



# VECAN

VERMONT ENERGY & CLIMATE  
ACTION NETWORK

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## February 2022 E-News

Dear Local Energy Leaders,✕

Winter storm Landon has arrived in Vermont. We hope you stay safe over the weekend (and hopefully get out to enjoy a LOT of snow)!

As February gets underway, we wanted to put several important events and opportunities on your radar, as well as share some exciting updates and news.✕

Thanks for all you do! We look forward to continuing to partner and engage with you in this important work.

### EVENTS

- **NEK Community Solar Info Session - February 9, 7pm - [Peacham Community Solar](#)**, a project of Peacham Energy Committee and Wolfe Energy, is hosting a virtual event to share information about a 100% community-owned solar array in Peacham. This 150 kW array is open to all GMP customers, whether you rent or own, already have solar, or just want to get started with one kilowatt or two. [Join the Zoom meeting here](#) to learn more.
- **VECAN 2022 Workshop Series: *Climate Progress? A Mid-Session Legislative Update* - February 16 at Noon** - Join VECAN and ActOnClimateVT members on February 16th from 12:00-1:30 for the fourth workshop in VECAN's 2022 Workshop Series, *Climate Progress? A Mid-Session Legislative Update*, to get an overview of what's happening in the 2022 legislative session to advance clean energy and climate progress. [Register here](#) and learn more below.
- **If You Haven't Already! Join Fellow Vermonters for the Winter Bike/Walk Challenge - January 31-February 11** - The third annual Vermont Winter Bike/Walk Challenge is on from January 31 through February 11! Participants who record a bike ride, or a stroll, on the Go!Vermont smartphone app or Go!Vermont website at least twice during the Challenge timeframe will be automatically entered to win prizes. [Learn more and download the app here](#).
- **Save the Date! Town Hall Meeting with Rewiring America - March 30, 5-6pm** - Join VECAN, Burlington Mayor Weinberger, and Co-founder and Chief Scientist of Rewiring America, Saul Griffith, Ph.D for a Town Hall Meeting to discuss the road to become a Net Zero Energy City - electrify everything! Stay tuned for more details and a Zoom link coming soon.
- **In Case You Missed It: Recording of Transportation Innovation Act Webinar** - Last week, the Vermont Sierra Club, Conservation Law

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### Get involved

[Events](#)

[Join or Start an Energy Committee](#)

### 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](mailto: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

Foundation, Vermont Natural Resources Council, and the Vermont Public Interest Research Group hosted a policy discussion about the Transportation Innovation Act, H.552. [Learn more and watch the webinar recording here.](#)

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

## UPDATES & OPPORTUNITIES

- 2022 Downtown Transportation Fund Grant - Applications Due March 7** - The Department of Housing and Community Development announced the availability of approximately \$2,900,000 in Downtown Transportation Fund Grants (DTF) to support revitalization efforts in Designated Downtowns and eligible Designated Village Centers. [Learn more about the program here.](#)
- Vermont Multi-Unit Dwelling Electric Vehicle Charging Grant Program** - This EV Charging Grant Program will provide up to \$1 million in grants to install electric vehicle charging solutions that provide accessible, affordable, and reliable home charging at multi-unit housing locations. Applications are due [April 1, 2022](#). [Learn more about the program here](#) and below.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Launches Pilot Program to Deploy Renewable Energy Infrastructure to People in Rural Towns** - The USDA announced up to \$10 million in grants to help people living in rural towns develop community renewable energy projects. Letters of request must be submitted by [April 19, 2022](#). [Learn more about this program here](#) and below.
- Vermont Energy Education Program Is Offering Teaching Partnerships** - If you or someone you know is a Vermont educator, VEEP is offering teaching partnerships again this semester to provide lessons and curriculum, join classes for presentations and workshops, and provide support with equipment for interactive learning to reach your educational goals. [Learn more here](#) and below.
- Watch Last Week's Climate Dispatch to Stay Updated About What's Happening in the Legislature** - [Check out the latest VNRC Climate Dispatch](#) with Representative Gabrielle Stebbins for an update on several important climate priorities that key legislative bodies are exploring. Be sure to tune into this coming week's Dispatch with Rep. Laura Sibilio, lead sponsor of [H.518](#) - a bill aimed at helping municipalities cut costs and carbon.
- U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Releases New Local Government Guide for Solar Deployment** - The DOE released a new guide on how to deploy solar power in your community. [You can view the guide here](#), and it is also listed on our website under Renewable Energy resources for easy and continued access.
- Vermont Department of Public Service Releases Final 2022 Comprehensive Energy Plan** - The updated Comprehensive Energy Plan was released last month. [You can read and download the plan at the here.](#) For an overview of what's in the plan, [check out this article in Vermont Business Magazine.](#)

## IN THE NEWS

- In Case You Missed It: "Fave Little State: Climate Migrants From Around America Are Seeking Refuge in Vermont"** - "As large areas of the nation become inhospitable or even uninhabitable, Vermont's cool climate, abundant water supplies and tradition of environmental

stewardship are proving increasingly attractive to people with the desire — and the means — to relocate.” [Read the full article in \*Seven Days\* here.](#)✕

- **Green Mountain Power (GMP) Works to Create Resiliency Zones in Towns Across Vermont** - GMP, Vermont’s largest utility, plans to create new microgrids and community resilience zones as part of a plan to “radically transform” the grid that is outlined in the utility’s new integrated resource plan (IRP). [Learn more here.](#)
- **Vermont Electric Coop (VEC) Powers Up Two New Solar Arrays in Jericho in Support of 100% Renewables by 2030** - Encore Renewable Energy and VEC announced the commissioning of two new community-scale solar projects, on the town’s former gravel pit and former municipal landfill, comprising 4.5 megawatts (MW) of new, clean energy generation in Jericho. [Learn more about these projects here.](#)

