



WEC CO-OP CURRENTS

Vol. 70, No. 2

The newsletter of Washington Electric Cooperative, Inc., East Montpelier, Vermont.

March 2009

The Stimulus Bill

With Federal Provisions, Now is the Time to Weatherize

The biggest news on the national scene in the first weeks after President Barack Obama's inauguration was the formation and eventual passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), better known as the federal stimulus bill. Signed into law on February 16, it has the potential to bring major changes to Vermont through its many energy-related provisions.

The \$787 billion ARRA invests some \$70-\$80 billion in energy efficiency and renewable energy – and while these measures are national in scope and not targeted specifically to New England, the bill speaks our language. Crafted with the dual purpose of saving consumers money on their energy bills and creating a burst of employment in the energy-efficiency and renewable-energy fields, provisions of the stimulus bill stand to make a huge difference for residents and businesses in cold-weather climates, if they take advantage of the opportunity.

The ARRA is not the only way that Congress and the Obama Administration are investing in home energy.

"There are two pots of federal money," explains Paul Zabriskie, director of the Central Vermont Community Action Council's

weatherization program. He cites the Weatherization Trust Fund, a grant program primarily financed by the state from a gross-receipts tax on non-transportation fuels and electricity (WEC and all utilities pay this tax). For many years the state has provided 80 percent or more of the Weatherization Fund's annual grant, which CVCAC applies to weatherization services for low-income Vermonters. The federal government has kicked in about 17 percent.

"This year, Congress is increasing that," Zabriskie says.

"The other pot is the stimulus funds," he continues, "which is separate funding, separate tracking. I think Vermont is to receive about \$17 million. We're used to that 17-percent funding stream from the federal government. Now we're seeing this gigantic increase in the federal portion."

The impact of that money will be to enable homeowners to "go deeper," in Zabriskie's words, when they undertake energy-efficiency renovations. That's a departure from the trend in recent years, when the ballooning costs of heating fuel undermined the financial impact of weatherization investments.

"We had five years of 20-percent

continued on page 8



Washington Electric Co-op member Rick Winston lives in Calais but organizes the Green Mountain Film Festival, taking place now in Montpelier. The festival, centered at Winston's Savoy Theater, received a boost from WEC's Community Fund.

President's Report

Celebrate WEC's 70th Birthday

Also, A Tribute to Nancy Huelsberg

By Barry Bernstein

In 1939, most rural homes and farms, even if they were just a little distance from the paved roads, were denied a hookup to the power lines owned by the investor-owned utilities, as it was not profitable for the companies to serve rural people given the greater distances between their residences. Only a very few had access to generators, and some of those who tried to sign up their neighbors to be part of a new electric cooperative

– and take advantage of the Rural Electrification Act (REA, as it was known for years) of 1936 – were harassed by the existing utilities.

However, that did not deter our founding members from starting our Co-op. In July 1939, a group of 30 neighbors met at the Maple Corner Grange and created Washington Electric Cooperative – an REA co-op – with Harmon Kelly, Lyle Young, James Carrie, Mrs. Howard Lackey, and Elizabeth Kent Tarshis as incorporators.

continued on page 2

Washington Electric Cooperative

East Montpelier, VT 05651

Inside

Five members want your vote for four seats on WEC's Board of Directors. Read their introductions as we begin preparations for the 70th Annual Meeting in May. Page 4.

The federal stimulus bill, and how to benefit from it. Weatherization eligibility, tax credits, and other opportunities are explained as our page 1 story continues on page 8.

To use energy wisely we need to know something about it. VEEP is working locally to fill that knowledge gap. Page 5.

Washington, Vermont's, Calf Library and the Green Mountain Film Festival are featured in our 2008 Community Fund report. Page 3.



A big victory for wind power in Vermont. The state Supreme Court has approved the PSB's permit for the Sheffield wind farm – and every electron will go to Vermont utilities. Page 6.

President's Report

continued from page 1

E. Harmon Kelley became the first president of the WEC Board of Trustees, as it was called then (we now call it the Board of Directors). WEC started with 90 members, linked by 50 miles of power line. By 1941 the Co-op had grown to include 1,900 members, and we are now more than 10,500 owner-member households and businesses strong, connected to eight substations and to each other by more than 1,250 miles of line.

Let's join in honoring the efforts of those early, visionary WEC pioneers and founders, by coming to the Washington Electric Cooperative 70th Annual Membership Meeting on Tuesday, May 12, at 5:30 p.m. at the Barre Elks Club.

And this year, let's try something new. Let's see if all our regular Annual Meeting attendees can bring someone from a Co-op member-household who is under 50 years of age! Our Annual Meetings, like other rural electric cooperative meetings

around the country, tend to attract older members (like some of your WEC Directors), many of whom have had a long relationship and connection to the Co-op and understand the value of rural, cooperatively owned power

companies. But we will be passing the baton, and with the trends in energy today it's never been more important for people to claim a stake in their electric utility and help make the decisions that will guide us into the future.

It's hard to believe WEC has reached its 70th year in operation. We have come a long way, from receiving our power from two small diesel generators in East Montpelier to generating our power from landfill gas in Coventry, Vermont, and our small hydroelectric station in Wrightsville – and receiving the balance of our power from Vermont small power producers, along with hydropower from New York State and

Quebec. Yet we remain a member-owned co-op, with a member-elected Board of Directors.

Reaching this anniversary is a great milestone, and a tribute to the small group of central Vermonters who


made it possible in 1939. So please come join us on May 12, and share a meal that – for the first time at a WEC annual meeting – will emphasize Vermont food products. We will have child care activities so you can stay for the business meeting which will start at 6:30 p.m.

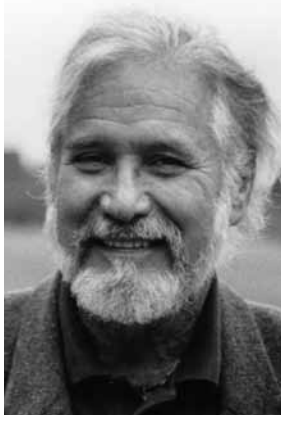
Remembering Nancy Huelsberg

The Co-op lost a dear friend in former WEC Trustee Nancy Huelsberg, who died early this month after a long bout with cancer. Nancy, who used to live in Worcester, was elected to the WEC board in 1985, when the Co-op was starting to address significant and contentious issues – WEC's investment in the Seabrook nuclear power project in New Hampshire, cost overruns and performance problems of the newly operating Wrightsville hydro plant, and a perceived lack of openness to change by the WEC board.

