

VECAN

VERMONT ENERGY & CLIMATE
ACTION NETWORK

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October 2021 E-News

Dear Local Energy Leaders,

First, thank you for all that you are doing, and to all of you who have shown up and spoken out at a recent Climate Council public meeting. Your input is critical to ensure Vermont's Climate Action Plan meets the moment.

There is at least one more opportunity to share your input on the Climate Action Plan in this first round, as well as several other upcoming events and opportunities for you, your community or your committee to stay motivated, learn something new, and take action.

EVENTS

- **Last Chance to Share Your Input on the Climate Action Plan! - Oct. 5 & 6** - The Vermont Climate Council is wrapping up its initial public events to gather input on the state's Climate Action Plan. The final two events will be held virtually - Oct. 5 [for BIPOC Vermonters only](#) and Oct. 6. Don't miss this opportunity to make your voice heard. [RSVP here](#) and find more information below.
- **Button Up Vermont Kicks Off With First Weatherization Wednesday - Oct. 6 at Noon** - Join Efficiency Vermont, VGS and NeighborWorks of Western Vermont for an introduction to weatherization October 6 at noon. [Learn more and register here.](#)
- **Electric Mower Demonstration at Veterans Memorial Park - Oct. 7, 11:30AM-1:30PM** - Join Vermont Clean Cities, with support from the South Burlington Energy Committee and others for a demonstration featuring the newest commercial electric mowers and lawn equipment from Mean Green and Greenworks. The event is free to attend, and lunch will be provided. [Register here.](#)
- **Community Forums on Climate Change for Low- Moderate-Income Vermonters - Throughout October** - The Vermont Community Action Partnership is hosting four virtual community forums throughout October to engage and empower individuals from low- and moderate-income backgrounds to make their voices heard. [Register here](#) and learn more below.
- **Register for REV2021: Climate Action, Equity, and Resilience - Oct. 18, 19 & 26** - This two-part virtual event will feature a keynote address from best-selling author and energy expert Saul Griffith, as well as interactive panel discussions on equity, leadership, climate innovation, energy regulation, and planning. [See the full program and register here.](#)

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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

- **In Case You Missed It — Climate Action Works Webinar: *What You Need to Know About the Climate Action Plan*** - Last week, the Vermont Climate Coalition hosted a conversation with leading Vermont climate advocates and members of the Climate Council to share the inside scoop on what's happening within the council and answer questions about the Climate Action Plan and the current public engagement opportunities. [Watch the recording here.](#)
- **Save the Date! 14th Annual VECAN Conference - Starting December 4th** - We are excited to announce that we will be hosting our 14th Annual VECAN Conference virtually this year starting December 4th, with workshop sessions continuing throughout the following week. Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more information coming soon. And, if you have ideas for what VECAN should cover, send them to rkuster@vnrc.org.

NEWS & OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

- **Climate Catalysts Leadership Program Accepting Applications Until Oct. 29** - The Vermont Council on Rural Development is now accepting applications for the Climate Catalysts Leadership Program, a year-long initiative focused on building peer connections, strengthening leadership skills, and providing project development support. [Learn more here](#) and below.
- **Transportation Alternatives Program Grant Opportunity - Applications Due Nov. 24** - VTrans is now accepting grant applications for the SFY 2022 Transportation Alternatives Program. Applications are due by Wednesday, November 24, 2021. [Learn more here.](#)
- **Chittenden County Program Offers Incentives for Those Who Green Up Their Commute** - The [Commuter Incentive Program](#) offers a \$75 gift card for use at local establishments to anyone who is willing to skip their solo drive to work at least two days a week and instead carpool, take the bus, bike or walk. Learn more about the program in [this VTDigger article](#).
- **NY Governor Signs Bill Banning Sale of ICE Vehicles After 2035** - New York's Governor Hochul signed legislation making New York the second state to ban sales of internal combustion energy cars by 2035. [Read more about this commitment here.](#)
- **Vermont Attorney General TJ Donovan Announces Lawsuit Against Oil Giants** - Vermont AG TJ Donovan recently announced the state has filed a lawsuit against the four largest suppliers of fossil fuels in Vermont, arguing the companies have misled consumers about their products' contribution to climate change. [Read more in this VTDigger article.](#)

OP-EDS OF NOTE

- **Elizabeth Courtney: Let There Be Crying — an Indication of Action on Our Climate Crisis** - "While there may be no crying in baseball, there is crying when it comes to the magnitude of the anxiety, stress and fear of the growing climate crisis," writes Elizabeth Courtney. Read her full commentary about how grieving the climate crisis can be a catalyst for action in [VTDigger here](#).
- **Peter Sterling: Electrifying Everything *Is* the Solution to Climate Change** - "We cannot continue business as usual by relying on imported fossil fuels and must accept the responsibility that using energy comes at a

cost and that cost includes dedicating some of Vermont's landscape to the production of the energy we use. It's as simple as that," writes Peter Sterling, Renewable Energy Vermont's executive director. [Read his full commentary in the Rutland Herald here.](#)

As always, thanks for all that you do.

Best,

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

Share Your Priorities for the Climate Action Plan at Last, Initial Upcoming Virtual Events - Oct. 5 & 6



Thank you to those of you who participated in one of the in-person Climate Council events and shared your input on the Climate Action Plan! If you weren't able to attend one of those events, [there are more upcoming opportunities to make your voice heard.](#)

This week, the Climate Council will be hosting the last of their initial public events. [Learn more about VNRC's priorities for the plan here](#), and [RSVP for an upcoming virtual event here](#).

