](#)

[Housing and Transportation Affordability Index](#)

[EPA Earth Day Video Contest](#)

[Transit Orientated Design Guide](#)

### **Area of Expertise**

One goal of the network is to promote collaborations between

### **Greetings!**

Happy Spring:

The Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network is sprouting. Grant funding is winding down, yet members have decided to contribute money, in addition to all their time, to create, use, and make useful, this Network of sustainability professionals in the Pioneer Valley.

Members have decided to remain connected with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, becoming a project of the PVPC's not for profit entity, the Pioneer Valley Regional Ventures Center Inc., and 'hiring' PVPC staff to continue to facilitate Network activities. Rick Taupier, formerly of the Environmental Institute (TEI) at UMASS and now in the Vice President's office, is moving on. Professor Erin Baker, Industrial Engineering, continues on as scientific advisor, Principal Investigator, and overseer of graduate students to produce deliverables in collaboration with PVPC. Staff work includes: organizing bi-monthly meetings; assuring utility of EPA funded deliverables: the Art of Sustainability, the Green Building decision support tool, and the Sustainability Indicators; promoting members to the wider community via the "Skills Bank"-work in process (see related article); promoting the Network to the public and sustainability professionals new to the region; recruiting and supporting members, and other work as directed.

Right now staff are working on a request for supplemental funds from the EPA program that launched the Network three years ago, Collaborative Science and Technology Network for Sustainability (CNS), to move work on the Indicators and the Decision support tool to a more broadly useful and usable stage.

- With respect to the Indicators we seek to:
  - Develop and implement the "Adopt an Indicator" program to assure ongoing

members and between members and our region to achieve our mission of creating a just and sustainable future for the Pioneer Valley region.

As part of that effort an Area of Expertise form is available on [our website](#). Please fill out the form and indicate your area of expertise in the sustainability field. This index of skills will be used to connect members to those who can benefit from your skills. You can define if you want your information available to the general public or just to members. Thanks for taking time to make our network stronger.

maintenance as well as use of the Pioneer Valley Sustainability Indicators;

- Create (or identify and adapt) a web-based "smart form" to display each of the 15 Pioneer Valley Sustainability Indicators;
- Transform the Pioneer Valley Sustainability Indicators into a sustainability assessment tool that will provoke consideration of the effect of proposed actions on the sustainability indicators and eventually display possible effects of proposed actions in the Pioneer Valley on the individual (or aggregate as appropriate) sustainability indicator(s).
- We also seek to develop and implement a web-based version of our green building decision support tool.

- Active Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network sub-committees:
  - Indicators: Jeff Rosen, Rick Kellart, Rick Taupier
  - Membership: Sue Bridge, Patrick Dufour, Forrest Bradford
  - Coordinating Committee: Eric Weiss, Lynn Benander, Jono Neiger, Sue Bridge, Patrick Dufour, Jeff Brown, Paul Lipke, Bill Baue, Joanne Sunshower

-Catherine

#### Member News and Updates

##### **Alteris Renewables partners with SunRun**

A new partnership cuts cost of installing solar on residential properties and locks in interest rates for a set period of time. The program, by taking out some of the risk of investment, may make solar a more attractive option for homeowners. Alteris Renewables, in partnership with SunRun is enabling homeowners to cut their electricity costs up to 50% of their current rates with a solar energy system installed for as little as \$3,000 down.

This program turns solar into a risk-free, budget-saver for homeowners. In addition to lowering their utility costs starting on day one, customers enjoy locked-in rates for 18 years. SunRun will maintain, repair, and insure the systems on homeowners properties. This allows better service and means that even those without technical knowledge can benefit from solar.

"With the SunRun solar service, we get to lock in a really low electricity rate for the next 18 years," said Teige Davidson, a homeowner in Arlington MA who recently signed-up with Alteris and SunRun. "Our family thinks this is a great opportunity to do our part to save the environment, and save money at the same time." Lynn Jurich, president of SunRun said "We're proud to be continuing our relationship with Alteris and helping homeowners in Massachusetts take control of their electricity costs and reduce their household pollution." More information about the program can be found on the website, [www.AlterisInc.com](http://www.AlterisInc.com)

##### **Cowls to Remain Open, But Shut Down Manufacturing Division in 2010**

Future of business will focus on sustainable forestry and retail operations. Citing diminished customer demand for custom sawn lumber, W. D. Cowls, Inc., will close its sawmill, one of its four divisions, effective in January 2010. Future focus of the 9th generation family business will be on W. D. Cowls' timberland & real estate management divisions; and on Cowls Building Supply's

retail lumberyard and design showroom.

