

# green news

NEWSLETTER OF THE GREEN DECADE / NEWTON



VOL.20 - NO.1

JAN / FEB 2010

Environmental  
Speaker Series

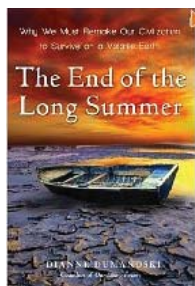
Co-sponsored with the Newton Free  
Library at the library Mondays, 7pm

**Monday, January 11 - 7pm:**  
*Gretchen Brewer, Earth Circle*  
*Conservation & Recycling*  
**Affluenza: Antidotes  
& Opportunities**



Drawing on her many years experience, Gretchen Brewer will share thoughts on forests, peak oil, climate change what we can do. What does Zero Waste entail? What is the future of recycling? The talk will include a hands-on component; come prepared to participate if you wish by bringing a plastic "cause" bracelet, a plastic hospital wristband or a credit card-type plastic card you no longer want for an interesting demonstration. Gretchen Brewer has over 30 years experience in the field of recycling. As a staff-member at the Resource Center in Chicago she authored the Chicago Recycling Network Plan for Mayor Harold Washington. In 1985, she joined the staff of MA DEQE, the agency responsible for recycling planning for the Commonwealth.

**Monday, February 8 - 7pm:**  
**Dianne Dumanowski will talk about:**  
***The End of the Long Summer***



Science journalist Dumanowski proceeds from the established facts that 1) human activity is rapidly shifting the balance of atmospheric gases away from historic normality, and 2) civilization has flourished during an 11,700-year period—an unusual "long summer"—of climatic stability. In subsequent chapters remarkable for lucidly explaining such matters as how ozone is destroyed by refrigerant gases and what ice cores containing thousands of years' worth of trapped air reveal about climate change, she unsensationally impresses upon us how factual those two propositions are. Now the first is affecting the second, such that the long summer is about to give way to conditions that will make agriculture and other mainstays of current human life vastly more difficult, if not impossible. She cautions against trusting technology but for faith in what humanity proved in the millennia namely, its prodigious adaptiveness.



Mayor Cohen signs the 1st stretch code adopted by a city in Massachusetts

## Newton approves Stretch Code for energy efficiency

Last May the state Board of Building Regulations and Standards added an appendix, known as the Stretch Code, to the state building code. The appendix, intended to improve energy efficiency of both residential and commercial buildings, allows towns and cities in the Commonwealth to adopt requirements beyond the state's base code. In November the Board of Aldermen made Newton the state's first municipality to adopt the Stretch Code.

The State of Massachusetts approved the code for communities that want to achieve greater energy usage reductions than they could achieve through the base energy code. Potential energy savings through the code range from 39% energy reduction for new homes to 29% reduction for large renovations to 20% reduction for large commercial buildings. The guidelines are intended to move the state toward its declared goals of building zero-net-energy buildings by 2030 and the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions by 80% of 1990 levels by the year 2050.

Newton has officially adopted the Stretch Code, which fulfills one of five requirements Newton must meet to receive state funding, provided under the Green Communities Act, to municipalities that commit to energy efficiency and renewable energy.

The code had extensive support in the community, with Green Decade and the High Performance Building Coalition speaking in favor of passage at a public hearing sponsored by the Zoning and Planning Committee. The committee voted unanimously, and without further discussion, to recommend adoption of the measure by the full Board of Aldermen. The new standard will take effect in Newton this month.

by Ed Cunningham

## Environment Art Contest for Newton students in K to 5!

New for 2010 -- the Environment Art Contest, open to Newton students in grades K to 5 who live or attend school in Newton! Last year more than 150 Newton students participated in the Energy Conservation Essay [and] Art Contests. This year's art contest expands the scope to the environment in general and how students are helping their schools and Newton "go green." Unlike previous years, there will be no essay contest. Art entries are due March 15, and the awards ceremony will be held in April at the

War Memorial Auditorium, City Hall.

The contest structure will be different, too, with entries from each of the six grade levels judged with their own grade, rather than combined with other grades. Entries for Grades K, 1 and 2 will be posters from teams of four to six students each, with as many teams in the classroom as the teacher elects to have. Grades 3, 4 and 5 have the option of team entry or individual entries, depending on the teacher's decision.