These meetings will take place online over Zoom. Find the schedule of upcoming events below:

- Tuesday, October 5, 6:00-7:30 p.m.: Virtual event for Black, Indigenous, Vermonters of color only (BIPOC) communities
- Wednesday, October 6, 6:00-7:30 p.m.: Virtual event

We encourage you to attend one of these final virtual events, if you are able, to amplify these priorities and share your voice at this critical time in the development of Vermont's Climate Action Plan.

A draft of the plan will be presented on December 1, and will outline how Vermont can reach its 2025 greenhouse gas reduction targets, mandated by the Global Warming Solutions Act, which many of you helped to champion.

Public comment will be crucial to ensure the plan cuts emissions across all sectors of Vermont's economy, in a way that is equitable to all Vermonters, and to ensure that the plan is fully funded.

Thank you for showing up and speaking out for climate action at this critical time!

Community Forums on Climate Change for Low- Moderate-Income Vermonters

Low- and moderate-income communities are disproportionately impacted by climate change. As our state begins to draft the Climate Action Plan, it's important that the voices of these communities are represented in our policies.

To engage and empower individuals from low- and moderate-income background, the Vermont Community Action Partnership is hosting four virtual community forums:



- Monday, October 11, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, October 20, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
- Friday, October 22, 9:00-10:00 a.m.
- Saturday October 23, 5:00 - 6:00 p.m.

In these forums, you will be able to share and learn from personal stories and discuss various opportunities to make your voice heard. **By attending one of the forums, you will enter a raffle to win gifts, including several \$50 VISA gift cards and warm**

and fuzzy blankets (gifted by a local small business). [Register here to participate in one of the upcoming forums](#), and share this opportunity with your friends and neighbors.

Register for REV2021: Climate Action, Equity, and Resilience - Oct 18, 19 & 26



For over two decades, the REV Conference has been a leading renewable energy event in New England. At this year's virtual REV2021, you'll connect with other people working to build an equitable energy future for Vermont and beyond. Through innovative policy, technological advancement, smart investments, and new ways of thinking, REV speakers are leading the way to a sustainable future. [Learn more about the conference here](#) and below.

This year's conference will be a two-part virtual series taking place October 18-19 and October 26. Find more information below:

PART ONE: Innovations in Climate Action

- **Monday, Oct 18 @ 5:00 pm - 7:30 pm:** An evening with best-selling author, scientist, engineer, and energy expert Dr. Saul Griffith. U.S. Congressman Peter Welch and Vermont Senate President Becca Balint offer insights on federal and state initiatives.
- **Tuesday, Oct 19 @ 9:00 am - 2:00 pm:** Three discussion panels examine the wide variety of innovation, policy, and climate action happening in Vermont and across the Northeast region. U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy will provide the day's opening remarks.

[Click here to register for REV2021 Part One](#)


PART TWO: Building a Just Transition

- **Tuesday, Oct 26 @ 9:00 am - 2:00 pm:** Vermont House Speaker Jill Krowinski offers opening remarks for three interactive discussion panels exploring questions of equity in energy and the workplace. Former Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin offers concluding remarks.

[Click here to register for REV2021 Part Two](#)

Here's What You Missed — What You Need to Know About the Climate Action Plan Webinar

Last week, members of the Vermont Climate Coalition hosted a webinar with a few Vermont Climate Council members who shared the latest work being done in each of the subcommittees to develop the Climate Action Plan. Then, advocates shared their priorities for the plan. These priorities include 1) ensuring that it cuts emissions across all sectors of Vermont's economy, 2) that it is equitable, and 3) that it is supported by ongoing, sufficient



CLIMATE ACTION WORKS

Monday, September 27th
at 12pm

Join us for a conversation with members of the Vermont Climate Coalition and Vermont Climate Council. The webinar will provide helpful context as you prepare to make your voice heard at Climate Council public engagement events.

#ActOnClimateVT

What You Need to Know about the Climate Action Plan

funding to meet those objectives.

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

With final public engagement events happening this week, this is a critical time to show up for climate action in Vermont. The Climate Council wants to hear from you about what you would like to see included in Vermont's

Climate Action Plan!

Visit the official website of the [Vermont Climate Council](#) for more information about the work of the council and how you can stay involved. For specific details about the work of the various [Climate Council Subcommittees](#), visit [this page](#) (scroll down to "subcommittees," then click on the subcommittee you are interested in.)

NEWS & OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

Application Open for VCRD's Climate Catalysts Leadership Program - Oct. 29



Climate Catalysts: A Community Leadership Program

The Climate Catalysts Leadership Program supports the power of individuals and their communities to achieve transformational climate economy progress. This program brings together a cohort of Vermonters for a year-long process focused on building peer connections, strengthening leadership skills and providing project development support.

Participants work on implementation of a local climate-related project as a focus of their program participation. The goal is to move projects from concept to reality while investing in people who provide multi-faceted service to their communities. Cohorts include a mix of new, emerging, and experienced leaders from a variety of large and small communities who have ideas for projects that are both ambitious and achievable.

Through monthly online and occasional in-person gatherings, participants receive training, peer connections, and consultative support as they develop and implement their projects. An application period is now open with a deadline of October 29. [Learn more here](#), and [apply by clicking here](#).

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