"The reason why our family business has survived nine generations is because we have innovated and evolved in response to changing markets" said Evan Jones, who manages Cows Building Supply. "In 2009, we expanded our flooring department and grew our window and door sales team in response to market opportunities. These initiatives have been successful. However, lack of customer demand for sawmill products requires us to make a tough decision about our long time unprofitable manufacturing division at W. D. Cows."

In 1980 Paul Jones built Cows Building Supply - the thriving building materials store. When the retail store opened, over 70% of what the sawmill produced was sold at the store. Today only 20% goes there. "Customers of Cows Building Supply shouldn't notice any change in our product availability," says Evan. "The sawmill is no longer in the back yard, but we have relationships with several nearby mills that can seamlessly custom cut timbers and lumber for all the orders we receive." Cows design showroom, the Building Supply sales, and real estate management divisions are to remain open.

### **Environmental Justice/LandUse Photo Tour of Springfield**

Springfield Institute recently held a lecture at WNEC Law School. Aron Goldman talked about environmental justice and land use with Professor [Ben Rajotte's](#) students at Western New England

College School of Law in early March. Van Jones (Obama's exiled green jobs czar) set the stage with [this excellent video](#). Aron Goldman followed up with a guided photo-tour of Springfield's most dramatic built environment equity issues. [Download the slideshow here \(PDF, 11.5 MB\)](#).

### **Co-op Power News Announcements:**

#### **NORTHEAST BIODIESEL - INVESTORS RELEASE \$100,000**

As Co-op Power prepares for launch of Northeast Biodiesel, the investors have decided to release \$100,000 of their escrowed funds to pay for the final research and documentation required to secure a loan for the Greenfield plant. Co-op Power members have already released \$135,000. We're working for a Fall 2010 launch.

#### **NEW ENERGY EFFICIENCY CREW**

Co-op Power launches new energy efficiency services under the leadership of Energy Efficiency Program Director, Paul Schmidt. Paul has hired two graduates from the Roots Up program and a skilled crew member. They are very busy insulating and air sealing homes throughout the Pioneer Valley. He's working with a Co-op Power group in Boston to help them get a crew on the road.

#### **GREEN JOB TRAINING**

Co-op Power has been working with Nuestras Raices' Roots Up training program in Holyoke and the Brick House Green Jobs Training Program in Turners Falls. In the first two weeks 16 amazing students gathered to hone their skills and prepare for energy efficiency and solar hot water installation jobs. Trainers from Co-op Power and Nuestras Raices met with a new group of 12 Roots Up students in Holyoke. We began talking about the challenges facing our society and the wide range of options we have in how to respond.

### **PVGrows Infrastructure Finance Project for Food System Enterprises**

Pioneer

Valley Grows is offering new loan options and creative financing opportunities for enterprises that help bring more local food to markets and fill food system infrastructure gaps in the Pioneer Valley.

PVGrows is seeking committed entrepreneurs whose well-researched plans provide solutions for handling, processing, or distributing local agricultural products, and improve sales for farm-related businesses. Plans can be in various stages of completion: you do not need to have a complete business plan to receive consideration for financing.

- Are you handling, processing, marketing, or distributing local agricultural products?
- Does your business activity improve sales for farm-related businesses?
- Are you looking for financing?

Small and mid-sized enterprises, particularly food-based businesses, face unique challenges in identifying suitable sources of capital. PVGrows is launching a financing project designed to provide these businesses between \$10,000 and \$500,000 in financing opportunities. Find [more information and get connected](#).

### **Springfield Becomes one of First Municipalities to Adopt Stretch Code**

The city of Springfield voted on March 1<sup>st</sup> to adopt an amendment to their Building Code that will increase energy efficiency. The so called Stretch Code amendment will require new construction and extensive renovations to include energy efficiency measures that surpass the current building code. It is expected the new methods will save homeowners money over the long run in the form of lowered heating and cooling bills.

