



A Municipal Staff Community Carbon Challenge

Our Climate Is Changing

Pick up a newspaper, scan the Internet, or turn on TV and you're bound to find something on climate change. Indicators that our climate is changing are all around us: in reports of Arctic glaciers melting, rising sea levels, record heat waves and droughts, endangered species and more extreme and frequent storms. Faced with such a global problem, it's easy for individuals to feel overwhelmed and powerless to do anything.

What can households do about climate change?

Roughly half of all US greenhouse gas emissions come from households through their energy consumption for motor vehicles, home heating, and electricity. Moderate reductions in energy consumption by all of us can have a significant impact on reducing the risk of climate change and can save us money! By taking the Carbon Challenge, your community's residents will gain valuable insight into how their families use energy and will learn how simple actions they can take in their homes can reduce their energy consumption and their environmental impact.

How can the New England Carbon Challenge (NECC) help?

Our New England Carbon Estimator™ (<http://necarbonchallenge.org/calculator.jsp>) will help residents understand how they use energy, assess their current household emissions (their "carbon footprint") and map out a strategy to reduce their energy consumption, costs, and environmental impact.

Plus, we can "link" households together to show the impact of residents in your community taking action. Having one household take the Challenge is terrific, but having 100 homes take the Challenge together can reduce annual emissions by a million pounds or more! Imagine if residents knew that they were responsible for keeping a million pounds of CO₂ out of the atmosphere every year... that's like taking 80 cars off the road every day of the year!

We can also put your community "on the map" as taking action to address climate change and give residents the recognition they deserve. They might even want to challenge another town to a little friendly competition!

Households that have taken the Carbon Challenge have reduced their energy consumption by an average of 16% and are saving over \$800 a year.



Why not join them?

The New England Carbon Challenge™

Helping New England Households Meet the Challenge of Our Changing Climate

How can your Municipal Employees lead a Carbon Challenge?

1. **Identify a few Carbon Challenge team leaders** within the municipal structure to assist in leading your town's challenge.
2. **Have team leaders Take the Carbon Challenge for their own homes:** (<http://necarbonchallenge.org/calculator.jsp>). It will give you the best overview of our system and will likely answer your questions. We charge a nominal yearly fee of \$50 per community to assist in tracking and implementing a challenge.
3. **Contact us** (info@necarbonchallenge.org or 862-3128) to discuss your Challenge ideas and how to have your community listed in our online Carbon Estimator™. We'll give you all the details on the phone.
4. **Meet with the Town Manager and/or Mayor** to outline the proposed program and request their support. Some of the program details to determine (see our Community Carbon Challenge Implementation Guide):
 - What departments/offices/committees will be included in the Challenge?
 - How will you outreach to them? Letters, calls, emails?
 - When/where will employees take the Challenge?
 - Will you incentivize the Challenge? How? Recognition? Prizes for businesses?
 - What's the scope of your Challenge?
 - *Will this last a month or a year?
 - * Are you inviting other groups to join a larger Community Challenge?
 - How will you publicize the Challenge?
 - Will the Challenge utilize other town events in kicking off or wrapping up?
 - Are you challenging another group in town? Or another town? Will you include a fun wager or wrap-up event?
5. **Review the NECC document** "Framework for Implementing a Community Challenge" for further planning.
6. **Contact the NECC with your draft design** and we can assist you in refining the plan and holding planning conference calls if necessary. We'll set up your town's pull down listing on the Estimator.
7. Once you've publicized and launched, **have your municipal employees select your town's Challenge from the pulldown list** of Community Challenges. That way, their actions can be linked to your town.
8. **Encourage employees to save their challenge!** We will e-mail each Challenge Taker a customized report summarizing their challenge. Saving their challenge enables individuals to update their records.
9. **Share results, experiences and testimonials** before municipal meetings and in town communications.
9. Watch your numbers grow! Locate your town on our online map and publicize savings: http://necarbonchallenge.org/maps/challenge_takers.jsp and chart your progress in reducing your emissions and energy costs. Congratulations!

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