Nancy brought a fresh perspective to the board. Her skills as both a

professionally trained mediator and experience in energy management and development, including on in-state hydro projects, were invaluable to the Co-op. Nancy served as clerk (1985 and 1986) and vice president (1987) on the WEC board. She became part of a new majority of Directors that stopped Co-op payments to the Seabrook project and supported a lawsuit brought by the Vermont Department of Public Service on behalf of Vermont cooperative and municipal utilities, which was successful in getting the Vermont Supreme Court to invalidate the contracts. This legal action saved WEC members more than \$50 million in future liability, as well as probable bankruptcy, and it returned nearly \$1 million in previous Seabrook payments to the Co-op.

Nancy was married to Derek Williams. They made their home in East Hardwick, and both taught school in Andover, Massachusetts. We offer our condolences to Nancy's husband and her children, Ginger and Peter. 



A challenge: Let's see if all our regular Annual Meeting attendees can bring someone from a Co-op member-household who is under 50 years of age!

Co-op Currents

Co-op Currents (Publication No. USPS 711 -210 and ISSN No. 0746-8784) is published monthly except February, May, August and November by Washington Electric Cooperative, Inc., Route 14, P.O. Box 8, East Montpelier, Vermont 05651. The cost of this publication is \$.45, which is included in the basic monthly charge to each member. Periodical postage rates paid at East Montpelier and at additional offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Co-op Currents*, P.O. Box 8, East Montpelier, Vermont 05651.



WEC is part of the alliance working to advance and support the principles of cooperatives in Vermont.
www.vermontcooperatives.coop

Board of Directors

President	BARRY BERNSTEIN (May 2010)	1237 Bliss Road, Marshfield, Vt. 05658 Bbearvt@aol.com	456-8843
Vice President	ROGER FOX (May 2009)	2067 Bayley-Hazen Rd., East Hardwick, Vt. 05836-9873 rfox@pivot.net	563-2321
	ANDREA COLNES (May 2009)	918 Jacobs Road, East Montpelier, Vt. 05602 alc@sover.net	223-8474
Treasurer	DONALD DOUGLAS (May 2011)	21 Douglas Rd., East Orange, Vt. 05086 dondougl@gmail.com	439-5364
	KIMBERLY CHENEY (May 2010)	143 S. Bear Swamp Rd., Middlesex, Vt. 05602 kcheney@cbs-law.com	223-3181
	ROY FOLSOM (May 2010)	2603 US Rt. 2, Cabot, Vt. 05647 RoyGrnsy@aol.com	426-3579
	DAVID MAGIDA (May 2011)	632 Center Road, Middlesex 05602 vtmagida@aol.com	223-8672
Secretary	MARION MILNE (May 2009)	1705 E. Orange Rd., W. Topsham, Vt. 05086 milne@tops-tele.com	439-5404
	RICHARD RUBIN (May 2009)	3496 East Hill Rd., Plainfield, Vt. 05667 rrubin@sover.net	454-8542

AVRAM PATT
General Manager
avram.patt@washingtonelectric.coop

WILL LINDNER
Editor
Willind@aol.com

TIM NEWCOMB
Layout

Editorial Committee

Avram Patt Donald Douglas David Magida Will Lindner

The Board of Directors' regularly scheduled meetings are on the last Wednesday of each month, in the evening. Members are welcome to attend. Members who wish to discuss a matter with the Board should contact the president through WEC's office. Meeting dates and times are subject to change. For information about times and/or agenda, or to receive a copy of the minutes of past meetings, contact Administrative Assistant Deborah Brown, 802-223-5245.

Right of Way Reclearing Projects Spring & Summer 2009

Affected Members with 'Special Trees' Should Call the Co-op

The Co-op will continue working to improve service reliability by reclearing power-line rights of way in the areas described below. Right-of-way reclearing normally involves removing trees and pruning vegetation for 15 feet on either side of a single-phase distribution line, and for 25 feet on either side of a three-phase main distribution line. Except where noted, all of these projects involve single-phase lines, those carried by poles without cross-bars. Reclearing projects often involve a tap. That's where a single-phase line takes power from another line.

Throughout the year, post cards are mailed to members notifying them that right-of-way maintenance is to take place. Also, WEC's automated message-delivery system will place a phone call (if a phone number is on file) to all households affected by such maintenance projects, up to two or three weeks before work on the property is to begin. Calls will be placed in the evening, when most members are likely to be home. If no one answers, Co-op staff will attempt to reach that member during the day.

Because the evening calls are automated, they cannot hold the line if, for example, a child answers. If you believe you may have received a call from WEC, please call during office hours to check. If you are notified that a portion of your property is to be recleared and you especially hope to save any particular trees that are within the right-of-way, call the Co-op.

The Co-op's Right-of-way Management Coordinator Mike Myers, also a forester, will be happy to talk with you about any problems.

Barre	Jalbert, Lyman, Taplin and Cobble Hill Road
Berlin	Paine Turnpike, Brookfield Road
Bradford	Hackett Hill
Brookfield	East Street, Twin Pond, Schoolhouse and Ralph Road
Cabot	Houghton Road
Chelsea	Jenkins Brook and Vershire Center Road
East Montpelier	Brazier Road
Groton	Great Road
Marshfield	Maple Hill
Middlesex	3 phase line Middlesex Center and Molly Supple Road
Middlesex	East Bear Swamp Road
Middlesex	Notch, McCullough Hill, East Hill, South and East Bear Swamp Road
Moretown	3 phase line Moretown Common Road and Route 100
Peacham	Great Road, Green Bay Loop
Peacham	Macks Mountain Road
Plainfield	Brook, Gray, East Hill Road
Newberry	Swamp and Corey Hill Road
Northfield	Berlin Pond Road
Topsham	Hart and Lime Kiln Road
Williamstown	Rood Pond Road
Vershire	Mciver Road
Vershire	Route 113, Parker, Algerian, Durgin Hill and North Road
Williamstown	Graham Road
Williamstown	Limehurst Trailer Park
Worcester	Eagle Ledge Road

2008 WEC Community Fund Report

Balance of Social Services, Cultural Contributions Enlarge Our Members' World

Washington Electric Co-op's Community Fund works to improve our quality of life in central Vermont. Interestingly, one way for people to enhance their lives is by, in their imaginations, leaving central Vermont. Two recipients of Community Fund donations in 2008 afforded avenues for such personal expansion. The Calef Memorial Library in Washington, and Focus on Film – which presents the annual Green Mountain Film Festival hosted by the Savoy Theater in Montpelier – were among 43 nonprofit organizations the fund supported last year.