Adoption of the Stretch code is one of Five Criteria that needs to be met for a municipality to be deemed a Green Community by the State Department of Energy Resources. More information about the Stretch Code can be found at:

## Status of Deliverables

### **Deliverables Update on Sustainability Indicators**

By Sandhya Sundararagavan with Dr. Erin Baker and Rick Taupier  
University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Sustainability indicators are tools that assist decision makers in proceeding towards sustainability. In conjunction with the Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network, we have developed a set of sustainability indicators. The indicators are currently classified under 6 fundamental objectives: to maximize ecological health, cultural vitality, equity, social connectivity, and resource efficiency. The indicators cover the Pioneer Valley region, including Hampden, Hampshire and Franklin counties. Under the guidance of Professor Erin Baker and Rick Taupier from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, I successfully obtained data for more than 75 % of indicators. This data will provide a baseline from which progress on sustainability can be measured by the community.

In our report, we have briefly explained the significance of each indicator, discussed the corresponding attributes that were measured and the source of the data obtained. We depict our data graphically at the county level for the Pioneer Valley region. Finally, we depict key data for each of these indicators and propose that key data could be considered as a baseline data for future research. The initial representation of the indicators can be found at:

<http://www-unix.ecs.umass.edu/~sundararagav/index.html>

### **Deliverables Update on the Decision Support Tool**

By Rose Zdybel & Erin Baker

Ongoing work involves including in the Decision Tool uncertainty associated with and the interrelationship of heating oil, natural gas, and electricity prices. We have developed a tentative model for the prices and are working on fine-tuning the model. The next step is to implement the model into the decision tool. We are planning on presenting the results at the May meeting.

### **Deliverables Update on Logo Designs**

Three options developed by Boysen Hodges were presented at the March 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. Members voted to have Boysen Hodges revamp two of the designs. We gave specific feedback about color, shape, size and font. A final presentation and vote on the new PVSN logo will take place at the May 2010 meeting.

### **Members' Area of Expertise**

Our goal is to promote collaborations between members and between members and our region and to achieve our mission of creating a just and sustainable future for the Pioneer Valley region.

As part of the effort to promote collaboration, an Area of Expertise form is available on [our website](#). Please fill out the form and indicate your area of expertise in the sustainability field. This index of skills will be used to connect members to those who can benefit from your skills. You can define if you want your information available to the general public or just to members. Thanks for taking time to make our network stronger.



### **Art of Sustainability**

Forrest Bradford offered to see if the art installation could move to a public space in Agawam.

We need communities to host the show. If you would like to host the Art of Sustainability winner, "A Table Set for Forever" please contact Catherine at [cratte@pvpc.org](mailto:cratte@pvpc.org) or call 413/781-6045. We will bring the art to you and set it up.

*Artist Jane Wegscheider*

## **Sustainability Events in the Pioneer Valley**

### **EGG LAYING HEN WORKSHOP**

The first Homes for Hens Workshop is being offered by Dave Tepfer of Simple Gifts Farm Saturday, April 3 from 10:00am-1:00pm at Simple Gifts & NACF Farm in North Amherst 1089 Pleasant St. Registration is required. For more information and to sign-up please visit the website at: <http://www.justfoodnow.org/hens.html>

This community-oriented program is sponsored by NACF, SGF and Amherst Farmer's Supply. What better way to eat local than to produce healthy food on your own property!

## **WHAT IS A RAIN GARDEN?**

Tuesday, April 6th from 6:30 - 8:30 PM at the Greenfield Public Library

Come see the Greenfield Public Library's rain garden, and learn how you can beautify your yard or community, while attracting birds and butterflies, restoring streams, ponds, and water supplies, and reducing human health risks. Ed Himlan, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Watershed Coalition, will present a slideshow on how to build a rain garden. Refreshments will be served.

Nancy Hazard, co-chair of the Greening Greenfield Energy Committee, and organizer of the event said "Rain gardens have captured my imagination! They not only beautify our neighborhoods, but also help us rejuvenate the Earth." Rain gardens rejuvenate the Earth and reduce health risks by cleansing storm water runoff. They collect rain water from our roofs, lawns, streets and parking lots, and replenish the ground water that keeps streams flowing during dry seasons. In the process the garden removes harmful pollution from our cars, roofs or lawns. State and federal environmental agencies agree that stormwater runoff is the leading cause for damages to streams, ponds and water supplies. Marie-Francoise Walk, Chair of the Deerfield River Watershed Association said that "Stormwater is the number one water quality problem in the Deerfield River watershed, particularly in Greenfield."

