

# VECAN

VERMONT ENERGY & CLIMATE  
ACTION NETWORK  
MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER

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Dear {{Salutation or 'Local Energy Leaders'}},

Welcome to 2023! We hope you had relaxing and rejuvenating holidays spent with family and friends. It's stacking up to be a busy and exciting 2023, with the legislative session kicking off and an influx of federal funding to support Vermont communities. In the year ahead, VECAN hopes to be a resource for all of you, continuing to lift up and promote the critical work you're all doing to lead your communities through Vermont's energy transition.

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## **EVENTS**

*All events can be found on the VECAN Events Calendar at <http://vecan.net/events>*

# 2023 WINTER WORKSHOP SERIES

**BIWEEKLY ON WEDNESDAYS AT NOON**

**January 18th at 12pm** - Complete Streets: *Connecting Communities Through Multi-Modal Transportation Options*

**February 1st at 12pm** - Community-Led Resilience Hubs

**February 15th at 12pm** - Inter-Community Idea Share: *Cross-Pollinating Community Energy Progress, Challenges, and Successes*



**VECAN Winter Workshop Series: Join Us Every Other Wednesday at Noon in 2023!** - Starting Wednesday, January 18th at noon, VECAN will kick off our Winter Workshop Series, covering timely clean energy and climate action topics! These virtual workshops will be free and open to anyone who wants to join. [Learn more and register to join us here.](#)

- **Complete Streets: Connecting Communities Through Multi-Modal Transportation Options - January 18th at 12:00 PM** - This virtual workshop will overview how communities can support the planning, design, and implementation of Complete Streets and build a cleaner, more equitable, and accessible transportation future for Vermont! [Learn more and register to attend here.](#)
- **Community-Led Resilience Hubs - February 1st at 12:00 PM** - This virtual workshop will overview an effort underway to develop Community-Led Resilience Hubs. Through regionally-specific, community-led design, we can support Vermont communities in building climate resilience. Join us to learn more and identify ways your community can support existing efforts. [Learn more and register to attend here.](#)
- **Inter-Community Idea Share: Cross-Pollinating Community Energy Progress, Challenges, and Successes - February 15th at 12:00 PM** - Are you hoping to launch an energy or climate action project or campaign in your town but don't know where to start? Do you have a success story that you think other communities can learn from? Is your energy committee facing roadblocks that you need advice for overcoming? This workshop aims to provide space for energy committees and environmental change-makers across Vermont to share their experiences and learn from one another's efforts. [Learn more and register to attend here.](#)
- **Stay tuned – we'll be announcing more workshop topics in the coming weeks!**



# ENERGY ACTION NETWORK

## Energy Action Network Webinars:

- ***Improving School Transportation - January 23rd at 3:00 PM*** - This webinar for school leaders by the Future of Rural Transit EAN Network Action Team will provide information about two opportunities to innovate your school transportation system to improve equity, student health, and environmental impact. We will first discuss opportunities for increasing equity through coordination with transit providers, sharing the benefits of adding public transit options for students and staff, how to get started in your district, and where to find resources and support. We will then discuss options for electrifying your school bus fleet, including stories from the field and information about grant programs and assistance. [Learn more and register to attend here.](#)
- ***Retaining Workers in the Climate Workforce - February 9th at 12:00 PM*** - This webinar by the Climate Workforce EAN Network Action Team will be targeted at climate workforce employers. It will provide an inspiring view of low and no-cost retention techniques for keeping your workers in their jobs. The webinar will be presented by Susan Loynd, M.A., SHRM-SCP, an accomplished, certified senior human resource executive with over 25 years of experience as a business leader. She also brings a sense of humor that will make this hour well worth your while. [Learn more and register to attend here.](#)

**Public Service Department Electricity Webinars** - To kickstart public engagement opportunities related to reviewing renewable electricity programs in Vermont, the Public Service Department is hosting an informational webinar series to share information and answer questions about Vermont's current electric system. [Learn more and register to attend here.](#)

- ***Where Does Vermont's Electricity Come From?***
  - January 31st from 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM [register here](#)
  - February 2nd from 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM [register here](#)
- ***Current Renewable Electricity Policies***
  - February 14th from 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM [register here](#)
  - February 15th from 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM [register here](#)
- ***Parking Lot Session***
  - March 9th from 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM [register here](#)
  - March 13th from 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM [register here](#)

