



# VECAN

VERMONT ENERGY & CLIMATE  
ACTION NETWORK

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## April 2020 E-News

Dear Local Energy Leaders,

As the state slowly reopens, we must continue to work harder than ever to create climate resilience. This means making sure we continue to foster opportunities that prioritize and protect the most vulnerable Vermonters and help the state rebuild and recover, stronger than ever. Please find some resources below that we hope can support your important work and our collective efforts to pivot out of this pandemic towards the equitable, job-creating energy transformation a healthy planet requires:

- **Webinar with Congressman Peter Welch and Town Energy Committees -- June 5th at noon** - Town energy committee leaders are invited to share their successes, goals and interests in this conversation with Congressman Welch. [RSVP here!](#)
- **Times Argus/Rutland Herald: "Reset Button"** - We highly recommend folks read this recent editorial outlining a potential beneficial recovery pathway to strengthen our communities as we rebuild -- and also do our part to tackle the climate crisis. Check it out [here](#).
- **TRORC Seeks Intermunicipal Regional Energy Coordinator** - The Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission has a great job opportunity. Learn more about and apply for the Intermunicipal Regional Energy Coordinator [here](#).
- **A Case for Divesting from a Dying Fossil Fuel Industry** - Check out a recent opinion piece, making a case for the federal government to invest in clean energy [here](#).
- **Bennington County Regional Commission to Hold Energy Efficiency and Incentives Webinar** - Register for the June 4, 4 p.m. webinar with Efficiency Vermont and Green Mountain Power [here](#).
- **Protect Access to the Sun -- and Solar** - There's an effort afoot nationally to gut net-metering -- a successful program that has helped 1000s of Vermonters access clean, renewable power. Find out more, and what you might do to help, [here](#).
- **Restarting the Engine: HEAT Squad Home Energy Audits** - Learn more about and register for your home energy audit with HEAT Squad [here](#).
- **VEEP Hosting Free, Professional Learning Workshops for Teachers** - Register for free, interactive workshops on the NGSS Instructional Toolkit [here](#).

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## Get involved

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## Share

We are always looking for great stories of local action for our blog, social media and as helpful resources for our network. Please consider sending along anything you or others have accomplished or are working on by responding to this email or emailing [abaad@vnrc.org](mailto:abaad@vnrc.org)

## About Us

VECAN is a network of statewide Vermont organizations helping communities across the Green Mountain State to reduce energy costs and climate impacts through conservation, increased energy efficiency and conversion to renewable energy sources.

VECAN's mission is to start, support and strengthen town energy committees.

## Committee Changes?

Help us keep our network up to

- **Slow Living Summit Goes Virtual this Year** - Register for the 10th annual Slow Living Summit, taking place this week and next!, *Take a Bite Out of Climate Change*, [here](#).

date! Email changes in committee leadership or contact info to [abaad@vnrc.org](mailto:abaad@vnrc.org)

As always, thanks for all that you do.

Best,

Johanna Miller, VECAN Coordinator and VNRC Energy Program Director  
802-223-2328 ext. 112 - [jmiller@vnrc.org](mailto:jmiller@vnrc.org)

### Webinar with Congressman Peter Welch and Town Energy Committees -- June 5th at noon



[RSVP today](#) for a webinar tailored for town energy committees across the state with Congressman Peter Welch this Friday, June 5th from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. The webinar will include an update from Congressman Welch on what's happening on climate and energy on the federal level, success stories from local energy committee leaders and a Q&A section with Congressman Welch. This webinar will look to create a conversation about opportunities to support and strengthen (local) energy innovation in Vermont. Please submit any questions for Congressman Welch in advance to Stephanie

Gomory: [sgomory@vnrc.org](mailto:sgomory@vnrc.org). When you do, please indicate your name and your town and/or energy committee. [RSVP here](#) for the webinar meeting this Friday!

### Times Argus/Rutland Herald Calls for a Strategic Reset



A [recent op-ed](#) by the *Times Argus/Rutland Herald* makes the case for centering climate action in a resilient recovery; one that can strengthen our communities, create greater economic justice and ensure we do our part to tackle the climate crisis. It specifically highlights the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA), currently under consideration in the Senate, as an accountability framework and process for moving towards a strategic, climate resilient recovery. Read the full op-ed [here](#).

### TRORC Seeks Intermunicipal Regional Energy Coordinator



The Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) is looking to hire an [Intermunicipal Regional Energy Coordinator](#) (IREC) to help reduce energy use and make the switch to renewable energy for several towns in the region. The IREC will work with TRORC and representatives from Thetford, Fairlee, Norwich, Strafford, Sharon, Barnard, and Woodstock on energy efficiency and conservation projects focused on municipal and public buildings, vehicles, and services. The position will produce benefits for the towns in terms of cost savings, energy reductions, and carbon reductions. Interested applicants should submit a cover letter, resume, writing sample and three references to Peter Gregory, Executive Director

for TRORC, at [pgregory@trorc.org](mailto:pgregory@trorc.org). The position will be open until filled. Read the full job description for the IREC position [here](#).