#### OP-EDS OF NOTE

- **VTDigger: Johanna Miller: Getting Vermont to a clean transportation system** - “Arguably, H.552 is one of the biggest climate-action bills on the table this year. And on the heels of the adoption of the first statutorily-required Climate Action Plan last December, which requires significant, stepped pollution-reduction progress, this bill is likely the biggest opportunity in the short-term to reduce emissions in our most carbon-intensive sector.” Learn more about the Transportation Innovation Act in [Miller’s full commentary here.](#)
- **VTDigger: Ben Edgerly Walsh: A 2022 blueprint for bold, equitable, essential climate progress** - “With unprecedented federal funding available, we have a historic opportunity to get to work implementing the solutions laid out in the Climate Action Plan and help all Vermonters benefit from the clean energy economy,” writes Ben Edgerly Walsh of the Vermont Public Interest Research Group (VPIRG). Learn about VPIRG’s and other environmental advocacy organizations’ 2022 legislative priorities in [Walsh’s full commentary here.](#)
- **Valley News: Linda Gray: Vermont delegation has it right** - “The Build Back Better Act takes bold steps to dramatically reduce climate pollution for everyone. But it also begins to address decades of unchecked environmental injustice, ensuring at least 40% of the benefits of this bill go to those communities hardest hit by pollution and climate change. The stakes could not be higher; this may be our last best shot at real climate action.” [Read Gray’s full commentary here.](#)✕
- **Times Argus/Rutland Herald: Build Back Better Could Be A Silver Lining for Vermont** - “There is no question, it [Build Back Better] would be another silver lining for Vermont. It could modernize our economy, lift up communities across Vermont, and finally turn the corner on the climate crisis here by putting into motion the solid plans already in place, including the Global Warming Solutions Act, advocates for that work say.” [Read the full op-ed here.](#)

As always, thanks for all that you do.

Best,

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

### VECAN 2022 Workshop Series: *Climate Progress? A Mid-Session Legislative Update* - February 16 at Noon



Join VECAN and ActOnClimateVT members, Wednesday, February 16th from 12:00-1:30 for our next workshop in the VECAN 2022 Workshop Series, *Climate Progress? A Mid-Session Legislative Update*.

[Register to attend here!](#)

In this workshop, get an overview of what's happening in the 2022 legislative session to advance clean energy and climate progress. On the heels of the first required

Climate Action Plan and an unprecedented amount of federal funding at the state's fingertips, hear what policy makers are advancing, what that could mean for climate progress and how you can help ensure Vermont takes significant climate steps forward on climate this session!✕

And, if you missed any of the previous workshops, you can [find the recordings here](#).

P.S. Stay tuned for more details about future sessions, including a workshop on March 2nd at noon in partnership with Capstone Community Action to learn more about increased capacity at community action agencies for Financial and Energy Coaching for income-qualified Vermonters.

## UPDATES & OPPORTUNITIES

### Vermont Multi-Unit Dwelling Electric Vehicle Charging Grant Program - Applications Due April 1



The 2022 Vermont Multi-Unit Dwelling Electric Vehicle Charging Grant Program will provide up to \$1 million in grants to install electric vehicle charging solutions that provide accessible, affordable, and reliable home charging at multi-unit housing locations. Learn more here: [https://accd.vermont.gov/multiunit\\_dwelling](https://accd.vermont.gov/multiunit_dwelling).

Funding may be used for the planning, permitting, purchase, installation and other one time costs associated with the installation of EV charging equipment for plug-in electric vehicles, including all electric and plug-in hybrid models, according to the specific criteria.

Grants will be awarded up to \$80,000 per site, \$300,000 per applicant, with priority for grant awards given to affordable housing. [Please find the full program description here](#), and the [program application here](#). **Applications will be due April 1, 2022.**

### USDA Rural Energy Pilot Program Accepting Letters of Intent Until April 19, 2022

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is making up to \$10 million available to help people living in rural towns develop community renewable energy projects that will help them cut their energy costs and contribute to the nationwide effort to reduce pollution that contributes to climate change. These funds will be targeted to help people who live in communities that have been historically underinvested and disinvested.



USDA is making the funds available through the new [Rural Energy Pilot Program](#) to help the people of rural America build back better, stronger and more equitably than ever before. Through this program, USDA is supporting the Biden-Harris Administration’s commitment to making environmental justice a part of every agency’s mission to address the disproportionate health, environmental, economic and climate impacts on

disadvantaged communities.

Prospective applicants must inform the Agency by submitting a required Letter of Intent prior to submission of a complete application. **The letters must be submitted via electronic upload into a secure cloud vault, by 11:59 p.m. EST on April 19, 2022.** Application guides and submission information are available on the [program website](#), under the To Apply tab. ✎

### **VEEP Offers Teaching Partnerships – Share With Vermont Educators You Know**



✎The [Vermont Energy Education Program](#) is excited to offer Teaching Partnerships again this semester!

Teaching Partnerships are designed to be able to meet the needs of K-12 educators and are therefore highly customizable. The VEEP educators are equipped with a

menu of options such as energy and climate workshops, equipment kits, curricula, storylines, and other resources. They also offer a range of professional development opportunities, NGSS mentoring, and action project support. ✎

[Click here](#) to learn more and share with educators you know so they can sign up for a teaching partnership today.

## **Donate**

### **Connect With Us:**

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