



## OUR MISSION

*Cool Rochester is dedicated to making this planet a healthier, more sustainable environment to pass on to our children and grandchildren.* To accomplish this goal, we need to make changes now—and we need to start at home. That's why Cool Rochester offers the tools to empower the Rochester, NY community (businesses, colleges/universities, communities and individuals) to: Understand your carbon footprint; Reduce your energy consumption and carbon emissions; Help create and implement organizational policies and practices; Realize the future environmental benefits of making lifestyle changes now; Appreciate immediate benefits, including: Lower energy bills, A cleaner environment, Improved physical health (from eating locally and walking/biking more). Actions promote change. Together we can preserve our natural resources and ensure a brighter future for our children.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**ADK Outdoor Expo @ Mendon Ponds Beach** Saturday June 12 9AM - 4 PM

**Brighton Energy Fair @ Brighton Farmers Market, Brighton High School** Sunday June 13 9AM - 1PM

**Cool Rochester General meeting @ Downtown United Presbyterian Church, North Fitzhugh Street,** Monday June 28 6:30 PM - 8 PM



## ENERGY INDEPENDENCE BEGINS AT HOME

By Bob Siegel

At this point, I think it's safe to say that just about all of us feel some unease about the energy picture, whether it's the climate crisis, as confirmed yet again this month by reports from [NOAA](#) that this year is on track to break another temperature record, the looming specter of [peak oil](#) and the impending price shocks that are only a matter of time, or the massive [Gulf Oil leak](#) that is threatening lives and livelihoods across an entire region of the world.

All of these portend the beginning of the end of the fossil fuel era and the way of life that came with it. Whether we take concerted action as a society in recognition of the fact that these fuels are simply too risky (is nuclear really any safer?) and too costly to continue using or we simply wait until they begin to run out and the prices soar out of reach; it is only a matter of time before the ramifications of our

obviously misguided energy policy come knocking on each of our doors.

Many of us feel powerless in the face of these monumental changes, but in fact, now is the time to begin taking steps that will help us weather the storm, many of which will, in fact, lessen the storm's impact for everyone. [Transition Towns](#) is an organization that began in England and is now sweeping across this country, helping people address the question of economic resiliency in the face of looming increases in energy prices.

Is it too soon to begin thinking about going [solar](#)? Imagine how secure you would feel having your own energy source sitting on your roof as you watched energy prices go soaring through it. Perhaps you might even have an electric car or a plug-in hybrid vehicle that you can charge overnight, for free, from the panels. Skeptics say that we could never switch over quickly enough to make a difference, but if people switched to solar at anywhere near the rate they've switched to [cell phones](#), you better believe it would make a huge difference.

As you can see, getting prepared doesn't necessarily mean giving up our current way of life entirely, though it does require changing more than the way we power it. We will need to reconsider the amount and kind of goods we buy, the kinds of food we eat and where they come from, as well as our way of dealing with waste and water if we are going to be able to make the transition to a

sustainable society. If perhaps you are not ready to become your own power company, there is at least one thing that you can and should do right away. Become informed. Stay tuned to this [website](#). Follow me on [Twitter](#). Check out my [book](#) and take a look at this really cool [energy usage visualization tool](#). This iconic tool was developed for GE by [Lisa Strausfeld](#), an alum of the [MIT Media Lab](#). She is considered by many to be a master information architect. Her talent apparently lies in her ability to present complex data in ways that are extraordinarily accessible. The icons in the graphic represent various home appliances and it shows how much power they require or how much energy they will consume over a given time frame. If you play with it for a few minutes, you will learn that an electric can opener uses five times more power than cable box, and that an LCD TV uses significantly less power than a plasma model. You can also sort the results in several ways including how many equivalent gallons of gas the device would require, and how long you can run each device on one kilowatt hour of electricity. The results for this one range from 60,000 messages on an answering machine (does anyone still use those?) to 3 minutes of run time for an electric furnace. My only complaint about the site is that it doesn't show how much carbon dioxide is generated by each activity. For a rough estimate though, you can take the number of equivalent gallons of gas and multiply by twenty, which is the number of pounds of carbon given off when a gallon of gas is burned.

Read more:

[http://www.triplepundit.com/2010/05/energy-independence-begins-at-home/?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Feed:+AskPablo+\(Triple+Pundit+Headlines\)#ixzz0q6j6OHSO](http://www.triplepundit.com/2010/05/energy-independence-begins-at-home/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed:+AskPablo+(Triple+Pundit+Headlines)#ixzz0q6j6OHSO)

## **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

As Cool Rochester continues to develop momentum, we find ourselves in need of volunteers to sign up for some specific upcoming events: We need volunteers to help at the events noted on the **Calendar of Events** to promote Cool Rochester. If anyone has a few hours to help out on any of these dates, please email us with specifics. All handout materials (such as brochures) will be supplied. You just need to bring yourself and your enthusiasm. Please send a note to [CoolRochester@gmail.com](mailto:CoolRochester@gmail.com) and indicate which events are of interest & we will contact you.

