



ECO-JUSTICE

INTERRELIGIOUS ECO-JUSTICE NETWORK

VOLUME 18

SPRING 2005

Connecticut Clean Energy Option is HERE!

All Connecticut Light & Power (CL&P) and United Illuminating (UI) residential customers will be offered a 100% or 50% clean energy service as of April 1, 2005.

You will be able to sign up for clean energy through your utility when you receive your April electric bill or you can go to www.GoCleanEnergy.com. All you need to do is choose the type of energy you want and mail the insert back with your regular payment to CL&P or UI or sign up on the website www.GoCleanEnergy.com

Your choices are:



Community Energy

Energy source: 50% wind and 50% landfill gas generation.

Surcharge for 100% option will be around \$5.50 per month for the average residential customer (500kWh per month at up to 1.1 cents per kW).

Surcharge for 50% option will be around \$3.25 per month for the average residential customer.



Sterling Planet:

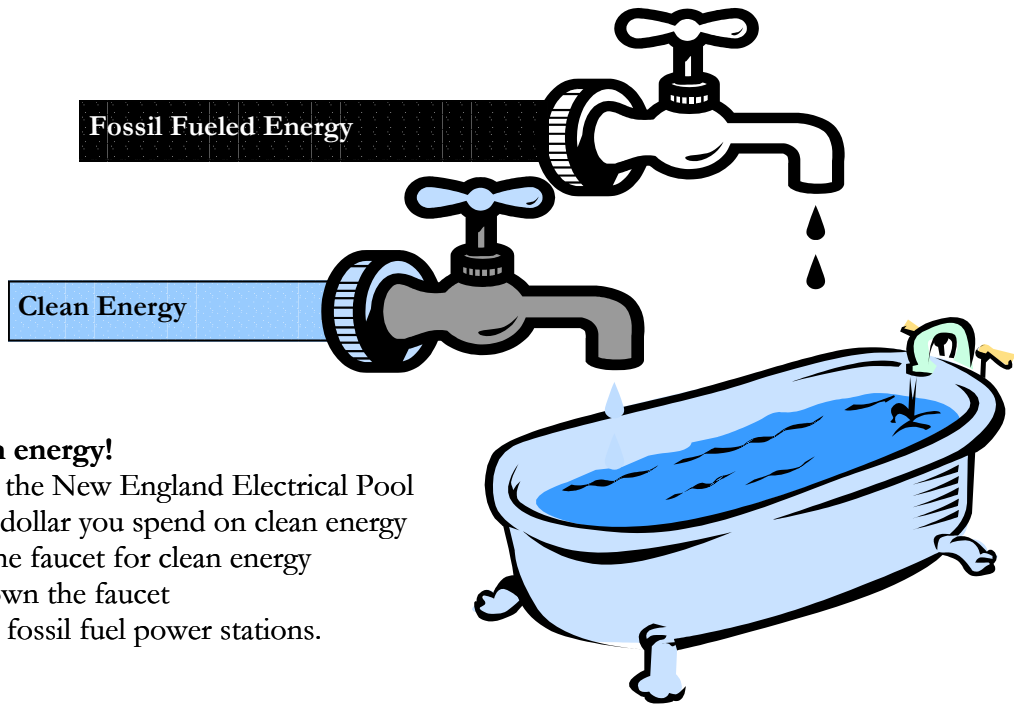
Energy source: 33% wind and 33% small hydroelectric and 34% landfill gas generation.

Surcharge for 100% option will be around \$5.75 per month for the average residential customer (500kWh per month at up to 1.15cents per kW).

Surcharge for 50% option will be around \$2.88 per month for the average residential customer .

To sign up for clean energy you can go to www.GoCleanEnergy.com

CARING FOR CREATION just got a little bit easier. Sign up for clean energy today.



Turn on clean energy!