The workshop is organized by Greening Greenfield, and co-sponsored by the Connecticut River Watershed Council, the Deerfield River Watershed Association, the Greenfield Garden Club, the Greenfield Planning Board, the Greenfield Public Library, and the Western Massachusetts Master Gardener Association. For more information go to [www.GreeningGreenfield.org](http://www.GreeningGreenfield.org)

## **CLIMATE WISE WOMEN:**

A Conversation on Global Women's Response to Climate Change on Monday, April 12 at 7:00 PM in Weinstein Auditorium, Wright Hall at Smith College in Northampton, MA.

Four Climate Wise Women from the South Pacific Islands, Uganda and Biloxi, Mississippi will begin a 30-city, 18-country speaking tour in the Americas. These community activists can't wait for politicians and governmental negotiators to get it right on climate change. They want straight talk on what climate change is doing to women, children, families and communities around the world. This dynamic foursome will be presented in public conversation with high-profile academics, scientists, artists, religious leaders, urban planners, rural agriculture experts, government officials and local activists to share their experiences and put forward an agenda that can be acted on now to guarantee a safe, just and sustainable future for everyone on the planet.

## **SPRING 2010 ARCHITECTURE TROUGH FILM SERIES:**

How do we experience the built environment? Is architecture playing a significant role in our lives? Can film further inform our understanding of architecture?

Join us for a stimulating evening of film and conversation. Each screening will be followed by a discussion with a guest speaker. Both films will be held at Pruyne Lecture Hall within Fayerweather Hall at Amherst College at 6:30PM.

April 12th. Making the Modern. Directed by Wim Wenders. Discussion led by Kevin Chrobak, AIA

May 3rd Spaces: The Architecture of Paul Rudolph. Directed by Bob Eisenhardt. Discussion led by Prof. Timothy Rohan, PhD

## **NESEA SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHOPS**

NESEA's Sustainability Workshop series is aimed at serving professionals and building their knowledge with in-depth, professionally accredited workshops on a wide range of critical topics. NESEA is committed to advancing three core elements: sustainable solutions, proven results and cutting-edge development in the field. Each workshop is AIA accredited. A full day workshop provides 7 continuing education units and a half day workshop provides 3 continuing education units. More information at: <http://www.nesea.org/sustainabilityworkshops/sustainabilityworkshop/>  
Events include:

April 15 - Brockton, MA, Conference Center at Massasoit

Residential Retrofits for Energy Efficiency and Sustainability, Larry Harmon.

April 22 - Manchester, NH, Public Service of New Hampshire, 5 Rivers Auditorium

Introduction to Building Science Thermography, Michael A. Browne

May 15 - Providence, RI, Rhode Island School of Design, Center for Integrative (CIT), 1st floor

Introduction to Passive House, Mike Duclos and Paul Eldrenkamp

June 9 - Manchester, NH, Public Service of New Hampshire, 5 Rivers Auditorium

Scorekeeping; Benchmarking and Monitoring Energy Performance, Mike Duclos and

Paul Eldrenkamp

June 17 - Atlantic City, NJ, Atlantic Cape Community College

Scorekeeping; Benchmarking and Monitoring Energy Performance, Mike Duclos and Paul Eldrenkamp

## **BIKE COMMUTE WEEK**

The

11TH annual Bike Commute Week is May 15th-23rd. Pioneer Valley cities and towns, from Greenfield to Springfield are hosting fun events for bicyclists such as free breakfasts, bike tours, lectures, public music, community bike rides, and bike-themed film screenings. Some events will be giving away prizes. Find the most up-to-date listing of events at [www.BayStateBikeWeek.com](http://www.BayStateBikeWeek.com). The week long program encourages people to try bicycling, whether commuting to work or school, or just running errands around town. Bicycling is a fun, efficient way to reduce your carbon footprint and get healthy. Bike Commute Week is a collaboration of MassBike, Mass DOT, PVPC, and community volunteer

## **TOWER SQUARE EXPO SEEKING VENDORS**

Tower Square will be sponsoring

the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Green Expo Information Fair on Thursday, May 27 from 11am - 2pm in the Tower Square building at 1500 Main Street in Springfield. This event is FREE to both the vendors and the visitors. Last year we had 25 vendors that filled the street level of the retail area of Tower Square. This year we would like to expand it to include the upstairs portion of the retail area as well.