For a time in 2008, however, it seemed like the most urgent need in the central Vermont community would be to respond to hardship caused by increasing fuel prices. WEC General Manager Avram Patt coordinates the fund, fielding inquiries from organizations and reporting to a committee of WEC board members that authorizes the donations. Patt noticed an emerging

Washington Electric Cooperative's Community Fund is capitalized by WEC members who voluntarily choose to donate their annual capital credit refunds instead of taking those amounts as deductions on their November electricity bills. The capital credit refund program will be starting again soon. Please consider donating your return to the Community Fund. You can do it just for this year or in perpetuity. It's a way for us all to make small contributions that do so much for our neighbors and ourselves in central Vermont.

trend.

"The allocations of funds shifted a bit in 2008 toward social service and assistance programs," he explained in his annual report to the Co-op's board of directors on fund activity for the previous year.

"We became concerned about people's need for assistance around mid-year, when energy costs were skyrocketing," said Patt. "Fuel prices then dropped dramatically, but there is some increase in energy-payment problems and other needs due to poor economic conditions."

Perhaps a little escapism is in order. For patrons of Washington's Calef Library, which provides computers and high-speed wireless internet, the library is a resource for job hunting, local and statewide news, and the boundless world of the worldwide web. For the hundreds who purchase tickets to the 10-day-long Green Mountain Film Festival – being held this year from March 20 to March 29 – the festival's foreign and domestic movies corral an amazingly diverse world and drop it in our very laps.

"As wonderful as central Vermont is, it's a bit of a bubble," said Rick Winston, owner of the Savoy Theater and the primary programmer of the festival. (Rick's partner, at the theater and beyond, is Andrea Serota; they are WEC members from Calais.) "I think there's tremendous value in films from different cultures, in seeing how people live and how they think about issues."

Andrea added, "If you see an Iranian film, and see how they live day-to-day, it changes the conversation when the country's thinking about dropping bombs on them."

Dozens of films and documentaries, from cultures as diverse as human existence, are on the menu. For a detailed schedule of the 10-day festival contact GreenMountainFilmFestival.org or call 802-262-FILM.

The festival also turns its lens inward, onto central Vermont. The 12th Annual Green Mountain Film Festival will include a showing of "Numen: The Nature of Plants," largely dealing with the medicinal qualities of plants, followed by a discussion with its Montpelier filmmakers, Terrence Youk and Anne Armbricht. "The Apartment," created by U-32 teacher Steve Barrows, is about a special-education program that helps its graduates find

discussions, are the Kellogg-Hubbard Library and the Pavilion Auditorium.)

As for Washington Electric Co-op, its Community Fund contribution earned it sponsorship a French film, selected by Winston, titled "A Secret," about post-War France.

"This is our fifth year of support from Washington Electric," said Winston. "The Co-op has been a great help to us."

Shift toward social services

In light of today's economic climate, the Community Fund has never been more important. Established in 2003, the fund is capitalized by WEC members who donate their annual capital credit refunds to it, rather than taking those amounts as deductions on their November electric bills. While capital credit refunds are typically in the \$10-to-\$40 range, those modest contributions add up.

The fund is replenished each January by the autumn capital credit donations, which are added to Community Fund monies left unspent the previous year. Patt reported that the Community Fund began 2008 with \$21,080.38 – \$20,542.52 from capital credit donations and a carry-forward of

continued on page 7

2008 WEC Community Fund Contributions

Contribution Recipient

U-32 Project Graduation '08
Studio Place Arts
Hardwick Area Food Panty
Washington County 4-H
Vermont Land Trust
Association of Vermont Recyclers
Washington County Diversion
Sustainable Energy Research Grp
(Tunbridge event)
Spaulding High School Project Grad.
Central VT Home Health and Hospice
Community Capital of VT
Friends of the Winooski River
VT Historical Society
Kellogg-Hubbard Library
Lost Nation Theater
Central VT Community Land Trust
Home Share of Central Vermont
Calef Memorial Library (Washington)
Prevent Child Abuse VT
Montpelier First Night
Central VT Basic Adult Education
VT Companion Animal Neutering
Jacquith Public Library, Marshfield
(concert series)
Vermont Arts Council
Freedom & Unity
(VT history film project)
Plainfield Historical Society
Food Works @ Two Rivers Center
VT Earth Institute
People's Health & Wellness Clinic
Barre Youth Sports Association
Cabot Coalition
The VT Farm Works
Farm Women's Fund
Kellogg-Hubbard Library
Sugar Maple Pre-School
Green Mountain Film Festival
North Branch Nature Center
Stuff A Truck (food shelf drive)
Good Beginnings of Central VT
VT Center for Independent Living
Central VT Council on Aging
Tunbridge Public Library
Central VT Community Action Council



Calef Librarian Roberta Carrier, in Washington's town library. Behind her, flanking the checkout desk, are a pair of marble statues attributed to a sculptor named P. Barzanti. Carrier says the figures have been there "forever."

2009 Annual Meeting Set for May 12 at Barre Elks Club

Five Candidates for WEC's Board of Directors

In an unusual election year, five member/owners of Washington Electric Cooperative have come forward as candidates for four seats on the Co-op's Board of Directors in 2009. Three of the candidates elected in May will serve the usual three-year terms, their service ending in 2012. The fourth successful candidate will complete the final two years of Wendell Cilley's term (until 2011), to which he was elected last May (2008). Wendell passed away in September and WEC member **Andrea Colnes** was appointed to fill his position on an interim basis, until the forthcoming elections. Andrea, who lives in **East Montpelier**, has decided to become a candidate in these elections.

