



Speaker Series:

Is your home healthy & energy efficient?

Residential Green building - what is it and why do you need to know more? On May 22, Barbra Batshalom of Green Homes North East (GHNE) will provide an overview of issues related to renovation and new construction, green building

strategies for healthy, efficient living and specific guidance for resources you will need
The session will address:

- Overview of issues in the average home related to energy losses, water efficiency, indoor air quality, ventilation, moisture intrusion and maintenance
- Recommendations for site and landscape design and maintenance
- Water recovery / reuse and conservation techniques
- Material and product selection and installation for healthy, durable interiors
- Energy efficiency strategies for short and long term investments
- Suggestions for how to engage architects, contractors and realtors to address these issues



The Green Decade Coalition/Newton
Co-sponsored with the Newton Free Library
**Environmental Speaker Series at
Newton Free Library**
Druker Auditorium
Mondays at 7:00pm



Barbra Batshalom, Executive Director of The Green Roundtable

May 22
"Is your home healthy & energy efficient?"



June 12
"Reflections on the Charles River"

Come see slides and hear a speaker from the **Charles River Watershed Association (CRWA)**

help us to fully understand the beauty and wonderful recreational resource of the Charles River. CRWA is a member of our Coalition and works to protect and make the river safe for our enjoyment.

Join us at these free public presentations!
Refreshments - Please bring your own mug
For information call 965-1995

How do you know if you are building green? How do you measure it? How can you tell if your contractor or architect is doing the right thing? GHNE has created a checklist that provides you with criteria to measure against. You can use it to ask informed questions or to evaluate renovation or construction work in your home.

Green Homes North East-GHNE- is a new residential green building program whose mission is to transform the residential building marketplace so that healthy, energy and resource-efficient homes become common practice.

To achieve its mission, GHNE is providing training, facilitation, and resources to the real estate, construction, design and regulatory bodies to help raise awareness and provide support to make green building mainstream.

Barbra Batshalom, Executive Director of The Green Roundtable, will be presenting this session. The Green Roundtable's mission is to mainstream sustainable development and provides many programs and resources to the community for green building.

Take advantage of new energy tax credits

Now is the time to insulate your house and get federal tax credits in addition to rebates from the utility companies. There are also rebates available for programmable thermostats and new windows; call or check online for details. Use the contact information in the table to learn the exact requirements to qualify for rebates, such as whether or not you need an energy audit, and any limits on rebates per household.

Rebates & Tax Credits	Insulation	Furnace Boiler	Water Heater	Deadline	Contact
Nstar gas heat customr	50% up to \$1500	\$150-500	\$300	April 30, 2006; call for renewal info	800-632-8300 www.masssave.com
Key Span Gas heat customr	20% up to \$750	Up to \$500	\$300	April 30, 2006; call for renewal info	800-292-2032 www.keyspanenergy.com
Federal*	10% up to \$500	\$150	\$300	1/06-12/07	888-Star-Yes

*These figures are not final. The U.S. Treasury has not yet provided final interpretation for IRS use.

Note on financing: If an official home energy rating or HERS report indicates that energy improvements will save you money, you may be eligible to pay for the improvements through your mortgage. Ask your lender about energy efficient mortgages (EEMs).

The Kyoto Committee of the Green Decade Coalition is offering a non-profit service to assist you with an energy efficient update of your home. We suggest applying the above rebates and tax credits to finance two tests on your home that will evaluate the effectiveness of any work you have done. The blower door and infrared camera test cost approximately \$200-400.

A blower door test works by having the doors and windows closed in the entire house, then setting up a powerful fan in an outside doorway. The area around the fan is sealed up so that when the fan is turned on, air is sucked from every part of the house. Since all other major openings are closed, any leaks create a noticeable breeze. The test can actually measure the pressure difference created by the fan and determine how close to "ideal" is the air-tightness of your home (not totally air-tight). The next step is sealing off the air leaks identified by this test.

The infrared camera test allows you to see through your walls and check to see if the insulation was actually

installed, and if so, if any air leaks are visible in the insulation. This shows up as dark areas within the "whiteness" of the insulation. Ideally this test would be performed in the presence of the contractor who installed your insulation so that you could point out which areas the contractor needs to go back and re-do. In some cases it is wise to do the tests before AND after any work done on the house. We are hoping to collect data on 50 houses, so simply sharing the data from these tests would significantly help the Kyoto project. Please contact www.greendecade.org or 617-965-1995 for more information. *by Michele Davis*

Do you have a Nominee for our **Environmentalist of the Year award?** Submit nominations to: **info@greendecade.org** by **MAY 20**. Nominate an individual, a group, and/or a business.