## A Case for Divesting from a Dying Fossil Fuel Industry



Check out [this recent opinion piece](#), making a case for why the federal government needs to invest in clean energy. Sarah Raskins, a former member of the board of governors of the Federal Reserve and deputy Treasury secretary, editorialized in the *New York Times* about the need for the federal government to stop propping up fossil fuels and, instead, transition post-pandemic to a more clean, resilient energy economy. Sarah makes the case that fossil fuels are a bad investment and that we need to reduce greenhouse gases as the climate crisis will have a large, economical impact on the

country. She also highlights that the clean energy sector continues to be one of the fastest growing sectors and has generated roughly three times as many jobs compared to the fossil fuel industry over the last few years. Read the full op-ed in the *New York Times* [here](#).

## BCRC to Hold Energy Efficiency and Incentives Webinar

The Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) is holding a [webinar](#) with Green Mountain Power and Efficiency Vermont to discuss their energy efficiency programs and incentives that they offer. The webinar will take place on June 4th from 4:00 to 5:45 p.m. The webinar will also have a question and answer section for both organizations and an update from BCRC on their upcoming webinars and workshops. BCRC encourages energy committees to join the call, as there will be time for them to have a roundtable discussion after the presentation. Find out more about the webinar and to join in on the call using BCRC's flyer [here](#).

## Protect Access to the Sun -- and Solar



[Solar United Neighbors](#) and [Vote Solar](#) have recently raised the alarm about a petition that has been fast-tracked for review by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). The petition would look to regulate the cost at which home solar owners could sell their credits back to their utilities. This means that it would reduce the return for home-owners with solar, increase the payback time for new solar buyers, and decrease the number of people buying solar, which in turn

reduces the jobs and revenue for solar installers. This petition would hurt the use of solar, which in turn reduces its effect in mitigating climate change. To find out more about the petition and the potential to take action yourself, visit Solar United Neighbors and Vote Solar's website [here](#).

## Restarting the Engine: HEAT Squad Home Energy Audits



Do you have a home in Addison, Rutland, Bennington, Caledonia, Essex, Orleans, or Windsor County and have you been thinking about getting a home energy audit? HEAT Squad is ready to help as they are restarting their [home energy audits program](#). HEAT Squad has developed a Covid precautions protocol to reduce risks and ensure the safety of both homeowner and auditor.

After the initial welcome with the homeowner wearing a face mask, ideally the homeowner and auditor will not be in the house at the same time. During the visit, social distancing practices will be used as well as the auditor wearing a face mask, gloves, and disinfecting surfaces. After the homeowner receives their written report, they will have the opportunity to review the recommendations, potential solutions, financing and rebate options, and next steps over the phone or virtually with the auditor.

Efficiency Vermont rebates in place through December 31, 2020 cover 50% of the weatherization project cost, up to \$2000 or \$4000, depending on your income. Homeowners can apply for a low-interest home energy loan with HEAT Squad. As long as your loan closes by October 31 and you income qualify, Efficiency Vermont will make the first 6 monthly loan payments for you up to \$900, not to exceed 50% of the loan amount. Now is a great time to act, rebates and financing options have never been better and they will expire - so act now! To learn more and schedule your energy audit, visit HEAT Squad's website [here](#) or call 802-438-2303.

### VEEP Hosting Free, Professional Learning Workshops for Teachers



The Vermont Energy Education Program (VEEP) is hosting [virtual, interactive-style workshops](#) on the NGSS Instructional Toolkit for Vermont teachers. The workshops will focus on anchoring phenomena and instructional routines that support student sense-making, and will share curriculum ideas that work in the classroom, as well as home-learning lessons and strategies with a lens of project based learning. Attendees will work in small and large group discussions, make and share models of their understanding, and try investigations at home. Teachers will get support from one another and the instructor with planning time for curriculum development. The workshops consist of 3, 2-hour sessions in both June and August. The June sessions are on the 4th, 11th, and 18th from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. Find out more about the workshops and register at VEEP's website [here](#).

### Slow Living Summit Goes Virtual this Year -- Starting June 4th!



The 10th annual [Slow Living Summit](#), *Take a Bite Out of Climate Change*, hosted by Strolling of the Heifers will be virtual this year for the first time. The summit will look at local food, beverage and agricultural businesses that are using innovative practices of production, farming and agricultural practices to help reduce climate change. The summit will be held over a week and a half from June 4th through June 12th and will include presentations on topics such as social justice and climate change, regenerative agriculture, and a virtual farm tour. The summit will also be kicked off by keynote speeches from Bill McKibben, Frances Moore Lappé, Tom Newmark, and Sandra Steingraber. Learn more about and register for the Slow Living Summit on their website [here](#).

**Donate**

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