Every year three seats on WEC's

nine-member Board expire, providing the membership an opportunity to elect one-third of the board that makes leadership decisions for the member-owned cooperative, and oversees management and staff. This year the directors whose terms will expire at the time of the Annual Membership Meeting (they remain Board members until that event) are **Roger Fox of Walden**, **Marion Milne of Washington**, and **Richard Rubin of Plainfield**. All three of these incumbents are seeking re-election. In addition, **Annie Reed**, a Co-op member from **Marshfield**, has declared her candidacy and been approved to run by the 2009 Committee on Candidates.

The election of directors is performed by ballots sent to each Washington

Electric Cooperative member by mail in the weeks prior to the Annual Meeting. **When your ballot arrives, check the accompanying materials to determine when the deadline is for posting your votes by mail.** Members who attend the Annual Meeting can vote there if they wish, rather than by mail. As in recent years, the meeting, which includes dinner, will be held at the Barre Elks Club. The date is Tuesday evening, May 12. (A schedule of events for the Annual Meeting, and a coupon for the dinner, will be printed in the next issue of *Co-op Currents*.)

In this election the three candidates who receive the most votes will fill the three-year Board seats. The candidate who receives the fourth-highest total will finish Wendell Cilley's term.

Voters can also write in the names of other Co-op members who are not official candidates on their ballot, if they choose. Candidates run at-large because Washington Electric Cooperative is not divided into districts.

Printed below are brief biographical sketches submitted by the candidates, which introduce them and contain information on each person's background and involvement with the Cooperative or other avenues of community service. The April "Annual Meeting" issue of *Co-op Currents* will feature their responses to questions about issues related to Board service. It will provide readers a better sense of the interests, viewpoints and experience of the five candidates.

Report of the 2009 Committee On Candidates

The 2009 Committee on Candidates convened a teleconference on Thursday, March 12, at 7:00 p.m. to review the petitions and qualifications of those members who have submitted their names as candidates for the Board of Directors. There are four (4) positions to be filled due a vacancy caused by the death of Wendell Cilley last September. That position was filled on an interim basis by the Board of Directors and according to WEC Bylaws, this position is subject to election this year. Five (5) members of the Washington Electric Cooperative,

Inc. submitted their names as candidates for the four (4) Board positions to be filled. The Committee on Candidates hereby affirms:

- that each candidate submitted a valid petition in accordance with Article III, Section 3A of the Bylaws;
- that each has signed a statement of affirmation indicating that they:
 1. have been a member of the Co-op in good standing for at least six months;
 2. are residents of Vermont;
 3. are not employees of the Cooperative;
 4. do not have a conflict of interest as defined in Article III, Section 2 of the Bylaws; and
 5. have received and understand the responsibilities and time commitments required of a director.

Therefore, the Committee determines all of the candidates to be qualified for the position of director in accordance with the Cooperative's Bylaws, and hereby presents the following official listing of candidates for the Washington

Electric Cooperative 2009 election of Directors:

Andrea Colnes
Roger Fox
Marion Milne
Annie Reed
Richard Rubin

2009 Committee on Candidates:

<i>Dale Bartlett</i>	<i>Carla Payne</i>
<i>Carl Demrow</i>	<i>Cort Richardson</i>
<i>Anne Dolan</i>	<i>Polly Stryker</i>
<i>Michael Duane</i>	<i>Carolyn Wells</i>

Andrea Colnes



Residence: I live on Jacobs Road in East Montpelier and have lived here since I built

my home in June 2001. Our Co-op membership is listed under the town of East Montpelier. I've been a Co-op member since 1990, which would make it 19 years! I can be contacted at: 918 Jacobs Road; East Montpelier, VT 05602. My home phone number is 802-223-8474; my e-mail address is alc@sover.net.

Education/Profession: Professionally, my work has focused on public policy in the environmental, forestry and land-protection fields, as well as rural economic development and related issues. I have just taken a new position as the Policy and Development Director for the Biomass Energy Resource Center, where we work on sustainable, community-scaled wood energy in Vermont and nationally. I also have a background in energy issues including working for the Department of Public

Service developing Vermont's first Comprehensive Energy Plan under Gov. Kunin, and more recently working for the DPS in managing their "Area Specific Collaboratives," a series of 10 negotiations intended to explore least-cost options for electric supply and transmission in areas of Vermont with the highest potential for alternative approaches.

Community Service/WEC: Energy issues will in many ways define the future of our world – from how we put food on our tables and heat in our homes to the relations between countries and global politics, prosperity and well being. Election to WEC's Board of Directors would give me an opportunity to work on these issues at a local level and help support WEC's longstanding efforts to provide reliable energy from sustainable sources at reasonable costs. I feel I could contribute as a director by drawing on my career in natural resource and energy policy, and my long experience of working with boards, organizations and community interests to sort out complex issues and find a common direction.

Roger Fox



Residence: I live at Dows Crossing in Walden, in the northern part of WEC's service territory, and have been a Co-op member in Walden since 1971. You can contact me by mail - 2067 Bayley-Hazen Road, East Hardwick, VT 05836; phone (802-563-2321); or or by e-mail at rfox@pivot.net.

Education/Profession: I have a bachelor's degree in engineering from M.I.T., and I worked on aerospace engineering projects in Florida and Massachusetts prior to becoming a Vermonter. Since 1974, I have operated a printing and graphic design business, Apocalypse Graphics, in Walden.

Community Service/WEC: I currently serve as Walden's town moderator, and as a justice of the peace and chair of the Board of Civil Authority. I've previously served as selectman and town energy coordinator. I am a member or patron of several other Vermont coop-

eratives, including Buffalo Mountain Food Co-op, Vermont State Employees Credit Union, North Country Federal Credit Union, Opportunities Credit Union, and Co-operative Insurance. I was first elected to the WEC board in 1991, and have served as the Co-op's vice-president (since 1998) and secretary. My current assignments include chair of the Members & Markets Committee and membership on the Finance & Administration, Policy, and Evaluation committees. Previously I served on the Power & Operations and Editorial committees, and as treasurer of the Northeast Association of Electric Cooperatives (covering the upstate New York and northern New England area). With energy and economic issues becoming increasingly important, I want to use the experience and perspective I've gained on the WEC board for the continued benefit of our Co-op and its members.