If you imagine the New England Electrical Pool is a bath, each dollar you spend on clean energy is turning up the faucet for clean energy and turning down the faucet from polluting fossil fuel power stations.

Q: What is clean energy?

A: Clean energy is energy from solar, wind, small hydro (water) and other clean energy resources.

Q: When I'm choosing, how do I know which products are clean?

A: Look for the Green-e label. Products carrying it have been certified by the Center for Resource Solutions, an independent nonprofit organization.

Q: Is clean energy as reliable as the power I get now?

A: Yes. There is no difference. You will still receive the same reliability from the grid, and the same utility company you have now will continue to deliver power to your house.

Q: Will clean energy be delivered directly to my home?

A: No - it will be delivered into the grid. We all pay for energy to be supplied to the power grid on our behalf. Right now, you're paying for the standard mix of resources. When you sign up for clean energy, you will pay a small additional cost for solar, wind, small hydro, and other clean sources.

Q: Why is there an extra charge for clean energy?

A: Creating clean, renewable energy through wind power, small hydro-electric or landfill generation currently costs the producers a few cents more per kilowatt-hour (kWh) to produce. The more clean energy that is produced the more money clean providers have to invest in new research and facilities and the quicker the price of clean energy goes down to match that of fossil fuels and other traditional energy sources.

Q: What would I do if my power goes out?

A: You would call your regular utility. It will continue to serve you.

Q: What are the environmental benefits of using clean energy?

A: In the U.S., electric power generation accounts for two-thirds of the country's emissions of sulfur dioxide (a pollutant that causes acid rain) and more than a third of the carbon dioxide (the leading cause of global warming).

Conventional electricity production also creates nitrogen oxides (a cause of smog), mercury, nuclear waste and other environmental pollutants.

When clean electricity is generated, that displaces electricity generation, from conventional sources such as coal, oil, nuclear, large hydro or natural gas.

For every kilowatt-hour (kWh) of clean electricity there is one less kWh of conventional generation that is occurring. Clean, renewable electricity has lower or zero air emissions, does not produce nuclear waste and has other health and environmental benefits.

Q: What difference does my purchase make?

A: We already need more power plants. If there is demand for clean energy, new power plants can be built with clean energy technologies. Your individual choice to buy clean energy sends a powerful market signal that these are the energy sources the region wants.

Q: How much more will it cost?

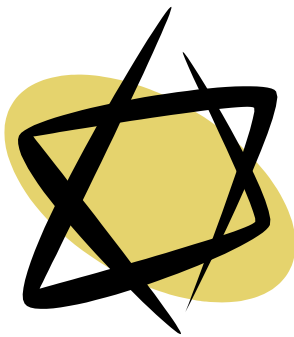
A: It varies depending upon your electric usage. If you have your electric bill handy, you can use a calculator at www.GoCleanEnergy.com

Help us to get the word out!

Help us to get the word out about clean energy by putting information about it in your own faith community newsletter or service bulletin.

Contact us at 860-231-8554 or info@irejn.org for information. We can send you a paragraph or an article in any format, any size! All you'll need to do is give it (or email it) to the bulletin/newsletter editor at your faith community

The Greening of Denominational Camps



When the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center was founded in 1896, a desire to teach environmental stewardship was not the reason. Initially called the Jewish Working Girls Vacation Society and located in New York, the group was established to provide young working women with a free vacation – a sorely needed respite from the grind of the garment industry and its sweatshops. Over the next 50 years, the agency grew, changed its name to honor Isabella Freedman, and moved to its current location in Falls River, CT. The Isabella Freedman Center continued to offer vacations and summer programs in the

beautiful setting of Western Connecticut, expanding the program to include GI's, students, and senior adults.