We are just in the planning stages for this event, which primarily consists of searching for vendors who have a solid environmental message and/or product/service that they would like to share with the downtown office community as well as local residents. Any potential vendors should contact Annette Scheidecker, Head of Marketing Department, at 413 733-2171 or [ascheidecker@towersquare.net](mailto:ascheidecker@towersquare.net). Deadline to register is May 17<sup>th</sup>.

## **TOGETHER ON THE LAND: Options for Ecological Living in Community**

A Multi-site Guided Tour. Join us, Saturday June 12th, 2010, from 9am-5pm, for a tour of ecological living options in Franklin County. We'll visit homes and farms that have tested different models for community living, such as community land trusts, coops, cohousing, and more. Meet other people interested in community building and see new places!

Throughout the Pioneer Valley there are numerous models for how to create communities that balance affordability, ecology and community connections. No one model has all the answers - but they all offer tremendous insights and for some, may be the answer you were looking for today. This tour focuses on concrete examples of sustainable community living right here in Franklin County. Tour stops will include: Cooperatively owned homes, Homes on community land trust land, A small co-housing development, A working farm utilizing the state APR program, "In-town" green housing, New construction & existing neighborhoods, Intentional community.

The goal of this tour is to connect people with organizations and individuals working towards sustainable community living, offer real-world examples of community models, and explain basic information about how they work. We hope you can come! PreRegistration is required. Find out more and register online at [VCLT.ORG](http://VCLT.ORG). Co-sponsored by Cooperative Development Institute, Equity Trust, Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust & Valley Community Land Trust

## **SUSTAINABLE ENERGY SUMMIT**

Please save Saturday, June 19th for this year's Sustainable Energy Summit. Co-op Power is planning a low key, fun family event this year with lots of hands-on activities and real conversation about what we've learned this year about sustainability and justice and what we hope to learn in the coming year - a real People's Summit. The Summit will be on the shore of the Connecticut River in Holyoke at the Nuestras Raices 30 acre farm. We've ordered beautiful weather, by the way, to go along with the beautiful location! The annual meeting will likely be that weekend as well.

## **CISA TASTE THE VIEW GALA**

Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA) is looking for volunteers to help organize our 2010 fundraising gala, Taste the View, taking place on September 24 at the Three County Fairgrounds. Last year more than 400 people attended. A lot of volunteer involvement is needed to make this event happen. From helping with onsite logistics to coordinating food/vendors to organizing the Silent Auction, there are many large and small opportunities to get involved.

If you would like to know more or would like to attend the volunteer kickoff on Thursday, April 1, contact Michele Marotta, Event Contractor, at [micheleamarotta@hotmail.com](mailto:micheleamarotta@hotmail.com) or 413-587-3902. <http://www.buylocalfood.org/upload/content/TasteVolunteerOpps.pdf>

## **NESEA GREEN BUILDING OPEN HOUSE**

GBOH program is now open for 2010 registration. The daylong event to be held in locations throughout the Pioneer Valley and New England will be October 2, 2010. NESEA works with over 70 local organizers and member businesses to market the event, increase participation and promote our members services. Many of the sites were designed and/or built by NESEA professional members. Over 16,000 people toured over 500 sites in October 2009. For more information please see: <http://www.nesea.org/greenbuildings/aboutgboh/>

[Calendar of Sustainability Events Happening in the Region](http://www.earththrive.com/calendar/)  
<http://www.earththrive.com/calendar/>

In doing research for the newsletter I often run across interesting websites/new technologies/ resources that might be useful (or just entertaining) to further our work toward sustainability.