## Send us your energy data

Thanks to those Green Decade members who have filled out the energy spreadsheet! At this time we have received spreadsheets from about 2% of our membership and would like to get information from more of you. We have installed an interactive spreadsheet on our web site at [www.greendecade.org](http://www.greendecade.org) and are already receiving data online. PLEASE use this as your inspiration to get the job done! Or send it directly to Michele Davis at [ReuseRecycle@rcn.com](mailto:ReuseRecycle@rcn.com). We cannot win the race (to reduce energy consumption before it's too late) unless we know our starting point!

*by Michele Davis*



*At the Green Decade Yard Sale Ira Krepchin, Green News Managing Editor & Board Member checks out Albert Einstein's photo (considering an idea for the next newsletter?)*

## Honor our out-going Mayor

Thanks to David Cohen who has been supportive of all our initiatives over his years in office. Green Decade honored him in June with our Environmental Leadership Award at the Annual Meeting. The award certificate starts: "You are one of the most articulate local climate protection leaders in the Northeast. You have contributed financial support and leverage, political will and solid commitment to reducing the emissions that affect climate change". While the Mayor's environmental achievements are much too extensive to detail here, our page one article on the stretch code features his leadership. Also see the award details on our web site.

*by Peter Smith*

## Tribute to a good friend

Bob Zeeb, former board member and clerk of Green Decade died recently when he fell from his bike. He was training to ride his bike across the country in 2011 by riding 60 miles several times each week. Bob was a dedicated environmentalist and was about to lead a new Eco-Team Program at 1st Unitarian Society in Newton. *by Peter Smith*

There will be one first-place team winner from each class level, and three honorable mentions. Each first-place team will get a gift basket of eco-friendly / nontoxic art supplies (valued at \$50) for the teacher. Individual entries from 3rd, 4th and 5th graders will have prizes for first- and second-place winners of \$35 and \$25 respectively, plus three honorable mentions for each grade.

All winners will be recognized at the Awards Ceremony, and all students who enter will receive a certificate of participation. In addition, the names of all participants will be entered in a raffle for another basket of art supplies, valued at \$50, to be drawn at the awards ceremony.

This year's contest coordinators are Antonia DiMambro (Newton North 2010) for the Art Contest, and Amanda Frank Webber, Fundraising. Thanks also go to the Schools Outreach Committees, Students for a Greener World, the Newton schools and the Newton PTO Council for helping coordinate the 2010 contest.

Students must register on-line to participate in this year's contest. Contest details are available on the Green Decade/Newton Web site, along with the Contest Registration Form. The contest is cosponsored by the Green Decade/Newton and other organizations. Questions or information: 617-965-1995 or [energycontest@greendecade.org](mailto:energycontest@greendecade.org) *by Margaret Ford*

## Nontoxic solution to remove head lice

Thanks to Deborah Altschuler from the National Pediculosis Association®, Inc., (NPA) for donating safe, effective head lice and nit removal combs to Green Decade. The NPA is the only nonprofit health and education agency dedicated to protecting children from the misuse of potentially harmful lice and scabies pesticidal treatments.

As part of its mission, the NPA works to encourage our nation's health and child-care professionals to adopt standardized head-lice management programs in an effort to keep the children in school free of lice and nits. Please call Green Decade at 617-965-1995 if you would like to pick up a LiceMeister comb (while supplies last). More info is available at [www.headlice.org](http://www.headlice.org).

## Volunteer grant writer needed to help us fund new projects!

*Call Marcia Cooper: 617 964-8567*



*Eco Baskets a perfect gift for Valentines Day !*

## A special thanks to Swartz Hardware

When Michael Swartz, owner of Swartz Hardware, read an article about Green Decade's gift EcoBaskets in the Nov/Dec issue of the Green News, he wasted no time to contact us with an offer we could not refuse. Michael's generous offer has been to feature and sell our beautiful mini and large gift EcoBaskets in his store with all proceeds going to Green Decade!