Cool Rochester is a 100% volunteer organization, and is looking to fill a few more volunteer posts in the next couple of months. Please contact: [Info@CoolRochester.org](mailto:Info@CoolRochester.org) if you are interested in more information about any of the following volunteer roles:

**Events Coordinator:** Planning and coordination of Cool Rochester events, including Climate Cafe Training sessions (approx 6 / year), Partner Recruitments (2 / year) and other events as identified. Approximately 3-4 hours per week.

**Volunteer Coordinator:** Serve as primary liaison for all Cool Rochester volunteer posts. Facilitate communication among volunteers and plan volunteer recognition events. Approximately 2-3 hours per week. In addition to this, we have some things going on that could create large demand for ECO Team facilitators:

- **University of Rochester Facilities and Services** has agreed to a pilot program for some River Campus facilities staff.

- **Action for a Better Community**

is considering arranging with Cool Rochester to train people who are qualifying for weatherization projects

Let us know if you are interested in helping out by facilitating an ECO team. Cool Rochester will help provide the necessary training for this (free of charge). Respond via email for more information on becoming a facilitator: [coolrochester@gmail.com](mailto:coolrochester@gmail.com)

One of the best training events to provide a larger perspective on our goals and objectives and the process for getting started is a free "Tele-Training" session offered by the Empowerment Institute. David Gershon, author of the book Low Carbon Diet, runs sessions. If you want to help and you feel that you need more background, this is a great place to start. Here is the link - Click on the link for more details and sign up today.

[http://www.empowermentinstitute.net/lcd/lcd\\_files/LCD\\_Tele\\_Training.html](http://www.empowermentinstitute.net/lcd/lcd_files/LCD_Tele_Training.html)



## **EMPOWERMENT INSTITUTE OFFERS FREE LOW CARBON DIET TRAINING**

This web-based training takes two hours and includes pre-work and a post-training web-based support system to exchange best practices. All participants must pre-register. You will then be provided a call-in number. The training will be offered Thursday, June 24<sup>th</sup>, from 7-9 PM Eastern Time.

**SENECA PARK ZOO THANKS COOL ROCHESTER FOR PARTICIPATION IN "OUR FRAGILE WORLD"**

From a letter dated May 5, 2010

Good Afternoon!

I just wanted to extend my deepest gratitude for your participation in the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Our Fragile World Environmental Fair. The initial feedback has been quite favorable!

I also would like to share with you some numbers that will demonstrate the impact your participation had on the community as well as the traffic that was exposed to the great work you do on behalf of our environment.

On Friday, our total attendance was 2,486 people, 931 of those were the middle school students that participated in the formal program that morning.

On Saturday, our total attendance for the day was 3,040!

Thanks again and I look forward to seeing you again in 2011!

Sincerely,

**Tina Crandall**

Conservation Education  
Coordinator  
Seneca Park Zoo Society

**TIP OF THE MONTH**

Via Margie Campaigne  
(Courtesy of Green Irene LLC)

Although water seems to be everywhere on earth, only 1% is available for human consumption, and much of it is diverted for agriculture or industrial uses. How much water does your home use daily? The average American home uses around 400 gallons every day, which adds up to about \$500 spent every year on water and sewer bills (assuming you don't have large landscaping or pool water use). Wasted water also means energy consumption: heating water makes up about

12% of our home's energy bills. With numbers like these, you can see how **conserving water means significant savings for your family. Green Irene believes that without changing your lifestyle, your family can drastically reduce its water consumption.**

**Outdoor Water Use**

Where's the best place to direct your water conservation efforts? Knowing how household water is used can help make sure that your reduction efforts have the biggest possible impact. For instance, **outdoor water use is a full 30% of our homes' water consumption**, so our yards are an important part of any conservation efforts. The gallons add up quickly when we water our gardens and lawns, hose off driveways, sidewalks, and patios, or wash our cars. Make sure you have a [nozzle](#) and an inexpensive [mechanical timer](#) on your outdoor hose. Consider a [Rain Pillow](#) or a [Waterbroom](#) if you face watering restrictions brought on by drought conditions.

**There are so many free ways to save water in your yard including watering in the early morning hours** (and skip windy days) to minimize evaporation and **adjust your mower to allow longer grass** (as it holds water better than a closely clipped lawn). **Mulching slows down evaporation** so spread a lot around trees and plants. **Consider adding elements of xeriscaping** by using native and drought resistant plants as you make changes to your landscaping.