If you have any links you would like to share with the network email me at [bmarkey@pvpc.org](mailto:bmarkey@pvpc.org)

In The News

#### **National**

##### **Sponsor Transit Oriented Development Guide**

#### **HUD and FTA**

The

*Mixed Income Transit-Oriented Development Action Guide* is an online tool designed to help local jurisdictions and planners develop strategies to create mixed income transit oriented development (MITOD) around planned transit stations. This interactive site was developed by the Center for Transit Oriented Development in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The Action Guide walks users through three critical data gathering and analysis components of plan development: Existing Conditions Analysis, MITOD Strategies Analysis, and MITOD Opportunities Analysis. These three areas of analysis are composed of questions-to be answered by the planner-that span several subjects: demographics, housing, real estate markets, land capacity, and neighborhood stability. Each question highlights key information that will be used to help local jurisdictions select and direct policy tools to achieve their MITOD goals. The Action Guide is available at: <http://www.mitod.org>

##### **City of Baltimore's Announces Innovative Effort to Reduce Household Energy**

**Use.** The Baltimore Neighborhood Energy Challenge (BNEC) is a pilot program of the Baltimore Office of Sustainability and the Baltimore Community Foundation. The program is a great way to get residents informed about and involved with the city's goal of reducing energy use and GHG emissions. It is a new tool that may be useful for other municipalities around the country and within the Pioneer Valley to model.

In partnership with eight Baltimore neighborhoods selected for their diversity, they are working with community groups, neighborhood volunteers (Neighborhood Energy Captains), and residents to spread knowledge, resources, and motivation to help our communities save energy and money.

Residents who live in one of the target neighborhoods, can participate by taking a pledge and joining the challenge getting a free pledge kit with some energy-saving tools, learn how to save energy, connect with neighbors, access Baltimore Gas and Electric data to understand energy use, plan home energy projects, and connect to local contractors, programs, and services that can help save energy. More information can be found at <https://baltimoreenergychallenge.org/systems/energy>

##### **Center for Neighborhood Technology Links Housing and Transportation Affordability**

The Center for Neighborhood Technology unveiled a new online tool that allows consumers see the true cost of their housing and transportation options. Housing Costs factored as a percent of income has widely been utilized as a measure of affordability. Traditionally, a home is considered affordable when the costs consume no more than 30% of household income. H+T has been developed as a more complete measure of affordability beyond the standard method of assessing only Housing Costs. By taking into account both the cost of housing as well as the cost of transportation associated with the location of the home, H+T provides a more complete understanding of affordability. Dividing these costs by Representative regional incomes illustrates the cost burden placed on a typical household by H+T expenses. CNT has defined an affordable range for H+T as the combined costs consuming no more than 45% of income. Learn more and see what housing and transportation cost are in the Pioneer Valley at: <http://www.htaindex.org/>

##### **Regional Sustainability Funding Announced**

Most of you are aware of the federal governments' initiative to enhance regional sustainability via competitive funding to facilitate regional sustainability planning and implementation focused on integrating housing with transportation, reducing energy use and resulting GHG emissions and protecting the environment. Check this link often-anticipate call for applications in the coming weeks.

[http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/program\\_offices/sustainable\\_housing\\_communities/grant\\_program](http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/program_offices/sustainable_housing_communities/grant_program)

PVPC plans to collaborate with the Capitol Region Council of Governments (Hartford CT) to apply for a portion of these competitive funds.

##### **Participate in EPA's IT'S MY ENVIRONMENT video**

## contest

Show your commitment to a clean and healthy environment by joining in the "It's My Environment" video project! Just take a 10-15 second video showing a simple action to protect the environment, read a sign saying "It's My Environment," and pass it across the screen from the viewer's left to right.

We'll pick several to include in a compilation video we'll release on Earth Day (April 22). It'll look like the sign is traveling from clip to clip, forming a human chain around the globe. Because environmental protection is for everyone - people of all ages, races, languages, economic status, or geographic location! Detailed instructions are at <http://www.epa.gov/earthday/video>

## Massachusetts Efficiency Projects

## Trailblazing Energy

As part of the Patrick-Murray Administration's Massachusetts Recovery Plan, Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Ian Bowles announced that 11 projects, including four in the Pioneer Valley will share \$16.25 million in federal stimulus funding to demonstrate innovative ways of achieving dramatic energy savings in buildings across the Commonwealth. "These projects promise to deliver energy savings beyond what Massachusetts has seen before - cutting long-term operating costs while providing models for other energy efficiency efforts across the Commonwealth and the nation."