Energy Efficiency Fund- Raisers in Newton Schools



Kids can be great leaders and ambassadors for change. The GDC's Energy Committee has done programs at four elementary schools in Newton (Mason-Rice, Horace-Mann, Burr and Williams) where we talked about climate change and what children can do to make their homes more efficient and to use less energy. We present a 25-minute video (In Hot Water) produced by the New England Aquarium which highlights the impact of global climate change on the oceans and the animals and human communities which depend on them. In each case, we followed the assemblies with an energy efficient bulb sale with 100% of the proceeds going to the school's PTO. These programs were very successful! and well-received by teachers and parents, many of whom had discussions with their kids about energy-related problems and solutions. For information please contact Eric Olson (781-736-8363) or Heather Tausig (617-243-0363). *by Eric Olson*

Thanks ! and . . next deadline

For the next newsletter, please send submissions or requests by email to Ira Krepchin, irapk@alum.mit.edu by Friday, May 19, 2006.

Thanks for making this newsletter possible to Managing Editor Ira Krepchin, Co-editors Peter Smith/ Louise Bruyn, and those who wrote articles. Many thanks to our Newsletter Collator Chairs Marcia Cooper and Frank Propp, and their team for the last issue: Sarah Barnett, Hope Dauwalter, Ali Saminsky, Sharon Sholkin, Anna Verhulst, and Francine Vidockler.

Thanks for donations go to:



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Green Decade energy committee receives award

The Green Decade's Energy Committee, under the leadership of former chair Katherine Gekas has made a lot of things happen. The committee started the Kyoto project, successfully encouraged local business to get audits and upgrade their lighting systems, raised thousands of dollars for the solar installation at the Newton Community Services Center, and a host of other activities. As a result, the committee was awarded the "Outstanding Activism Award," at the recent Environmental Action 2006 Conference. The award cited their "successful initiatives to reduce energy consumption and increase use of renewable energy in Newton, MA." The conference is a joint effort of the Toxics Action and the New England Grassroots Environment Fund. Committee members have included Eric Olson, Ana Zarina Asuaje Solon, Louise Bruyn, Barney Freiberg-Dale, Rina Okawa, Amelia Ravin, Ann Berwick, Al Blankenship, and Laxmi Rao.

Are you getting your E-bulletins?

Once a month Green Decade sends out an E-bulletin to announce upcoming events and activities with key information about each one, including web links. E-bulletins are scheduled for the first week and sent to all GDC members and friends who have given us their e-mail addresses. If you haven't been receiving it, please make sure we have your correct e-mail address by sending your information to contact@green-decade.org and tell us that you want to subscribe to the E-bulletin. It's FREE and a quick way to find out what's happening! As always, our mailing lists are confidential and are not used for solicitations or sold or shared with any other organization. If you are a member you can also request receiving our newsletter via email instead of by postal service. *by Margaret Ford*

JOIN THE GREEN DECADE

Enclosed is: New member Renewal

(\$20.00 suggested annual individual donation)	(additional donation)	TOTAL
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Yes! I am joining/renewing for calendar 2006!

Most of our budget comes from memberships. Membership and contributor lists are not given out. You get the bi-monthly GREEN NEWS, discounts at selected local businesses, and more!

Amount	Person/Family	Business
\$ 20	Basic	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
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1000	Really Green	Benefactor

Please circle your category

For Friend or higher contribution, we acknowledge your donation in green news unless you check here

Thank you! Please send your tax deductible check payable to: GDC/N, P.O. Box 590242, Newton, MA 02459 May/June 2006

Board Member Spurs Action on Climate Change

Sometimes your job and your passion can coincide, and that's the case for GDC board member Amelia Ravin. A Newton resident and former energy planner with the Newton Public Buildings Department, Amelia has recently joined Cambridge-based engineering and consulting firm Camp Dresser & McKee (CDM), where she is helping the company fight global pollution through participation in Cambridge's Climate Leader Program. The

program is a communitywide partnership between the City of Cambridge, Massachusetts, and local businesses and organizations to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Through the program, a business or organization submits a completed agreement pledging to support the goals of the Cambridge Climate Protection Plan and to actively work on GHG-emission-reducing actions involving energy, transportation, and waste reduction. Among the commitments made by CDM's Cambridge-based world headquarters is to undertake actions that can involve energy efficiency improvements, use of renewable energy, transportation improvements, and reduced waste. CDM will report annually to the city on actions taken and progress made toward reducing GHG emissions.

