

Citizens Committee on U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement



Mission:

1. Encourage citizens to be a part of the solution
2. Encourage City staff and citizens to conserve current resources
3. Work with the City Council to implement ideas
4. Effectively address the future impacts of climate change

Committee Members:

- Members:** Steve Bernheim, Carolyn Chapel, Wes Gallagher, Wayne Grotheer, Hank Landau
- City Staff:** Mayor Gary Haakenson, Steve Fisher, Sally Lider, Noel Miller, Rob Chave, Jen Machuga, Jim Stevens, Linda Carl

Meeting Agenda

March 5, 2009

1. Update on Earth Day /Climate Conversation ~ April 22	Gary/Steve F./Bob
2. Update on “The Wash. Climate Change Impact Assessment”	Rob & Jen
3. “GHG Emission Reduction Proposal”	Steve B.
4. Volunteer/educational opportunities with SCALLOPS	Steve B.
5. Miscellaneous	All
6. Next meeting date – Thursday, April 2	

Meeting Notes

February 5, 2009

1. Earth Day, April 22

Bob Freeman indicated that ICLEI is sponsoring a “National Conversation on Climate Change” on Earth Day, and Sustainable Edmonds would like to organize an event. Linda will check on the availability of the Brackett Room on April 22. Rick suggested that perhaps vendors, such as Solar Retrofits, may be interested in helping to sponsor the event. Sally indicated that there’s a beach cleanup scheduled for Saturday, April 25.

2. Downtown merchant energy diet

Steve B. distributed data on electrical outputs for downtown businesses. He indicated that Edmonds gets 70% of our power from renewable hydro/sustainable power sources, plus nuclear and natural gas. This encompasses most of our energy consumption (not including gas for cars). This makes it harder for us to reduce our carbon footprint because we’re doing so well with hydro power. Steve suggested there’s still room for improvement by reducing electricity consumption (business and residential), such as switching to energy-conserving light bulbs. He would like people to change their behavior in order to learn to conserve. His focus right now is on downtown merchants, and his raw data includes a periodic sample of downtown electric meters. He hypothesizes that a significant amount of electricity is used at night (such as indoor and outdoor lights, ventilators, heat, outdated refrigeration, etc.). He found that some businesses, such as the theater, use up to eight times more than residences. He also included data from his own home.

He then asked the question, is there an overnight excess waste of energy? Could this committee provide an educational piece to business owners to encourage overnight conservation? The data he’s collected could be used as a starting point for business owners to analyze their own usage

and target where to reduce, as well as see how their neighbors are conserving. Steve would like to see a cooperative program with local businesses. Gary indicated that we don't want to tell business owners how to run their business; however, perhaps we can ask them to track their energy usage for a week so they can begin seeing the day and nighttime differences and where they can easily conserve.

Rick Jenness mentioned that the City's Community Technology Advisory Committee (CTAC) is looking into wireless meter readers that can monitor usage by the minute. When people see detailed feedback, they're encouraged to increase conservation.

Hank mentioned that the Governor's priority is energy efficiency, but is not yet mandated. There needs to be a catalyst to encourage people to conserve. When he and several other CPC members spoke to area Chamber members last year, there didn't seem to be an overwhelming interest.

Gary indicated that a better venue could be the Downtown Edmonds Merchants Association (DEMA) group, or even a different way of reaching the merchants, such as a press release, since other pockets of businesses (e.g., Highway 99) don't have group representation. People will conserve if they understand the benefit (such as saving money); and it helps if it's easy for them.

Wes suggested that someone from PUD and/or PSE come to speak to our committee to let us know what they're doing to encourage businesses and residents to conserve. Steve B. will provide a contact name and number. Rick thought it possible to create a computer program that takes PUD's usage information and converts it to a graph.

Bob mentioned that there's a "climate cam" mounted in a public square in Australia that shows the city's hourly usage.

Steve F. indicated that some electrical companies include an average consumption level of the homeowner and compares it to the average consumer. This encourages the homeowner to conserve via "peer pressure."

Janice didn't use her clothes dryer for a week, but did not see a significant reduction because her usage is only provided every two months. She sees a great benefit for people to see their daily or weekly usage.

Carolyn suggested that providing simple information (such as the cost savings of switching to CFLs) is also beneficial, even without having more specific data.

Rick talked about a voluntary program in California where homeowners place a device in their home that is monitored by the electric company. The company can then turn on or off their appliances during peak and non-peak hours when energy usage spikes or goes down. This helps the utility company balance the energy load, and the incentive to the homeowner is a lower electricity rate. Also, the City of Lynnwood is in the process of replacing their fleet vehicles with energy-conserving vehicles.

Hank mentioned that incandescent light bulbs also give off heat, such as when he's sitting at his home-office desk. This allows him to stay warm without heating the entire room and therefore saving overall energy costs. Keep in mind that personal choices could create exceptions.

Miscellaneous

Steve F.: As part of our baseline inventory, ICLEI reviewed Edmonds' power usage (residential, commercial, industrial) and compared it to our energy usage in 2000. Business and residential numbers appear to be almost equal. Compared to the statewide average, Edmonds' overall energy consumption is higher for electricity and natural gas usage: electric 34% for residential Edmonds compared to 21% in the state; natural gas 38% for residential compared to 10% in the state. Electrical is mostly hydro-electric, which has lower emissions, and natural gas has lower emissions as well.

Steve B. distributed a draft "GHG Emission Reduction Proposal" that he plans to provide to the Mayor and the City Council. Please review it and give him your comments at or before our next meeting.

Sally attended a Cool School Challenge “Storming the Sound” conference that was sponsored by PSE and the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency. The Cool School Challenge was developed to educate kids on conservation and encourage student leadership and empowerment. Students learn to measure energy in the classroom and learn how to reduce their school’s energy consumption. Sally had a brochure on climate literacy with the seven essential principles of climate science and science education standards. It’s used as a guide for teachers on how to include climate science in their science curriculum. Sally also attended a “Beat the Heat” session in Skagit County where there is a growing grassroots movement on sustainability.

Hank: Edmonds bicycle advocacy group is also working with schools; he asked Sally for a potential contact person.

Rick is involved with an organization that supports the windpower proposal called “Pickens’ Plan.” The plan calls to reduce foreign (“unfriendly”) oil imports by 30% over the next 10 years and switch to natural gas, and replace electricity with windpower. They are asking the federal government to build a “smart grid,” while private enterprise will pay for the wind turbines. You can go online to www.pickensplan.com and view the presentation video, then sign up for the “Washington District 1” group, which Rick is heading up.

Gary received an email this morning from staff regarding the availability and purchase prices for hybrid vehicles. The City has to balance the cost and the available supply within our budget. Rick suggested that a conversion kit might be cheaper. Steve F. noted that Mountlake Terrace has proposed to replace their vehicles with hybrids.

Bob F: The next Sustainable Edmonds meeting will include information on coastline construction and how to deal with rising sea levels. The meeting is on February 22 at the Port of Edmonds. Bob also mentioned that he was not happy with the December meeting’s topic (“Climate Change: The science is not settled”). He feels we’re an operational committee, not a policy committee, and therefore it’s not conducive with our goals to have someone speak on the other viewpoint. Hank responded that hearing the other side provides insight into skeptics’ way of thinking. Bob also mentioned that “lobby days” with the State legislature is on February 19. The Sustainable Edmonds website lists their legislative priorities, including a cap-and-invest bill.

Carolyn recently attended an Environmental Priorities Coalition conference at Seattle Pacific University. She will be out of town for the next CPC meeting.