**Sustainable Woodstock's Virtual Green Drinks – How Can the IRA Help You Go Electric? - January 19th at 5:30 PM** - The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) was last year's marquee federal legislative accomplishment and the biggest climate bill to ever be written into law. It includes provisions that support manufacturing, industrial policy, federal purchasing policy - and also provide residential consumer benefits in the form of tax rebates and funding low-income electrification programs. This presentation will dive into the details of how the consumer-facing provisions of the IRA might impact choices Vermonters are making around upgrading homes, purchasing heat pumps, and purchasing electric vehicles. [Learn more and register to attend here.](#)

**10-Year Working Lands Celebration - January 24th from 4:30 - 6:30 PM at the Vermont Statehouse** - Over the last 10 years, farm and forest businesses from all across the state have leveraged new funding to create more than 500 new jobs, generate tens of millions in new economic activity, strengthen local supply chains, and invest in the future of working lands. The Working Lands Coalition would like to celebrate this remarkable milestone by hosting a 10 Year Anniversary Celebration, and you're invited! Please join fellow working lands champions, legislators, coalition members, and others and enjoy food, music, and community. [Learn more and RSVP here.](#)



### UPDATES & OPPORTUNITIES

**2023 Legislative Session Kicks Off!** - The 2023 legislative session has begun! Stay updated on what's happening this session on equitable climate action and the transition to a clean energy economy by tuning into [VNRC's weekly video Climate Dispatch](#). If you are interested in staying more connected to what's happening this session, please reach out to VNRC's Greta Hasler to find out how – [ghasler@vnrc.org](mailto:ghasler@vnrc.org). We'd love to support you in staying connected, advocating for needed climate action, and elevating your community energy efforts!



**The Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD) Announces Selected Communities for Their 2023 Climate Economy Resilient Communities Program!** - This year's community projects include the following:

- Working with the Arlington Town Energy Committee on their Greenhouse Gas (GHG) tracking for the town and compiling available data tracking resources for other towns, including articulating and documenting the need, limitations, and process for energy tracking
- Supporting Lyndonville in a community engagement plan, process, and implementation to move the needle on energy awareness, efficiency, and interest within the community
- Rebooting the Randolph region Climate Economy Initiative with an opportunity to bring the community together, celebrate the successes, and develop future actions and ideas
- Facilitating a conversation around an Intermunicipal Energy Coordinator for Bethel, South Royalton, Rochester, Randolph, and other surrounding towns

[Learn more about the Climate Economy Resilient Communities and how to apply here.](#)

**Button Up Vermont (Wrap Up!)** - This year's Button Up Vermont campaign saw the highest engagement and interest in Buttoning Up yet thanks to collaboration from over 30 partners, including communities around the state, utilities, RPCs, nonprofits, and a brand new media campaign. Some of the highlights from this year's campaign include:

- Over 20 Vermont communities signed up to participate and/or host events
- Nearly 1,200 people watched a [Weatherization Wednesday](#) webinar
- Governor Scott featured Button Up in a press conference and integrated it into the state [website](#)
- The first-ever TV campaign ran through the end of November and garnered 2.9 million impressions and 64,000 [YouTube views](#)



- View the full impact report [here](#). Please help inform future Button Up campaigns by completing [this five-minute survey](#). Whether you participated in 2022 or not, Button Up would love your feedback as a representative of a town or an organization that does energy-related work.



**2023 LEAP Energy Fair - Saturday, April 15th from 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM** - Reserve a table for your renewable energy, energy efficiency, or emissions-reduction organization at this year's LEAP Energy Fair! Each year 700+ people attend the LEAP Energy Fair. The 2023 LEAP Energy Fair will occur at Crossett Brook Middle School in Duxbury, VT. If your business or organization would like to learn more or reserve a table, email [alaynahoward@gmail.com](mailto:alaynahoward@gmail.com). To learn more about Waterbury LEAP and its efforts to support green energy in Vermont, visit [www.waterburyleap.org](http://www.waterburyleap.org).