Marion C. Milne

Residence: I am proud to be a resident of Washington, Vermont, where I have lived and raised my family for 46 years. I have three grown children and eight wonderful grandchildren. Through all the years I have been a member of the Co-op.

Education/

Profession: I earned a B.A. from Goddard College as an adult. I started Milne Travel in 1975 in Barre and helped make it a successful business.



Community Service/WEC: I have held various town offices in Washington, where I am a justice of the peace and a director of the Calef Memorial Library. I served the town as a member of the Vermont House of Representatives for three terms. I have led the local United Way campaign, served as president of the Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce, and as president of COV (the Coalition of Vermont Elders). I am a member of the Governor's Commission on Healthy Aging and the Governor's Commission on Women.

I was elected to the Washington Electric Co-op Board in 2003. I serve on the Finance & Policy Committee, and currently serve as secretary of the Board. Over the last six years I have been very impressed with the other members of the Board and the professionalism of the staff. I am still learning, but if I am re-elected I will continue to do my best for the Co-op and its members.

Annie Reed



Residence: I have lived in Marshfield for 33 years. I have been a member of the Washington Electric Coop since 2000. Members may contact me at 802-454-1324, or by e-mail at annerreed48@gmail.com.

Education/Profession: I graduated from Beloit College in 1970 with a B.A. in anthropology, and in 1997 I received a Master of Science degree in environmental studies, with a concentration in biology, from Antioch University New England. Since 1996 I have been a freelance ecologist. For the past 11 years I have been teaching hands-on courses in science, including field ecology, wildlife ecology, and the natural history of Vermont, and I am currently teaching an online course entitled Nature and Human Nature, a seminar on environmental ethics.

Community Service/WEC: For many years I have been active in community matters. My civic involvement has included being a member of the Marshfield Conservation Commission, a member of the Marshfield Planning Commission, former president and now secretary of the Friends of the Jaquith Public Library, and chair of the state's Advisory Group to the Endangered Species Committee on Vascular Plants. For three years I served on the Goddard College Board of Trustees. For seven years I have

volunteered as an emergency medical technician with the Cabot Ambulance and the Plainfield Fire and Rescue Squad. I am a member of two food Co-ops.

As evidenced by my membership in the food cooperatives, I respect WEC's model of shared ownership. I am proud of the Co-op's reputation as a democratically run organization that is responsible to its members and respectful and supportive of its working staff. It would be an honor to serve on the Co-op's board of directors.

Richard Rubin



Residence: I have lived in Plainfield for 35 years. I am married to Jayne Israel and have three children: Sam, Nicko and Amanda Kitchen. Nicko lives in Plainfield and is the owner of East Hill Tree Farm. Amanda also lives in Plainfield with her husband Dan, and works for Legal Aid in Montpelier. They have two girls, Mabel and Sadie, my grandchildren. I am 63 years old.

Education/Profession: I was born and raised in the Boston area, attended Harvard College and then the University of Pennsylvania Law School. After law school I practiced law in Boston, representing low-income clients for a couple of years before moving to Vermont in 1972. I have been an attorney in central Vermont since 1972, and for many years our law firm – Rubin, Kidney, Myer & DeWolfe – has had offices in downtown Barre. Our firm is also the public defender for Washington County. My practice has involved representing people with all kinds of legal problems. Mainly, I am a trial lawyer.

Community Service/WEC: I have served as a WEC director for 10 years. I was first elected after being appointed to complete the term of a board member who had resigned. In the community, I was a member of the Twinfield School Board for five years, helped establish the original co-op in Plainfield, and served of the board of Vermont Legal Aid. I have also been active in various legal organizations, and am now a member of the board of the Vermont Association for Justice. Many years ago I was involved with my brother, Mathew Rubin, in creating the Wrightsville hydroelectric facility and the Winooski 8 hydroelectric plant in East Montpelier. I recently joined the Winooski Thresher Co-op.

MARKETPLACE

Wanted: One front spindle for 128 Cub Cadet garden tractor. ALSO wanted: a 6-volt starter for a John Deere 40U (circa 1955) utility tractor. Call George Matheson at 802-883-5459.

The Vermont Energy Education Project VEEP Programs: Vital For All Of Us, And Fun, Too

By Kimberly Hagen

There was no mistaking the joy and wonder on Tyler Dean's face as he pedaled furiously on a bike hooked up to a panel of light bulbs. Joy, that he could provide enough energy to light up the bulbs, and wonderment about how it all happens. A student at the Rumney Elementary School in Middlesex, Tyler was trying out the energy bike brought to his classroom by VEEP, the Vermont Energy Education Program. The bike is famous for the delight it brings to the faces of all who hop on and give it a go, no matter what the age. The idea that the human body can actually provide enough energy to power up light bulbs is a thrill, and most riders request that more and more lights be turned on, just to see how much energy they can supply. The idea of energy independence and the freedom it can bring is exhilarating.

"Could we hook this up to our television?" and "What about the washing machine?" are typical questions asked of the VEEPers. (The answer is, it's not quite so simple)

Dedicated to the job of providing education about energy, VEEP staff travel across Vermont, using the bicycle and other gadgets in hands-on presentations for classrooms, community groups, and special events. The goal is to generate a deeper understanding of what energy is and how to use it wisely, so people make energy-usage choices that will result in a sustainable, vital economy and a healthy environment.

For most people, the generation and effective use of electricity is not well understood. In a report by the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) "Environmental Literacy in America


Report" based on 10 years of NEEF/Roper surveys, results showed that just 12 percent of Americans have a basic understanding of energy topics, and less than half understand that the cars and appliances used in everyday life contribute to climate change.

So what is energy? What is electricity? These are seemingly simple questions, yet many people find themselves at a loss to articulate answers to either. And in all fairness, the answers are not that simple. But we are in a time of escalating energy and electricity needs, and a decreasing supply. It is the most critical issue of the 21st century, and since so few people really understand what it's all about, the need for education about energy is startlingly obvious.

VEEP's innovative programs help students and teachers to understand these issues, and introduce them to the array of potential solutions. Energy is a rich topic of study, providing opportunities to explore technology, social issues, arts, persuasive and technical writing and more, depending on the needs and desires of the school, the teacher and/or the community.