Michael is the grandson of Jacob and Julia Swartz, European immigrants who founded Swartz Hardware at their 353 Watertown Street location in 1890. In 1993, their business became a member of True Value Company, operating as Swartz True Value. Please visit their Web site <http://www.swartztruevalue.com/>, and if you are looking for the perfect all-occasion environmentally friendly gift, you know just where to find it.

Our mini EcoBasket, only \$25, contains two energy-efficient lightbulbs; nontoxic cleaner; one reusable shopping bag; an energy-saver book; aerators to reduce water use; electric-outlet gasket insulators; a Polar reusable water bottle; a complimentary GD/N membership and discounts from local vendors.

Our large EcoBasket, priced at \$50, has all of the above plus nontoxic hand soap; a second reusable bag; Frost King rope caulk; a power strip; Trader Joe's tissues; and a bottle of VinoDivino wine. EcoBaskets are assembled by adults with developmental disabilities at the Barry Price Center in Newton.

*by Marcia Cooper*

### Thanks ! and . . next deadline

For the next newsletter, please send submissions or requests by e-mail to Ira Krepchin, [irapk@alum.mit.edu](mailto:irapk@alum.mit.edu), by Wednesday, January 13, 2010.

Thanks for making this newsletter possible to Managing Editor Ira Krepchin, Editor Peter Smith, Copy Editor Susan Tornheim and those who wrote articles. Many thanks to our Newsletter Collator chairs Marcia Cooper and Frank Propp, with their team for the last issue: Sarah Barnett, Polly Kalman, Frank and Edie Propp, Davida Weiss.

## Thanks for donations go to:

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**BUSINESS PATRON:** United Parish of Auburndale

**BUSINESS DONOR:** Sage Builders, LLP

**BUSINESS FRIEND:** Needham Garden Center, Mass Energy Consumers Alliance

**GIFTS:** Carole & Alan Kushnir (in honor of M. Cooper);



## Wow! NEGEF grant award!

Green Decade extends a special thanks to the New England Grassroots Environment Fund (NEGEF) for awarding our group a \$1,000 grant for Newton's Eco-Team Project. This will help to spread the word to Newton residents on how they may join others in our community to reduce their home energy usage and save money. NEGEF's mission is: to energize and nurture long-term civic engagement in local initiatives that create and maintain healthy, just, safe and environmentally sustainable communities. Since its inception 12 years ago, NEGEF has built up a core grant making program that has funded over 1,000 different community groups located in over 40% of New England's cities and towns putting over \$2.5 million directly into these communities. Visit their website at [www.grassrootsfund.org/](http://www.grassrootsfund.org/) <<http://www.grassrootsfund.org/>> to sign up for their newsletter and/or take part in their root\$hare fundraising campaign.

*by Marcia Cooper*

# We appreciate all our wonderful 2009 volunteers !

Close to 300 volunteers generously donated their time in 2009 to Green Decade's environmental projects, programs and events! We look forward to your involvement with Green Decade in 2010 as we celebrate our 20th Anniversary. (apologies for any omissions)

## Thank you all!

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J. Douglas Leith  
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Julia Dziamba  
Lucia & Dorothea Dolan & Venus the Wonder Dog  
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Maren Gunning & Chris Kjellson  
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Alex Kaufman  
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The recycled obstacle course gang

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# These fine people made our programs happen !

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 Leticia Meza-Reidiwald  
 Nathan Phillips



Margaret Ford, Mary-Ann Greene, Sunwoo Kahng, Maeve Ward with Mayor Cohen who declared Alternatives to Pesticides Month in the city of Newton

**\*Bob Warren**

Julia Weiss  
 Rachel White  
 Meg Wilcox  
 Julia Wolfe



One of the farmers market Green Decade teams

**Students for a Greener World**

Roz Aronow  
 Noah Brown  
 Hilary Brumberg  
 Michael Costello  
 Sophia Delaney  
 Antonia DiMambro  
 Jay Feinstein  
 Annalisa Flynn  
 \*Margaret Ford  
 Malini Gandhi  
 Eliana Gevelber  
 Noa Golan  
 Helen Haskin  
 Jason Kuo  
 Antonia Nichols  
 Carolyn Ranti  
 Trevor Romich  
 Zachary Rosenof  
 Isabel Snyder  
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Lois Levin