More than 150 cities around the nation, and 600 cities worldwide have made official commitments to lowering greenhouse gas emissions and Newton is one of those — the Cambridge Climate Leaders is a great example for Newton to follow to gather support from private companies.

"We can't let America play Nero while the planet burns. But there's a growing sense of environmental responsibility and desire for change among Americans that needs to be encouraged. Instead of dwelling on the big picture, let's pull it down to a manageable scale. Let's bring it home, right down into our communities".

— Robert Redford on climate change (*Mother Earth News*, Dec. 2005/Jan. 2006) as quoted in *Ode*, May 2006.

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CALENDAR

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| May 13(Sat)
9:30am-12:30pm | Green Decade Plant & Garden Sale
10 Lindbergh Ave, W. Newton, 617 965-1995 |
| May 22(Mon)
7pm | "Is Your Home Healthy & Energy Efficient?" , Environmental Speaker Series, Newton Free Library, see article page 1. |
| May 24(Wed)
7pm | Green Decade Coalition Board meeting , call for location, 617 965-1995. |
| June 12 (Mon)
7pm | "Reflections on the Charles River" , Newton Free Library, Annual Meeting & Environmental Leadership Awards, See box page 1 this issue. |
| July 24
start date | "Farmers Market," volunteers needed, call for more information, 617 965-1995. |

Send environmental events to *GREEN NEWS*. email to Ira Krepchin by Friday, May 19, 2006 irapk@alum.mit.edu. We will list as space permits.

green decade
COALITION/NEWTON

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Recycling Update

The City is now publishing (electronically so no paper used) a recycling flyer to update residents about recycling efforts and programs. Here are a few highlights adapted from the first issue of the Green Bin:

More paper recycling. Thanks to citizen efforts, the City is recycling 52% of the paper that would normally enter the waste stream. That adds up to about 170 more tons than was recycled during the same period last year—an increase of 3.6%. And our trash total is down 640 tons. All-in-all, good progress towards the goal of recycling 60% of our paper.

Household Hazardous Waste collections. Collections will resume in May at the Recycling Depot. Bring us your old cleaners and pesticides. For a complete list of accepted materials, nontoxic alternatives, and household tips, and for exact dates for the collections, visit http://www.ci.newton.ma.us/DPW/recycling/hazardous_waste/hhw_days.htm.

Appliance Pick Up. If you have a large appliance to dispose of, please call Customer Service at 617.796.1000 to schedule a free pick up. Or, you can bring it to the Recycling Depot.

To subscribe to the Green Bin, send an email to recycling@newtonma.gov.

Call for Shoreline Volunteers!

Charles River Watershed Association is looking for volunteers to conduct Shoreline Surveys covering over half of the 80-mile river corridor. The visual monitoring effort will extend from Farm Road in Dover to the mouth of the Charles at the New Charles River Dam as a part of the "Find It and Fix It" Program being launched by CRWA and the Mystic River Watershed Association (MyRWA).

The Massachusetts Environmental Trust has awarded funding to both watershed associations to identify, monitor and help eliminate non-point source (NPS) pollution that still threatens the health of the two rivers.

These surveys will act as a baseline assessment, noting unmapped outfall pipes, erosion problems and other indicators of NPS pollution problems and help identify and prioritize problems of an urgent nature requiring immediate action. For more information on the project and the volunteer opportunity, visit www.charlesriver.org/projects/METwMyRWA/METFF.html Call: Pallavi Mande Phone :781-788-0007 ext-232 Email: pmande@crwa.org

Farmers Market volunteers We need you!

It's fun. Starting July 11, any time during the Summer and Fall. Join us in the tent to tell people about the Green Decade. Call 617 965-1995 to schedule a time.

Results of February Insulation Workshop

We tried a new format for the insulation workshop held on February 11, 2006! The Kyoto project had eight participants in a private home, which allowed for more of a dialogue during the presentation and during the two concurrent tours of the house with an infrared camera. We also demonstrated the blower door test and problem areas like crawl spaces. The participants found the workshop very informative and we look forward to our next workshop in Fall of 2006. *by Michele Davis*

New Millennium Trash Collection



Many communities in Massachusetts and across the country have found a new way to dramatically increase recycling rates and decrease production of refuse. The "pay as you throw" (PAYT) program operates the same way as other utilities—you pay for what you use.