With 10 high-quality programs, VEEP covers energy from the introductory basics of making electricity with a magnet and coil of wire to more complex topics, such as examining renewable and non-renewable energy sources, climate change, climate-change mitigation, and performing an actual energy audit. These are "homegrown" programs with curricula created by VEEP staff, combined with materials from many other sources. VEEP staff regularly read, examine, test and incorporate the best of new materials available into their programs.

All of VEEP's programs are available to classrooms – both public and private – community groups, libraries and churches, free of charge, on a first-come, first-served basis as long as there are funds; and when those funds periodically run out, Washington Electric Co-op has helped VEEP continue to make these educational programs available to schools and organizations in its service area by covering the costs. VEEP also provides teacher-training seminars, and full support to teachers that have participated in the programs or training.

VEEP is a program of the Vermont Energy Investment Corporation (VEIC), a nonprofit corporation dedicated to energy efficiency in Vermont. VEEP receives funding from VEIC, Efficiency Vermont, Washington Electric Cooperative, Central Vermont Public Service Corp., the Vermont Department of Public Service, and Green Mountain Power – organizations that realize the importance of educating the public about energy and its wise use. 

Kimberly Hagen is the Administrative Coordinator of the Vermont Energy Education Project.

VT Supreme Court Supports Sheffield Wind Farm

Wind on the Way to WEC

Vermont's green-energy footprint seems destined to expand, following a long-awaited February 6 ruling by the state Supreme Court that supported a 16-turbine, 40-megawatt wind-power project proposed for Sheffield in Caledonia County.

Vermont's green-energy footprint seems destined to expand, following a February 6 ruling by the state Supreme Court that supported a 16-turbine, 40-megawatt wind-power project proposed for Sheffield in Caledonia County.

With little now standing in the way of construction, according to a company spokesman, Washington Electric Cooperative also stands to benefit. WEC and Massachusetts-based First Wind are finalizing a contract under which the Co-op would purchase approximately 10 percent of the project's electric output. WEC was an early supporter, providing some \$900,000 in federal grant money to help First Wind (then known as UPC-Vermont Wind) develop its proposal.

"We have also reached agreements with Vermont Electric [Cooperative] and Burlington Electric [Department] to sell 90 percent of the power generated from the wind farm," said First Wind spokesman John Lamontagne. "This means the clean power made in Vermont will stay in Vermont."

Opponents of Vermont wind-power projects frequently contend that local residents would have to live with the impacts of wind farms while people far away received the benefits. There will be no such disconnect here: Vermont Electric Co-op is the primary electric utility in the northern tier of the state, and the Sheffield site lies a short distance from WEC's territory. (Even Burlington, across the state, is close by electric utility standards.) The project's electric output is projected to meet the energy demands of some 15,000 homes, equivalent to about 45 percent of the households in northeastern Vermont.

These days, of course, every development is viewed through the lens of jobs and employment. First Wind has said in the past that the project could employ up to 75 people during design and construction. After the Vermont Supreme Court decision Lamontagne said that First Wind's Stetson, Maine, project – about a third larger than the Sheffield plan – provided "about 350 construction jobs," including roadway and forestry work.

Regarding Sheffield, Lamontagne said, "We received a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permit last summer and have secured other permits that will allow for us to move forward. With the [Supreme Court's] affirmation we feel we are very close to moving ahead with construction. We have not established



Simulated images of wind turbines depict one future view of First Wind's 40-megawatt project in Sheffield. Washington Electric Co-op will receive 10 percent of the power generated by this green, local resource. (Image courtesy of First Wind.)

a firm timetable . . . but we hope to begin soon and will give everyone an adequate heads-up in advance."

'We find no error'

WEC General Manager Avram Patt said the Supreme Court's decision came as something of a relief to the Co-op's leadership. They had faith in First Wind and the Sheffield proposal – which was why WEC chose that project to support with its federal grant money – but a long wait for the ruling, after the court heard the case last May, had caused some concern. The court heard the case on appeal, by a group called Ridge Protectors Inc., of the approval by the Vermont Public Service Board (PSB) in May 2007, which granted UPC-Vermont Wind a Certificate of Public Good (CPG) for the Sheffield proposal. It was the first PSB approval of a commercial wind installation since Green Mountain Power's much smaller (6 MW) Searsburg project in 1997.

"The Public Service Board's decision was very thoughtful, and addressed all of the issues that the opponents had raised," Patt explained. "First Wind had made accommodations to address their concerns, and the board added 32 conditions to mitigate the impact of the project and ensure high standards of operation. We were confident that the court would support the board because it was a very well-formulated decision."

The Supreme Court's role was not to make its own conclusions about the proposed wind farm, but to ensure that the Public Service Board followed its own statutory requirements in considering the proposal for a Certificate of Public Good. As long as the PSB did so, diligently, the court deferred to the board's conclusions.

"We emphasize the limited nature of our review," Associate Justice Brian Burgess explained in the 15-page decision. Quoting the statute, Burgess continued: "The Board must exercise its discretion 'to weigh alternatives presented to it, utilizing its particular expertise and informed judgment.' . . . We will affirm the Board's findings

unless they are clearly erroneous, and an appellant bears a heavy burden of demonstrating clear error."

The Ridge Protectors based their appeal primarily on three issues: that the PSB misjudged the economic benefits to the state; that the project would violate standards of "orderly development" in the rural area; and that, visually, the 420-foot-tall turbines and blades would be "shocking and offensive to the average person," which in Vermont's regulatory language is called "undue adverse aesthetic impact."

Economically, the opponents argued that the board should have ruled that there would be significant benefit to the state only if First Wind signed stably priced contracts with Vermont utilities to purchase the power. (At the time, the company had not concluded its negotiations with VEC, BED, and WEC.) The Supreme Court countered that the PSB had explained its economic findings clearly, citing the creation of new jobs, increased tax revenues for Sheffield, lease income for the landowners, and new business for materials suppliers in the region.

Furthermore, the court added, "The promotion of the general good of the state can plainly encompass the potential for even greater economic benefit from taking advantage of a particular efficiency, such as a no-cost fuel source, as envisioned by the Board's decision."

In arguing that the wind farm presented development out of character with the rural Northeast Kingdom, the opponents relied largely on the area's regional plan. To this, too, Justice Burgess answered, "We find no error."