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## NEWS & OP-EDS OF NOTE

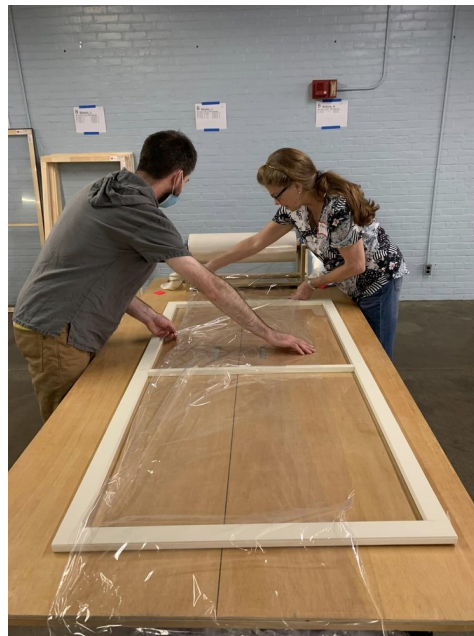
**VT Digger: New program helps Vermonters avoid high upfront cost of home weatherization** - The Weatherization Repayment Assistance Program (WRAP) provides an option for Vermonters to finance qualifying projects such as insulating, air sealing, installing heat pumps, and advanced wood heating systems on their utility bill - payments can run as low as \$15-20 per month. So far, the program will be offered by Green Mountain Power, Ludlow Electric, Vermont Electric Cooperative, Vermont Gas, and Burlington Electric. [Read the full article here.](#)

**VT Digger: Lawmakers plan to resurrect the clean heat standard as the 'Affordable Heating Act'** - Last year's Clean Heat Standard, which Governor Phil Scott vetoed, is being re-introduced as the Affordable Heat Act. The Clean Heat Standard was designed to gradually transition heating and cooling away from fossil fuels using a credit system. Businesses, organizations, and, in some instances, homeowners would have been rewarded for helping reduce fossil fuel usage. "The skeleton of last year's clean heat standard is likely to remain under consideration in this year's bill, with lawmakers looking to refine the details and address concerns raised last session." Chase Whiting, a staff attorney at the Conservation law Foundation, celebrates that "a well-designed clean heat standard or affordable heating act could be really game-changing for Vermont based on looking at the

affordability of access to clean heating options, based on reducing climate pollution, based on reducing toxic air pollution as well.” [Read the full article here.](#)

***The Guardian: The century of climate migration: why we need to plan for the great upheaval*** - This article explores how “human movement on a scale never before seen will dominate this century” and “how humanely we treat each other as we migrate, will be key to whether this century of upheaval proceeds smoothly or with violent conflict and unnecessary deaths.” The UN International Organization for Migration has projected that up to 1.2 billion people will be environmental migrants by 2050 and 1.4 billion by 2060, with this number soaring with every degree of temperature increase. There are currently more people displaced by climate disasters (~50 million) than political persecution, and Climate Central projects that half a million existing US homes will be on land that floods at least once a year by 2050. [Read the full article here.](#)

***Waterbury Roundabout: A Vermont solution to fighting climate change: 100% renewable energy*** - Peter Sterling, executive director of Renewable Energy Vermont, advocates for updating our Renewable Energy Standard to get Vermont to 100% renewable energy by directing our utilities to purchase electricity from new, in-state generated wind, solar, and hydropower. The cost of solar power installation has decreased over the last decade, and the Inflation Reduction Act “has given Vermont a once-in-a-generation chance to get hundreds of millions of dollars in federal money over the next decade to make the transition to renewables even more affordable.” [Read the full article here.](#)



***NetZero Montpelier: WindowDressers helps 40 local families save energy this winter*** - This year, WindowDressers built 258 window inserts over a week for 40 households from Montpelier, Barre City, Barre Town, Worcester, Websterville, Graniteville, East Montpelier, and Berlin. “The Central Vermont team was able to provide ten low-income households with free windows thanks to a grant from the New England Grassroots Environmental Fund.” Along with keeping homes warm during cold Vermont winters, “in a typical house, ten inserts save an average of 105 gallons of heating fuel every year for an estimated savings of \$270 per year. The inserts generally pay for themselves in less than two heating seasons.” [Read the full article here.](#)

### **About Us**

VECAN is a network of statewide Vermont organizations helping communities statewide 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.

### **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 emailing [sbayer@vnrc.org](mailto:sbayer@vnrc.org).

### **Event to Share?**

If you have an upcoming climate action opportunity, update or event you want others to know about, you can submit it to be included in the calendar. [Check it out here!](#)

### **Committee Changes?**

Help us keep our network up to date! Email changes in committee leadership or contact info to [sbayer@vnrc.org](mailto:sbayer@vnrc.org).



{{Disclaimer}}

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