It wasn't until the early 1990's, however, that environmental stewardship began to play a more important role at Isabella Freedman. During that time, Nature's Classroom, an organization that takes children out to nature for a week, was bringing children to the Center. One of the teachers, who happened to be Jewish, noticed that many of the children were from Jewish day schools. This discovery led to the development of the Teva Learning Center, which was founded in 1994 to educate Jewish elementary school children about the connections between Judaism and the environment. In addition, the Center made an ambitious Environmental Commitment that called for them to, among other requirements, install state-of-the-art conservation measures, support local and organic farmers, and drastically limit the use of toxic chemicals on the grounds. Isabella Freedman is a member of the US Green Building Council and the Green Restaurant Association.

Adam Berman, Isabella Freedman's current Executive Director, began as an educator with Teva and was inspired by the program's blending of Jewish spirituality, social justice, and environmental stewardship. Encouraged by the success of the Teva Learning Center, Berman helped Isabella Freedman develop the Adamah Fellowship, which gives young people a chance to live at the center for three months while they grow in their faith, and learn about organic farming, sustainable living, and community building. Most applicants are fresh from college and interested in organic farming and communal living. The program is already a big hit; over one hundred applications have been received for fourteen summer fellowships. Berman is thrilled by Adamah's success and says he hopes that it is a "model of a spiritually vibrant and socially conscious community."

Isabella Freedman still offers senior adult vacations and has developed a Multiracial Jewish Network program as well. While the other programs were developed independently of the environmental commitment, Berman says that environmental stewardship is so important that it is integrated into the other programs. Berman hopes to encourage the Jewish community to address social ills in a meaningful and lasting way. At the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center, Berman says, "We hope to inspire the Jewish community to look outside ourselves and be models of what it means to love thy neighbor as thyself."

For more information about the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center, please visit their website at www.isabellafreedman.org.

Did You Know?



Torah law addresses many environmental issues including solid waste recycling, deforestation, species depletion and acid rain?

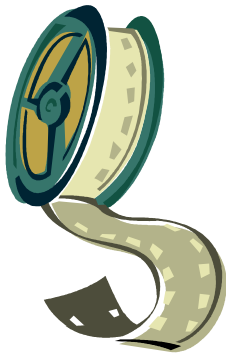
Jewish laws pertaining to creation care are called *Bal Tashchit*/Waste Not. Moses Maimonides, the genius of medieval Jewish thought, said that anything which has some potential usefulness that is not reused is a violation of the principle of *Bal Tashchit*/Waste Not.



Lakes Conference Center and Camp (UCC) has hired a sustainability coordinator Pammie Foxley.

“As Sustainability Coordinator at Silver Lake Conference Center, my work is manifested in two ways: through the Sustainability Workshops and through positive changes in the grounds and operations here at Silver Lake. The Workshop is offered to the campers during the summer time, and to Confirmation groups who come here on retreats and also to church youth groups, communities and even to local schools. It teaches about global warming and climate change, how we are contributing to global warming, and how we can take action to reduce our impact every day.

The Workshop leaves participants feeling educated, impassioned and armed with tools to effect change in their homes and communities!” Pammie can be reached at: sustainability@ctucc.org



At the Movies with IREJN

By Andrea Cohen-Kiener

End of Suburbia: Oil Depletion and the Collapse of the American Dream

Director: Gregory Greene

Distributor: The Electric Wall Paper, 2004

Format: VHS tape

A complex of interlocking factors requires an inexhaustible supply of petroleum for suburban life to flourish. Everything from where and how we build homes, where our foods are grown to how we understand and define safety and success. Except we don't have an inexhaustible supply and we need to take a look at that, sooner rather than later.

End of Suburbia explores the science, the economics and the psychology of “peaking”, the geological phenomena of a finite oil supply. The “talking heads” format cuts a clear picture of the scale of retooling that is necessary to avert an unsustainable culture just simply running out of gas.

Between World Bank executives, international geologists, think tankers and so on, this is not a fringe group of alarmist. The need for technological retooling is plainly out there, slowly making its way into our collective consciousness. End of Suburbia analyzes how our group mind avoids wrapping around this picture, delaying our capacity to be response-able.

