



VECAN

VERMONT ENERGY & CLIMATE
ACTION NETWORK

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Late April 2021 E-News

Dear Local Energy Leaders,

Coming off of the heels of Earth Day, we appreciate the chance to reflect on the need to protect our common home, and to do that work in partnership with all of you who demonstrate commitment to the well being of the earth and the people that depend on it every single day of the year. To that end, we wanted to share some exciting news on climate action at both the local and national level. With President Biden pledging that the US will cut its greenhouse gas emissions in half from 2005 levels by 2030, and the potential for federal funding to help lay the groundwork for real climate progress in our state if utilized strategically, we have a unique opportunity to make progress towards a cleaner, more efficient, affordable and equitable energy future.

See below for a listing of upcoming events, action opportunities, and exciting news, with more details on select opportunities below:

EVENTS

- **Weigh In on the Future of I-89 in Chittenden County - April 29 at 7:00 PM** - Do you have ideas about how our highway interchanges could better serve all? Attend a public meeting today, April 29th at 7 p.m. to weigh in on the Chittenden County I-89 2050 Study. [Find more details here](#) and below.
- **Take Part in the Way To Go! Spring Transportation Challenge - May 1-16** - Get up and go by biking, walking or taking the bus – while doing your part in battling pollution as part of the Way to Go! Transportation Challenge. Record at least two trips between May 1st and 16th to be entered into the raffle. [Learn more about how to participate in the challenge here](#) and below
- **VELCO Wants Your Input on Vermont's Transmission Plan** - VELCO will hold its second virtual public meeting on May 5, 5 p.m. - 7 p.m. to gather public input on the recently released Public Review Draft of the 2021 Vermont Long-Range Transmission Plan. [Find more details, including how to join the meeting, here](#) and below.
- **VBSR 31st Annual Conference: Businesses for a Better World - May 20th** - Vermont Businesses For Social Responsibility (VBSR) will be holding their 31st Annual Conference on May 20th. The virtual event will help businesses build a future that centers people, planet and prosperity for all. [Click here to learn more and register today.](#)

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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 rkuster@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

date! Email changes in committee leadership or contact info to rkuster@vnrc.org

- **Register for the Summit on the Future of Vermont - May 26th & 27th** - Join Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD) for a two-day virtual event to consider the Vermont Proposition – a framework of ideas for the future of the state, drawn from the input of thousands of Vermonters. Register today at futureofvermont.org/summit and find more details about the Summit below.
- **How Do Vermonters Think About Weatherization?** - Earlier this month, the Center for Research & Public Policy presented the results of a statewide survey on weatherization in Vermont, conducted on behalf of Efficiency Vermont and VGS. If you missed the presentation, you can [watch the recording and access the slide deck here](#).
- **Exploring the Climate Opportunity in Federal Stimulus Dollars** - At VECAN's recent Lunch and Learn, staffers of our Congressional Delegation joined us to provide an overview of federal stimulus dollars coming into Vermont. If you missed the event, you can now [watch the recording here](#). Find more information about the opportunity these dollars provide Vermont below.

NEWS & OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

- **President Biden Sets 2030 Greenhouse Gas Pollution Reduction Target** - Last week, President Biden announced a new, needed commitment to cut U.S. climate pollution by half over the next decade. This lines up with what climate scientists have long said is necessary to avoid the worst, costly consequences of a warming world. [Read more about this exciting announcement here](#).
- **Vermont Needs to Prepare For Climate Migration – How?** - Hear from VNRC's Kate McCarthy and other experts about how Vermont will be impacted by climate migration and what the state needs to do to prepare. [Listen to the full story here](#).
- **Climate Change Impacts Are Increasing Migration at U.S. Southern Border** - Experts say that climate-related events increasingly intensify drivers of migration, leading to people having no other choice but to move. [Read more about this issue here](#).
- **Environmental Benefits of Going Solar in Vermont** - In her recent commentary, Jane Stromberg lays out the many benefits of turning to solar to power Vermont, including less reliance on fossil fuels, less climate pollution, and more money in every Vermonter's wallet. [Read her full commentary here](#).
- **Washington State Will Require All New Car Purchases to Be Electric Starting in 2030** - Washington State legislature has passed "Clean Cars 2030," a bill setting a goal to require all light-duty vehicles of model year 2030 or later to be electric. With this bill, Washington State now has the earliest gas car ban in the U.S. [Read more about the commitment here](#).
- **Official Mow Electric! Campaign Website Is LIVE!** - Mow Electric, a new grassroots initiative to grow the electric lawn care movement, recently launched its website. [Visit the website](#) to learn more about the campaign and how you can participate!

As always, thanks for all that you do.

Best,

Bekah Kuster, Community Energy Coordinator, AmeriCorps Member, VECAN
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EVENTS

Weigh In on the Future of I-89 in Chittenden County - April 29 at 7:00 PM



Crossing the street shouldn't mean risking your life. But for those biking, walking, or rolling in Burlington or South Burlington, the intersection at Exit 14 of I-89 and Williston Road has been identified as the second most dangerous stretch of road for bicyclists in all of

Vermont.

Do you have ideas about how our highway interchanges could better serve all? Attend a virtual public meeting today, April 29th at 7 p.m. to weigh in on the Chittenden County I-89 2050 Study, which is evaluating multimodal improvements at Exits 13 and 14 and a possible new interchange at Hinesburg Road ("Exit 12B").

[Click here](#) to find more information, including the Zoom link to join the public meeting.