Last fall the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) released a Request for Responses (RFR) for \$15 million in Stimulus funding. The 11 selected projects won approval based on their ability to create jobs, leverage cost sharing, and achieve scalable and dramatic improvements in the energy efficiency of buildings across the Commonwealth. Demonstrating ways to significantly reduce energy use, as well as substituting alternatives for fossil fuel-based heat, the High Performance Buildings initiative will pave the way for widespread building energy performance improvements beyond what existing state- and utility-run efficiency programs can accomplish.

Local projects selected for funding include:

### Franklin/Hampshire Counties- Sandri Companies: \$3.2 million

Sandri Companies will undertake a high-impact oil heat program in Franklin and Hampshire Counties, to shift oil heat users to wood pellet boilers. Sandri proposes to install wood pellet boilers at multiple institutional sites throughout the area, including Greenfield Community College and the Greenfield Fire Station. In addition to this, the company will discount energy audits run by partner Next Step Living for a segment of its residential customers. Sandri will also provide incentives to act on audit recommendations, and offer rebates for ultra-low-emission wood pellet boilers. Finally, Sandri will shift resources to become a wood pellet distributor in the area, and continue to expand its operations to displace oil heat with renewable energy

### Springfield - Center for Ecological Technology (CET): \$900,000

CET's project involves a 100-year-old warehouse in Springfield, which will undergo a Deep Energy Retrofit consisting of aggressive treatment and insulation of the building envelope. The project will also use air-to-air heat pumps and target small, high-efficiency systems for specific uses - all in lieu of a massive central system. Finally, the renovated warehouse will house a ReStore Center, an ecologically-oriented home improvement store that will allow home improvement customers to experience the energy efficiency measures firsthand.

### Conway/Ashfield - Architectural Heritage Foundation: A portion of \$650,000

Architectural Heritage Foundation, in partnership with Historic New England and the Trustees of Reservations, will complete Deep Energy Retrofits at three historic properties in the Commonwealth: The Lyman Estate in Waltham, the Bullit Reservation in Conway/Ashfield, and the Appleton Farms Center for Agriculture and the Environment in Ipswich. Each of the Deep Energy Retrofits takes a different approach, and will provide valuable information for future retrofits of historic properties. Notable features include a historically sensitive retrofit to the Lyman Estate that preserves historic values of the property, efforts to make the Bullit Reservation a certified "passive house" that uses little to no fossil fuel energy, and a comprehensive building envelope treatment at Appleton Farms including exterior super-insulation, air source heat pumps and solar thermal hot water systems.

## EPA AWARDS \$2 Million to Support Local Research on the Consequence of Climate Change

The EPA is awarding a total of \$2.1 million in grants to Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to explore public health and environmental aspects of climate change. EPA regional administrator Curt Spalding said "This innovative work is a crucial step in leading our country into the clean energy economy of the future."

The first project, to be undertaken at Harvard and the University of Massachusetts Amherst, will study how regional climate conditions may be linked to the production, strength, and distribution of asthma-producing pollens from weeds, grasses and trees. Allergies are responsible for a substantial proportion of healthcare costs in the United States, and chronic allergic reactions have



been increasing since 1970.

"The Harvard Forest is engaged in regionally relevant research that connects human activity to the ecological landscape," said the Harvard/UMASS Team. "With new EPA funding, we are developing models and maps to predict where and when global change will exacerbate allergy risks due to pollen outbreaks in New England. This work forges new collaborations with public health professionals and creates unique opportunities to elucidate the links between global change ecology and human health." More information about the grants and the grant awardees at [the EPA website](#).

### **Membership Update**

For our first ever Members Only retreat-last December 2009, 24 of us became dues-paying individual members of the Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network. An additional 9 organizations became dues-paying members.

Our individual dues-paying members are:

Eric Weiss, Tom Benjamin, Bill Baue, Rose Zdybel, Patrick Dufour, Catherine Ratte', John Ratté, Lou Ratté, Jeff Rosen, Sue Bridge, Nancy Hazard, Craig Marden, Karen Ribeiro, Paul Newlin, Richart Keller, Rochelle Prunty, Pam Howland, Betsy Powell, Peter Vickery, Barbara Fingold, Gary Schaeffer, Larry Ely, Jeff Harness, Jono Neiger.