**Treasurer**

Jean MacRae

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 Fran Seasholes

**Website Manager**

Tom Boyd

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 Leah Budson  
 Carey Buttfield  
 \*Louise Bruyn  
 Suzanne Cammer  
 Diana Cartier  
 Regina Cati  
 Eileen Chodos  
 Sheila Clawson  
 Ben D. Cobb  
 Allison Conant  
 Marcia Cooper

**Yard Sale (continued)**

Jack Cosgrove  
 Deb Crossley  
 Maryann Cullen  
 Molly Dalzell  
 Michele Davis  
 Lucia & Fred Dolan  
 Ann Dorfman  
 Beverly & Tom Droz  
 Gail Elson  
 Sue Flicop  
 Margaret Ford  
 Patricia Foster  
 Sarah Gant  
 Jenn & Ari Goldberg  
 Elizabeth Graywolf  
 Mary-Ann Greene  
 Jacqui Gross  
 \*Barbara Herson  
 Hans Hinterreger  
 Dinora Justice  
 Marilyn Justice  
 Harriet & Richard Kahn  
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 Miles Smith  
 Dede Vittori  
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 Alla & Mark Webster  
 Ros Winsor  
 Barbara Wong  
 Yvonne Wong  
 Gil Wooley  
 Russell Yashinsky



Deb Crossley, co-chair High Performance Bldg Coalition & Barbara Herson, past president, Environmental Speaker Series & Yard Sale chair at the Yard Sale



Françoise LaMonica, Elie Goldberg, Rohna Shoul, Maeve Ward & Marcia Cooper at the Green Decade information table

## \$95M raised for schools' solar Super green supermarket

The Newton School Committee recently approved the installation of small solar energy systems for the Oak Hill and Bigelow Middle Schools. Included will be a data acquisition system for students to monitor the amount of energy produced. Each solar system will be capable of producing up to 2,500 watts of energy. NSTAR is expected to install the panels during the spring of 2010.

To cover the cost of the entire project, Newton will be receiving a \$95,500 grant from the Massachusetts Renewable Energy Trust's Clean Energy Choice matching grant program. This grant will also provide funding for the purchase of eleven Solar Powered Trash Compactors to replace traditional outdoor trash containers. The compactors automatically compress trash to reduce the number of collection trips and eliminate trash overflow. The Trust matched donations provided by Newton residents to the Clean Energy Choice Fund by way of the Mass Energy Consumers Alliance's New England Wind Fund.

Green Decade/Newton, under the leadership of Ana Zarina Asuaje Solon, played a lead role with other non-profit groups, City officials and business leaders to raise awareness of solar energy and to raise funds through the "Put Solar on Newton Schools Campaign."

Advocates for putting solar installations on school buildings included members of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Renewable Resources established in 2000 through a federal grant. Committee members include Co-Chairs, David Del Porto and Ira Krepchin, Peter Barrer, Katherine Gekas, Ed Craddock, George Nesgos, Frank Gundal, Alderman Brian Yates and David Tannozzini, Newton's Public Buildings Department Engineer. This committee's initial function was to advise the Mayor on solar energy opportunities. Their role was later expanded to advise on all renewable resources and to work with the Mass Energy Consumer's Alliance.

The Newton Citizens Commission on Energy, chaired by Eric Olson, was formed to develop and implement the city's energy action plan including using clean energy for Newton's public buildings. The committee includes three people appointed by the Mayor, three by the Board of Aldermen, one by the School Committee, one by the League of Women Voters/Newton and one member by the Newton/Needham Chamber of Commerce. David Tannozzini is an ex officio member of this committee.

Sustainable Newton with David Del Porto, Brooke Lipsitt and Peter Smith also contributed on efforts to bring solar on Newton's schools.