The 117 Massachusetts cities, suburbs and rural communities currently using PAYT programs either have a base rate for one trash can and purchase of special bags required for additional trash, or require special bags/stickers for all trash. Officials find that once people have to pay for the amount of trash they put out, even the most recalcitrant recyclers fill up their bins for their free collection of containers and paper.

For example, the Town of Wrentham adopted PAYT in July of 2004. To date they have experienced a 34% reduction in solid waste tonnage (down from 44 to 30 pounds per household), 36% increase in recycling tonnage and \$125,000 savings in one year (almost three times their expected savings of \$50,000).

It may appear that PAYT is a new tax, but in reality it is just a reorganization of the refuse system. We all currently pay for trash to be picked up, but the expense is not always billed separately so consumers are not aware that they are paying for curbside trash service.

One concern among officials is often the risk of illegal dumping, especially for items such as white goods, construction and demolition waste, tires and yard waste. The key is aggressive enforcement early on, and the provision of opportunities for disposal of bulky waste and yard waste.

The three advantages of a PAYT program are: economics, equity and environment. The reduction in solid waste translates to less extraction of natural resources, which leads to reduction in greenhouse gas emissions associated with the manufacture, distribution, use and subsequent disposal of products. Specifically, PAYT has been shown to reduce 15% of green house gas emissions.

by Michele Davis Chair, Newton Recycling Committee



Representatives of the Green Decade board of directors and members of the Green Decade Coalition / Newton join representatives of MassPIRG, Newton's Mayor and Alderman Ken Parker to honor State Representative Ruth Balser as a champion for the environment. L-R: Marcia Cooper, Dan Ruben, Maev Ward, Ken Parker, Rohna Shoul, Michelle Davis, Rep. Ruth Balser, Mayor David Cohen, representative from MassPIRG, Francoise LaMonica, Lois Levin and representative from MassPIRG.

MASSPIRG honors Rep. Ruth Balser

On February 22nd, MASSPIRG presented State Representative Ruth Balser (D-Newton) with a Public Interest Champion award. Representative Balser has been a champion of a number of crucial environmental issues. She has fought to strengthen protection for open space and public land throughout the commonwealth and is the House sponsor of a bill that would protect and preserve our public lands. She is also a champion in the fight to stop an out-of-state energy conglomerate from building an LNG facility in the Boston Harbor Islands State Park and National Recreation Area. Locally, Representative Balser organized and chaired a Task Force dedicated to the restoration of Hammond Pond, and also helped to secure an agreement from the MWRA to restore the platform under Echo Bridge in Hemlock Gorge, providing access to this unique natural resource.

Summer environmental science program available

Envi Sci is a unique summer program, part of the Newton Conservation Commission, that lets students enjoy exploring the wilderness while learning about the environment. Every year, students have fun hiking, biking, canoeing, and climbing Mt. Washington, the tallest peak in the Northeast. They also participate in an environmental clean-up project. The program can take up to 40 girls and boys who will be entering grades 7, 8, 9, or 10. For details, call 617-969-0288 or email: contact@newtonenvisci.org. For more information, visit our website at www.newtonenvisci.org

by David Backer



League panel looks at environmental issues

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts tackles environmental issues at its Council 2006 meeting. Douglas Foy, former Secretary of the Office of Commonwealth Development will be the keynote speaker. Other panelists include Commissioner Robert Gollodge of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, Leise Jones of New England Clean Water Action, Alan Noguee of the Union of Concerned Scientists, and Dr. John Warner, Director of the Green Chemistry at UMass-Lowell. The event takes place Saturday, May 20, 2006 at the Quincy Marriott. For more information, visit www.lwvma.org.

NewTV green update

The schedule for the Green Decade-produced Environment Show is Mondays: 3:00 p.m.; Tuesdays: 1:30 a.m. and 11:30 p.m.; Wednesdays: 11:30 a.m.; Thursdays: 12:00, 4:00, and 7:30 p.m. and Saturdays: 10:00 a.m. The Newton's public access is NewTV Blue channel, number 10 on Comcast and 15 on RCN. The topic for May's broadcast will be energy issues, including how to buy renewable energy certificates (commonly known as RECs). Volunteers are needed to help with the effort—in particular, if you'd like to learn how to use the video equipment to record events like Green Decade lecture series, please call the GDC office at 617-965-1995. www.newtonenvisci.org

by Francoise LaMonica