**Indoor Water Use**

Our indoor water use makes up the remaining 70% of home water consumption. **Toilets** consume 26% of this indoor water, so **reducing gallons of water used per flush** (gpf) and fixing even the smallest toilet flapper leak are

important steps toward savings. A leaky toilet can waste 200 gallons of water a day or 73,000 a year. When you remodel make sure you get a **dual flush toilet** to use less water when less is needed, and in any case get an EPA WaterSense model, sort of like Energy Star, but for water conservation. A \$3 [toilet tank bank](#) can **save more than a gallon per flush without upgrading your toilet.**

**Showers, bathroom sinks and kitchen sinks** draw a lot of water too; combined they constitute almost a third of indoor water use. These are also major points for hot water use, so by making investments that reduce their water consumption you'll get the double effect of saving both water and energy. A \$2 [faucet drop measurement gauge](#) can be a great lesson for the kids on how drops turn into dollars, and a [5-minute shower timer](#) can help too. Isn't it time you replaced your old 2.5 gallon per minute (or higher) shower head with the [Green Irene recommended 1.49 GPM low flow shower head](#)? **Over 5 years this one little shower head will save you at least 38,325 gallons of water and \$1,150 in energy costs.**



**RECENT ACTIVITIES**

By Bob Siegel

A number of Cool Rochester volunteers and staff were on hand at the Rochester Home & Garden Show at the Convention Center March 27<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>. Our table was there to greet a number of interested homeowners wanting to



learn more about how they could improve their energy efficiency, save money and build stronger neighborhoods, all at the same time. Bob also used the occasion to introduce the program to a number of local businesses that were also exhibiting at the show. "There was a particularly large number of energy-related contractors and service providers, most of whom expressed interest in getting involved with the program," he said. Anyone interested in tabling at similar events, please contact us by email. [coolrochester@gmail.com](mailto:coolrochester@gmail.com) Cool Rochester people who volunteered included Mike Healy, Frances DeWitte, Bob Siegel, Brenna Hartman, Denise Speicher, Bernie Daily, Greg Cunningham, Lucille Giannavola, & Jim Tappon.

#### MAY 24<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL MEETING RECAP

Ram Shirastava (Larsen Engineering) explained what they have been doing at Larsen Engineering in helping municipalities "Go Green". Their work is more than just energy - they are looking to help municipalities become more sustainable overall - considering water usage, water drainage, local foods, energy reduction, alternate energy creation, green roofs, insulation, new more efficient equipment and overall reduction of fossil fuel usage wherever possible. He advised a municipality recently to consider being "carbon neutral by 2020.

Larsen has been very supportive of Cool Rochester and has been holding monthly "Green luncheons" for them employees to go thru the LCD book and the discuss additional ways to reduce energy in their households and at the office.

Bob Siegel presented the new Cool Rochester strategy to partner with energy contractors and

architects. He provided a PowerPoint presentation and a handout for all those present and discussed the strategy. Basically, we will take on the energy contractors (for example) as a partner. The contractor will have their clients sign onto Cool Rochester website before the work is started including the energy partner as a "team" and create a carbon footprint. Then after the energy work has been completed, the household will also log in to show the resulting energy usage.

This will be a great way for people to become more aware of the benefits, and if the energy contractor can encourage the homeowner to make additional energy saving changes (like going thru the LCD book for ideas) the contractor "team" gets the credit for all the energy that they save in that household and other visitor to the website can see the savings that people realize when people use that contractor. Ultimately, the Cool Rochester website will become a place where people who want to have energy work done, they will come to visit to see who they might want to contract with - based on their energy results plus any comment and ratings left by clients on our website. (Bob can provide a lot more detail - I think that the program sounds tremendous - it is that partnership where we are providing a tracking service for energy companies and they are encouraging their customers to join us and to save more energy so that their statistics look good and the planet is the biggest beneficiary, but it is good for everyone involved.

John from Bergmann joined us to share what Bergmann Associates is doing to save energy. John works in IT and so his involvement is with two initiatives: Combining IT Servers into virtual servers, reducing the cost to run and the space required for computing power. This brought the space requirements down

considerably which allows the space to be used for other purposes and also reduces significantly the amount of space that needs to be climate controlled as sufficiently as Computer rooms need to be.

To reduce travel among their 8 sites around the country, they installed High Definition video conferencing rooms so that they can meet with folks off site via video teleconference. While he did not have the actual savings since this was installed, with the cost of travel, it is not hard to imagine that the payback period would probably not be very long. I think that he indicated that the cost of the systems and installation (8 sites) was approximately \$100,000.

The 3rd in the series of ECO Team meetings at Lake Riley Lodge in Cobbs Hill Park or Norris Drive will be Tuesday, June 8 at 6:30 pm.

#### OUR HISTORY

By Cheryl Munson

In the fall of 2006, Rochester Sierra Club's Global Warming & Energy Committee had an idea to launch a local effort to promote the Sierra Club's Cool Cities program in place in other US cities such as Washington, DC. To expose the concept to the Rochester community, they rolled out the Low Carbon Diet challenge in 2008. By Spring 2009, a 501-C3 organization was formed that included a core team of individuals with diverse expertise: Bob Siegel, Executive Director; Alison Davidson, Director of Operations; Jim Tappon, Communications Officer; Diane Newton, Project Management Support; Chris DiMuro, Public Relations Manager; Tanya Cuda, Treasurer; Barbara Grosh, Web Developer; and Clayton Munnings, Intern. On June 24, 2009, we held a successful public meeting to recruit other volunteers and identify additional strategic partners and sponsors.