*by David Tannozzini*

## Your choice: e-mail or print

Green Decade members have chosen to save paper and postage by receiving the green news on line, instead of by snail mail. An additional advantage is that you get to see the pictures in vibrant Technicolor and you can send it on to your friends with a click of your mouse! Call 617 965-1995

The Star Market on Route 9 in Chestnut Hill reopened at the end of October after being closed for more than year while the existing store was torn down and rebuilt. Green Decade board members were among several dozen participants who were given a tour of the new store and its energy-saving features. Actual performance data is not available yet, but most of the features that we saw sure look promising.

- **Fuel cell:** The store is powered by a 400 kW fuel cell that converts natural gas into hydrogen and then into electricity. Waste heat from the process is used in a variety of ways, including space heating and hot water for cleaning. The process converts almost three quarters of the energy that it takes in into useful energy, compared to less than one third in a conventional power plant/grid system. The store is the first user in the U.S. of this particular fuel-cell model.

- **Refrigeration:** The store's refrigeration system won an EPA "Green Chill" award for environmental friendliness. The store uses about 90% less ozone-depleting refrigerant than conventional stores of a similar size. Many of the refrigerated display cases in the store also boast automatically controlled screens that reduce heat gain in the cases when the store is closed.

- **Lighting:** The store is the only one in the country that is entirely lit by light-emitting diodes (LEDs). LEDs are not always the most efficient light source, but the lighting is very effective—if you didn't know they were LEDs, in most cases you couldn't tell. Time will tell whether or not this particular installation is truly a low-energy design, but it does show that this emerging lighting technology has potential for the future.

*by Ira Krepchin*

### Our Mission

Our mission is to create an environment in better balance with the natural world by making significant, measurable improvements in the way we use resources.

Goals include helping households, businesses and institutions to: Increase energy efficiency and seek alternatives to fossil and nuclear fuels; Use IPM and organic alternatives to pesticides; Promote high performance (green) building measures; Prevent pollution through source reduction and reduced consumption; Promote reuse and recycling practices; Improve waste disposal practices; Conserve water and other resources.

Our programs are designed to build awareness, provide opportunities for public dialogue, and educate and empower citizens to take personal and civic action.

## Eco-Team Project Update

The launch of the Newton Eco-Team Project on Sept. 16 ushered in a new era of green awareness in our city. Attended by more than 50 civic, faith, educational and political leaders, it represented an exciting start to a three-year program to reduce Newton's carbon footprint by 25%.

Eco-Teams are groups of five to eight households that meet together four times, working with a user-friendly workbook to learn simple, low or no-cost methods of reducing their residential carbon footprint. Being on a team is fun, social and inspiring.

A growing list of committed volunteers has stepped up to provide valuable resources for the project. Marcel Meth is the webmaster, Elsa Lawrence and Vicki Ashley are working with partner groups and individuals, Julie Goodman is heading the elementary school effort, and Ramona Hamblin is coordinating middle schools. Alex Kaufman is working with local colleges. High school students are helping Eco-Teams calculate before and after carbon footprints.

Groups that have committed to form Eco-Teams include the YMCA; the JCC; the Rotary Club, which has made Eco-Teams its project for this year; churches and synagogues; neighborhood associations and many Newton public schools. For a complete list of partner groups, see our Web site, [www.newtonecoteams.org](http://www.newtonecoteams.org).

The goal for our first year is the creation of 200 teams. Currently there are 50 teams in process—a wonderful start. Make sure to get in on the trend. Contact Jay Walter at [entasis@rcn.com](mailto:entasis@rcn.com) or Bonnie Glickman at [bglickman@mindspring.com](mailto:bglickman@mindspring.com) to find out how to be part of an Eco-Team.

*by Bonnie Glickman*

## Volunteer opportunities

### Help with our 20th Anniversary Celebration.

A superb short-term volunteer opportunity is to lend a hand with Green Decade's 20th Anniversary Committee as plans are made for our upcoming celebration in June. Green Decade's past president, Bev droz, has graciously offered to chair this committee. For anyone with limited volunteer time, your participation on the smallest of tasks will always be welcome. A lunchtime meeting is scheduled for Tues, Jan. 19 at City Hall. If you are interested, please contact Marcia at [marciacooper@greendecade.org](mailto:marciacooper@greendecade.org).