"The Board acknowledged that the project was inconsistent with some provisions in the regional plan, but found that the plan did not prohibit the project and, in fact, it encouraged the development of wind power . . . 'as a resource to meet some of [the region's] current and future needs.'"

But it's the aesthetic argument that seems to lie at the heart of opponents' hostility to commercial-scale wind farms

wherever they are proposed in Vermont. Because beauty and aesthetics are highly subjective, regardless of what kind of development is proposed, Vermont regulators in 1985 came up with a standard for judging "undue adverse aesthetic impact" (called the Quechee test), and the court found that the PSB applied that standard appropriately in this case.

"The Board recognized that the scenic qualities of the area were important to its residents and that there would always be some resistance to any change in the landscape. It reasoned, however, that the Quechee test did not guarantee that the aesthetic qualities of an area would not change." The PSB found that most of the views of the turbines would be "intermittent" from the roadways, and from a sufficient distance that they would not be "overwhelming," and concluded that "the average person would not find the scale of the project shocking or offensive." The PSB's obligation was to apply the standards of the Quechee test, and the court did not second-guess the board's conclusions.

First Wind had also taken measures to mitigate the project's impact – reducing the number of turbines, siting them near existing transmission lines, and "placing the access roads, collector lines, and substation so as to minimize visual intrusion by the project."


New climate for wind?

And so it turns out that you *can* win regulatory approval for commercial wind in Vermont, which some wind-power advocates had questioned in light of a 2006 PSB rejection of a proposed four-turbine site in East Haven and the governor's opposition to what he calls "the industrialization of our ridgelines."

Opponents thought they had a stronger case. Ridge Protectors member Paul Brouha of Sutton was quoted by The Times Argus as expressing concern that "if they can build a project here . . . they can do it virtually anywhere in Vermont."

By contrast, Renewable Energy Vermont Director Andrew Perchlik issued a statement saying, "Let's hope this decision sets a new, more positive tone that signals Vermont is open for renewable energy-development business."

While Vermont prides itself on its "green" reputation, its neighboring states – New York, New Hampshire, and Maine – already have wind farms in operation or under construction. Renewable-power advocates in Massachusetts hope to use federal stimulus funds toward constructing a "major" wind farm in the Berkshires.

Once it begins, construction of the Sheffield project is expected to take approximately one year. 

Community Fund

continued from page 3

\$565.86 from 2007. Those resources were somewhat less than the 2007 fund total of \$26,214.03.

Forty-three (43) organizations received donations in 2008. To qualify, organizations must be financially viable so that the money contributed by WEC members is not wasted, and demonstrate broad support in their communities. The Community Fund does not contribute to religious or political organizations.

Mostly, the fund's contributions range from \$250 to \$1,000. Patt divides them into four general categories: environmental organizations (which in 2008 received 13.8 percent of fund donations); social services organizations (51.4 percent); arts organizations (13.3 percent); and "community organizations and other" (21.4 percent).

As for 2009 – this year begins with \$21,266 in the Community Fund chest; members contributed \$20,700 in

capital credits last fall, and there was a carryover from 2008 of approximately \$566.

Washington's big little library

Local libraries have received regular support from WEC's Community Fund.

"In addition to lending out books they are hubs of the community, they provide meeting rooms and information displays on local history and other things," said Patt. "And since the internet, they are places where people spend serious time for research as well as communication – e-mail. We've supported Washington, Tunbridge, and Chelsea libraries over the years, as well as Jeudevine in Hardwick and Kellogg-Hubbard in Montpelier, which each serve a number of WEC towns."

You don't have to be a large library in a bustling burg to be an effective community resource. But Calef Librarian Roberta Carrier considers it crucial to keep up with technology.

"It's not just books anymore," said Carrier. "We offer audio books and movies for both adults and children, which bring more people in; we try to

lean toward movies that are educational as well as entertaining. This year we're going to add downloadable books on MP3. Some libraries have that, but we've waited for the price to come down."

Housed in a small brick building in Washington village, the Calef Memorial library, named for local benefactor and landowner Ira Calef, has served its community for 99 years. It is open five days a week (Monday 11 a.m.-4 p.m.; Tuesday and Thursday 2 p.m.-7 p.m.; Wednesday 3 p.m.-7 p.m., and Saturday 9 a.m.-1 p.m.).

"Most days we're fairly busy," said Carrier. "We usually have people every day using our computers."


Calef does more with its limited space by subscribing to Vermont Online through the state Department of Libraries. VO gives readers access to periodicals and reference books, freeing space on the shelves.

And its book collection is not stagnant. "Our budget comes to around \$300- a-month purchasing power for books," said Carrier. "There's very good support for the library in our town. Our

fund-raising is through raffles and our book and plant swap-and-sale sale which we hold each spring."

As it nears its century anniversary in 2010, changes are in store for the Calef Library. The board of directors (which includes WEC Director Marion Milne – who abstained from the Co-op's consideration of a donation to her community's library) is raising money for an addition to the rear of the building that will add some space, but more importantly will provide an elevator for safe and easy entrance into the library.

"We need a ground-level entrance," Carrier explained. "That's the board's main mission right now."

The mission of the Washington Electric Cooperative Community Fund is to have a positive impact on members' lives beyond providing their electricity. There are countless groups and organizations within WEC's 41-town service territory dedicated to the same goal. People are encouraged to call the Co-op to see if their organization and the Community Fund are a good fit. 

WEC CO-OP STORE

WHOLE HOUSE SURGE PROTECTION

Protect individual appliances, valuable equipment with a meter-based SURGE DEVICE. Be Safe, Not Sorry! Special Member Discounts!



A Full Line of "Plug & Play" (DIY installation) Surge Devices

Panamax MAX 2 SPECIALS!

Highest protection, compact size.
Three models, all in stock.
Offer good through May 2009.

Product	List price	Member discount price
Max2	\$39.95	\$32.95 (save \$7.00)
Max2 Coax	\$49.95	\$34.95 (save \$15.00)



If you own a single item such as a TV, a VCR, a computer connected to the internet by a cable or satellite provider, audio equipment or pay TV service, without surge protection you'll have to make up the replacement cost out of pocket in the event of a surge striking. Full protection, and an iron-clad warranty for all connected equipment.

Your equipment is exposed to power surges until you connect your equipment to one of the Panamax heavy-duty Max2 family of products. Be safe, not sorry!