And our organizational dues-paying members are:

Conway School-Jono Neiger, Co-op Power-Lynn Benander, Earththives-Rich Roth, Energia-Tom Rossmassler, Health Care Without Harm-Paul Lipke, Long Island Energy Partners-Andrew Glace, PVPC-Catherine Ratte, UMASS-Erin Baker and Rick Taupier, Hilltown Resource Management Collaborative-Eric Weiss.

At this time we would like to welcome three new dues-paying members Forest Bradford, Steve Rice, and Denise Caputo.

There are many of you out there receiving this newsletter who have not yet joined the Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network as a dues-paying member. Please consider this your official invitation to join!

Individual memberships are on a sliding scale-but no less than \$25.

Students may join for \$10

Organizations dues are based on annual operating budget:

Annual Operating budget > \$1,000,000 dues cost \$500

Annual Operating budget \$250,000-\$1,000,000 dues cost \$250

Annual Operating budget <\$250,000 dues cost \$100

Life-time member \$10,000

Corporate sponsor-to be negotiated, contact Catherine Ratté [cratte@pvpc.org](mailto:cratte@pvpc.org)

### **Earth Day Events**

#### **Earth Day turns 40 Years Old!**

The popular holiday and day of activity is now well engrained in the progressive American's calendar. Many events are occurring throughout the Valley this year. Please check you town website for a list of activities near you. Celebrate how far we have come in 40 years and help find solution to our new issues.

#### **Northampton Celebrates Earth Day Day**

The 40th Anniversary of Earth Day will be celebrated in Northampton on Sunday, April 25th from 11am to 4pm in Pulaski Park. The event is sponsored by WGBY, the Daily Hampshire Gazette, 93.9 The River, and GREEN Northampton. Anyone interested in having a table, leading an Earth friendly workshop or being involved should contact David Starr of GREEN Northampton at [info@GREENNorthampton.org](mailto:info@GREENNorthampton.org) or 413 584 8785.

#### **WGBY TV is Celebrating Earth Day with 9 Days of Events:**

2010 marks the 40th Anniversary of Earth Day. For western New England, an area already rich in environmental awareness, this is a milestone too big for just one day. We have over a week of programs and local events from April 17-24. A small sampling of some of what is scheduled so far include special environmental programming on WGBY, a concert by Dar Williams in Northampton, The Home Show, and an Electronics Recycling day. More information can be found at: <http://www.wgby.org/earth/index.html>

#### **Massachusetts Appliance Rebate Program Special Initiative.**

Starting on Earth Day, April 22, you will be able get up to a \$250 rebate to exchange your old refrigerator, dishwasher, clothes washer, or freezer and buy a new energy efficient model that will save you money on your electric bill for years to come. However, these rebates will only be available for a limited two week period so you should start planning now if you want to take advantage of this offer.

To get the rebate, you will need to visit a participating retailer go to [masssave.com](http://masssave.com) and use the online tool, or call 1-877-627-9721. There you will be able to get a reservation number and a rebate form to use after you have purchased the eligible appliance and

exchanged it with your old one. You can get lists of the eligible appliances by visiting the Mass Save website.

- The program will run from April 22<sup>nd</sup> through May 5<sup>th</sup>
- Rebates are available for energy efficient refrigerators, dishwashers, washing machines, and freezers
- To get the rebate you first need to get a reservation number for each kind of appliance you plan to exchange. So you can exchange up to four different appliances and get a rebate for each one but you have to get a separate reservation number for each kind of appliance.
- Reservation numbers will only be available starting on April 22<sup>nd</sup> can be obtained by visiting a participating retailer, visiting [www.masssave.com/residential](http://www.masssave.com/residential) and using the online tool, or calling 1-877-627-9721
- To get the rebate you have to turn in and recycle your old appliance. Participating retailers will be able to arrange pickup of your old appliance when they deliver the new one.

Are there topics you would like to see included in future issues? Do you have a success story you would like to share with the community? Are you hosting an event? Please let us know your thoughts by sending an e-mail to [bmarkey@pvpc.org](mailto:bmarkey@pvpc.org) with "Newsletter" in the Subject field.

**Brian Markey**  
**Pioneer Valley Planning Commission**  
**Land Use and Environment Planner**  
(413) 781-6045 Ext. 334

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