[Read about VNRC's \(and others'\) vision for I-89 here.](#)

Share Your Thoughts on the 2021 Vermont Long-Range Transmission Plan

vermont electric power company Following extensive input from the Vermont System Planning Committee and the Vermont utilities, **VELCO** has prepared this [Public Review Draft of the 2021 Vermont Long-Range Transmission Plan](#).

Through May 28, they are seeking input on the public review plan. The input will be used to create a final plan to be filed with the Vermont Public Utility Commission and the Public Service Department by July 1, 2021.

VELCO held its first virtual public meeting on Wednesday, April 28. Join the next meeting on May 5, 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. for an opportunity to share your comments on the plan.

[Click here for more information](#), including how to RSVP to receive a link to join the meeting.

Participate in the Way To Go! Spring Challenge May 1-16



Spring is here! Grab your bike, rollerblades, or sneakers and join hundreds of Vermonters, May 1-16 for the Way to Go! Spring Transportation Challenge.

This fun two-week challenge is your chance to "Get up and Go" walking, rolling, biking, carpooling and riding the bus for a chance to win great raffle prizes, including \$50 gift cards to grocery stores, Darn Tough Socks, walk/bike safety gear and the grand prize, a foldable fat tire DJ eBike.

Log two trips between May 1 and 16th to be entered to win great prizes. [Learn more about the challenge, and stay tuned for more prize announcements here.](#)

Staff and students (under 18) can participate at school, too—[details on how to win points and prizes for your school here.](#)

VBSR 31st Annual Conference: Business for a Better World - May 20th



VBSR's 31st Annual Conference will explore how businesses can shape the future through Anti Racism, Business Resiliency and the Climate Crisis.

This full-day virtual event will include a keynote address by Dr. Ellonda Williams, Director of Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion for B Lab, 11

interactive workshops, as well as time for networking, wellness and more.

[Learn more and register here.](#)

Register for Summit on the Future of Vermont - May 26th & 27th



The Vermont Council on Rural Development is hosting its Summit on the Future of Vermont, May 26 & 27. The Summit will bring Vermonters together to consider the Vermont Proposition – a framework of ideas for the future of the state, drawn from the input

of thousands of Vermonters, that lays out a set of bold opportunities for our economy, communities, and environment by mid-century.

Attend the Summit to consider ideas for Vermont's future, think with experts and leaders, contribute your ideas for action, and engage in partnership for the future of Vermont.

Registration is now open! Visit futureofvermont.org/summit to register and learn more about the Summit.

Survey Results Shows How Vermonters Think About Weatherization



Earlier this month, the Center for Research & Public Policy presented the results of a statewide survey on weatherization in Vermont, conducted on behalf of Efficiency Vermont and VGS.

The survey was designed to collect input from Vermont residents on their experience with (and perceptions of) weatherization. This research can be used to help all who work in the weatherization space to improve our understanding of potential gaps between actual opportunities for weatherization and customers' perceived opportunities for weatherization.

[Click here to watch a recording of the webinar and access the slide deck.](#)

VECAN Lunch and Learn Recap — Exploring the Climate Opportunity in Federal Stimulus Dollars



Thank you to everyone who joined us for our “Lunch and Learn” exploring the parameters and potential climate possibilities of federal relief dollars coming into Vermont, featuring staff from Vermont's Congressional Delegation.

[Click here to view a recording of the event!](#)

With the state set to receive over \$1 billion of funding — with much of that money appropriately prioritized toward helping house, feed and otherwise support Vermonters in

this challenging time — this moment offers a rare opportunity for meaningful investments in desperately needed money-saving, health-enhancing, pollution-reducing strategies. There is also the possibility of Congress passing a funding package focused on infrastructure and jobs soon. While exact guidance around how these federal dollars can be spent is still forthcoming, we wanted to make sure you are both aware of the possibilities and potential limitations around how these funds might be used. [Find more information and resources on federal stimulus dollars at our website here.](#)

The Legislature is hard at work crafting a FY 2022 budget that outlines their initial plans for appropriating some — potentially not all — of the just-over \$1 billion American Rescue Plan dollars to many important programs that serve Vermonters and Vermont businesses. Stay tuned for what in the Legislature related to all of this in the next couple of weeks. To track this process more closely, follow our weekly Climate Dispatch! [Sign up today.](#)

PS: Mark your calendars for our next Lunch and Learn on May 17th at noon. More details forthcoming but expect a first glimpse of the Energy Action Network's latest annual progress report and "pathways" analysis on meeting Vermont's climate and energy targets.

NEWS & OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

President Biden's Earth Day Commitment to Cut U.S. Climate Pollution In Half by 2030



On Earth Day, [President Biden announced a new ambitious commitment to cut U.S. greenhouse gas emissions 50% below 2005 levels by 2030](#), positioning American workers and industry to tackle the climate crisis.

While climate pledges are important guides, our experience in Vermont has taught us that it is policies in support of good promises that lead to durable progress. [See this fact sheet for more context about the kinds of policies that could help make President Biden's climate pledge a reality.](#)

With the passage of the [Global Warming Solutions Act](#), which turned our state's climate goals into requirements, and the important work of the [Climate Council](#) to develop a Climate Action Plan, Vermont has a real opportunity to lead again and help Vermonters realize all the money-saving, health-enhancing and equity-improving benefits of this needed transition.

Official *Mow Electric!* Campaign Website Is LIVE



The *Mow Electric!* Campaign is a grassroots initiative to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create more livable communities through the use of electric lawn

care equipment.

The newly launched website contains numerous resources to facilitate the transition to electric lawn care equipment within Vermont's public and private sectors as well as a variety of ways Energy Committees and all Vermonters can participate in the campaign.

[Visit the *Mow Electric!* Website here](#) to learn more about the campaign and how you can get involved.

Donate

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