At 78 minutes, it's just a little long for some adult education formats. It is a great film, certainly your core group will want to see it. Members, institutions or individuals, may borrow our films. Contact andrea@irejn.org for this and other materials.

Notes from the Field

We've met with Earth Ministries groups in several towns this winter. A number of them are running "green corners" in their bulletins, a place to insert ideas, resources and thought provoking questions, or inspiring stories about earth stewardship, activism and repair. One way we can Think Globally and Act Locally is to see what each congregation values. We think that these "green corners" can be a great way to keep the conversations moving through communities.

One resource you might access for action ideas is called Many Small Steps. This document is available on our website: www.irejn.org, under Practical Ideas.

Liturgical Materials

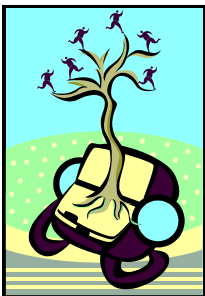


We want to spread the word of a famed Christian hymn that was borrowed and retrofitted by environmentalists because we thought the outcome was so singable.

To the tune of Angels We Have Heard on High, we bring you: Solar Carol.

See the sun how bright it shines on the nations of the earth
All who share this thing called life celebrate each day's rebirth
So-o-o-o-lar power: inexpensive energy (2x)
Brother River, so you hear how the valley calls you down
Send your rushing waters near, let the joyful hills resound
Sister Wind we've heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plain
And the windmills in reply echoing their glad refrain
How we love complexity when the answers rather plain
Join the sun in jubilee sing with us this joyous strain.

Networking and Membership Ideas



IREJN has formed interest groups in areas of importance to our members so announcements and resources can be shared. We encourage you to join any distribution list by emailing andrea@irejn.org or calling the office, 860-231-8554. Below is a brief description of the current distribution lists.

* Youth Initiative: Shares curriculum and programming ideas and announcements of events;

* Energy, Efficiency and Conservation: This is a network of architects, engineers, vendors and business people who have an interest in best building practices;

* Transportation* New! Would you like to stay in touch about ways to support rail, inter-modal transportation and fuel efficiency standards?

* Earth Ministries Leadership: This is for lay and clergy leaders to share teaching, preaching and action resources;

*Legislative Influencers and Writers: This group receives requests for opinion letters and public testimony for issues bearing on environmental justice and stewardship work. We are able to provide speaking points and guidelines for testimony.

*Food Systems: This group is sharing ideas and opportunities to support a vibrant local agricultural economy.

Thank you for joining with others to create real change.

Upcoming Events

Now thru June, Solar PVWorkshops

Free, informative workshops on the benefits and application of solar energy.
www.ctcleanenergy.com/renewable/StatewideSolarWorkshops.html

May 7, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Caring for Creation by the Committee on the Environment of the Episcopal Diocese of CT. A gathering of people of faith to celebrate God's gift of creation and work to care for it. Christ Church on the Guildford Green. For details: 203-453-2279 or orenvironment@ctdiocese.org

May 10, 7 p.m. Solar PVWorkshops

Naugatuck Valley Community Center www.nvcc.commnet.edu

May 12, 7 p.m. Solar PVWorkshops

Trumbull Public Library
www.trumbullct-library.org/directions.htm

May 14 PACE Solar House Tour, Canton

www.pace.org for details

May 16, 7:30 p.m. Solar PVWorkshops

Meriden Public Library
105 Miller Street, Meriden

May 19, 7:30 p.m. Solar PVWorkshops

Stamford Public Library
www.ferglib.org/ferg/branches/main.htm



America already produces enough clean energy to power every home in 11 states

America already produces enough clean energy to power every hospital in the country

America already produces enough clean energy to power every factory in NY, NJ, PA, CT, MA & RI

**Clean Energy, It's real, It's here. It's working.
Let's make more!**

www.GoCleanEnergy.com

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