**Join the Faith and Environment Committee** of Green Decade. One of the functions of this committee is to provide information from Green Decade on how to increase energy efficiency in places of worship. Another priority is to establish groups within congregations to help reduce home energy usage. Contact [www.greendecade.org](http://www.greendecade.org) if you are interested in helping your religious congregation to develop more environmentally friendly practices.

*by Marcia Cooper*

## Cut energy used by home electronic devices



Some people call it phantom power, to others it is vampire power, but whatever the name, many electronic devices still use electricity even when they are turned off. Cutting power at the socket can help to make sure that this does not happen. An easy way to do that is with a power strip/surge protector. You can plug multiple devices into the strip and shut them all off at once, depriving the vampires of their sustenance. Some power strips, sometimes called smart strips, can sense when power is off to one device, like a PC, and shut off power to its peripherals as well. Other models include occupancy sensors that can shut off power after a certain period of time when no one is nearby.

The U.S. Department of Energy provides some guidelines for turning off computers to reduce their energy use (see [http://www.energysavers.gov/your\\_home/appliances/index.cfm/mytopic=10070](http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/appliances/index.cfm/mytopic=10070)). Though there is a small surge in energy when a computer starts up, this small amount of energy is far less than the energy used when a computer is running for long periods of time. For energy savings, consider turning off the monitor if your PC is not in use for more than 20 minutes, and turning off both the CPU and the monitor if you're not going to use your PC for more than two hours. Use a power strip/surge protector to prevent this equipment from drawing power even when shut off, or unplug extra equipment when it's not in use for an extended time. Most PCs reach the end of their "useful" life long before the effects of being switched on and off multiple times have a negative impact on their service life. The less time a PC is on, the longer it will last.

Power strips are widely available in electronic stores, and NSTAR and National Grid customers can get discounts for smart strips at <http://www.energyfederation.org/cal/default.php>.

*by Marcia Cooper*

## Advocacy - 350 parts/per/mil



Green Decade members turned out in force in Newton Centre on a frigid evening vigil in December to encourage the climate change talks in Copenhagen to come up with a substatoial agreement that includes a target to bring down CO2 to 350 parts per million and protect the earth's natural environment for the future.

**"...120 book publishers have joined the Green Press Initiative in the U.S. & Canada, pledging to shift to recycled paper. 42% of the world's tree harvest is used to make paper."** - "Publishing industry begins to go green - indicators" p 9, YES, a journal of positive futures, Summer '04.



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## CALENDAR

<b>Jan 11 (Mon)</b> 7pm	<b>Affluenza: Antidotes &amp; Opportunities</b> Gretchen Brewer, Earth Circle Conservation & Recycling. Environmental Speaker Series, Newton Free Library. See box on page one. Tea & cookies, Free
<b>Jan 19 (Tues)</b> 12 noon	<b>Planning for Green Decade's 20th Anniv.</b> Meeting at City Hall. Everyone welcome, Call Marcia Cooper for details: 617 964-8567 See article on page seven.
<b>Feb 6 (Sat)</b> 1-4pm	<b>Insulating Your Older Home</b> - workshop Newton History Museum at Jackson Homestead. \$30/person (\$15/Green Decade & Newton Hist. Society members. Register @ www.greendecade.org
<b>Feb 8 (Mon)</b> 7pm	<b>The End of the Long Summer</b> - Dianne Dumanowski, author, will discuss her latest book. Environmental Speaker Series, Newton Free Library. See box on page one Tea & cookies, Bring your own mug. Free
<b>Feb 13 &amp; 14</b> Sat 10-noon Sun 1-3pm	<b>Urban Ark Seminar &amp; Tour: A Model of Green Living</b> - \$20; \$15 for Green Decade members/students. Register: 617 969-5927

Send environmental events to GREEN NEWS. email to Ira Krepchin by Wed. Jan 13, 2010 irapk@alum.mit.edu We will list as space permits.

*Put label here*

**Winter Tip: eco-friendly ice melt**  
<http://www.grist.org/article/De-salt-of-the-Earth/>  
**How to Protect Your Plants When You Melt Sidewalk Ice**  
<http://www.gardensalive.com/article.asp?ai=725>

**JOIN THE GREEN DECADE**

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