Home Performance with



HOME PERFORMANCE WITH ENERGY STAR

ENERGY STAR® is a fee-for-service program designed to improve home comfort, durability, health & safety and to reduce homeowners' energy costs.

Services provided as part of a Home Assessment?

- A comprehensive home audit, which may include an evaluation of your heating system, lighting, appliances, windows, building tightness and insulation effectiveness (blower door test, infra-red/thermal scan test)
 - Professional advice on ways to improve the comfort and durability of your home, as well as to solve problems and lower your energy bills
 - Assistance in prioritizing improvements
 - Information on energy-saving products
- Contact the Co-op (1-800-932-5245) or Efficiency Vermont (1-888-921-5990) for more information on Home Performance with ENERGY STAR®

Co-op Long Distance Telephone Service

- 6.9 cents per minute (outside VT)**
- 9.9 cents per minute (within VT)
- \$0.99 monthly service charge
- No gimmicks

Billed by Powernet Global. Call to sign up today: 1-866-216-0332, or www.washingtonelectric.coop/pages/phone.htm or call the co-op with questions: 1-800-932-5245.



Call the Co-op at 800-932-5245 or visit us on the web at: www.washingtonelectric.coop/pages/prod.htm

Stimulus Bill

continued from page 1

energy inflation,” says Zabriskie. “What was cost-effective in 2004 might not have been in 2008.”

While the precipitous rise in fuel costs made energy-saving investments even more important, people’s incomes didn’t keep pace. Nor did the Weatherization Fund’s.

“We’d get about a 3-percent increase in our average job allowance, while the cost of fuel was doubling,” says Zabriskie.

But that was then, and this is now.

“The stimulus money will allow us to go after greater energy savings in an individual building,” Zabriskie says, “and to do more of it. We’ll do dramatically more homes with this funding.”

For Vermonters, the income-eligibility guidelines for the low-income weatherization program will remain unchanged. Congress has raised the federal guidelines to include people with incomes below 200 percent of the national poverty level – or \$44,100 for a family of four – but Vermont’s Weatherization Trust Fund already exceeded that limit. (See “Eligibility Income Guidelines,” above).

With the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act only a month old, many important particulars remain unknown. The government’s stated goal is to get the money into circulation quickly, but recipient agencies still don’t know how long the boost in funding will last. Should CVCAC be gearing up for 18 months of feverish work, or two years’ worth?

The agency’s weatherization workforce will expand – one of the main purposes of the stimulus plan – but CVCAC

wants the expansion to be sustainable, rather than hiring and training people only to lay them off in a year and a half.

“The stimulus bill is a wave that’s washing over us,” says Zabriskie. “Everybody’s aware that it’s one-time money. Our goal will be to build jobs

that have a place in the green economy, and that there will be work after the stimulus money moves through.”

Tax credits and other incentives

WEC members and other Vermonters who do not qualify for low-income weatherization services will find plenty of encouragement to invest in home-energy improvements. Largely these take the form of tax credits, and although the Internal Revenue Service hasn’t published the 2009 tax forms that will clearly define all of the credits, they stand to be significant.

For example, weatherization incentives enacted in 2007 permitted homeowners to take tax credits for 10 percent of the cost of adding or installing insulation, up to a maximum credit of \$500. According to information provided to WEC by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), under the stimulus plan

County	HOUSEHOLD SIZE								For Each Person Over 8, Add:
	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5 Person	6 Person	7 Person	8 Person	
Lamoille, Orange	24,720	29,124	35,977	42,829	49,682	56,535	57,819	59,104	1,285
Washington	27,540	31,440	35,977	42,829	49,682	56,535	57,819	59,104	1,285

Weatherization Program Eligibility Income Guidelines

CVCAC does not extend its services into Caledonia County. WEC members who live in Caledonia County and are interested in weatherization should contact the St. Johnsbury offices of the Northeast Employment & Training Organization Inc. (NETO), which also works with Efficiency Vermont. Call 802-748-8953.

tax credits will extend to 30 percent of insulation costs and the maximum credit will increase to \$1,500. (For context, Zabriskie says an average home-insulation job runs to around \$10,000.)

ABOUT TAX CREDITS: Here’s language on tax credits provided by the NRECA:

“Tax credits . . . are generally more valuable than tax deductions because they reduce taxes owed dollar-for-dollar. In contrast, a tax deduction, like a home mortgage or a charitable gift, lowers taxable income and may only offer small savings. For example, a \$1,500 tax deduction for [someone] in the 25-percent tax bracket would lower taxes owed by \$350; a \$1,500 tax credit for energy-efficiency efforts will lower taxes owed by \$1,500.”

By looking around, central Vermonters can also find other sources of financial assistance for home energy-improvement projects. Some local

credit unions provide reduced-interest loans for an array of energy-efficiency investments, including weatherization and the purchase of energy-efficient appliances and solar panels. Notably, WEC has an affiliation with the Vermont State Employees Credit Union (members of WEC

qualify to become members of the VSECU) that also includes Efficiency Vermont (EVT). This partnership is based on the energy-efficiency program known as Home Performance with ENERGY STAR. Following a certified home inspection, VSECU will extend low-interest loans for qualified projects, and EVT and WEC will then buy down the interest on the loan from VSECU. In the end, the borrower (homeowner) pays only the principle.

Through its subsidiary, Energysmart of Vermont, CVCAC also provides non-low-income weatherization services, including home inspections under the ENERGY STAR program. Energysmart can then do the follow-up renovation services. There are also other qualified contractors in the area who specialize in weatherization projects. Information about Home Performance and about selecting a contractor is available on Efficiency Vermont’s website.


The bottom line: there are lots of avenues for financial assistance out there, and there will likely be no time better than 2009 to invest in your home’s energy efficiency.

“It’s relatively easy for the average Vermont home to knock off a third of its energy use through the services of a qualified contractor, just with straight-forward insulation and efficiency work – and this is before we talk about solar water heating or wood pellets,” says Zabriskie.

WEC General Manager Avram Patt agrees – with one important caveat: People should take the time to learn which investments are most important before going forward. (For instance, bringing your home up to modern insulation standards saves more energy

than installing expensive new storm windows – a good investment for later, perhaps.)

“We hope WEC members will get good advice about what will give them the biggest bang for the buck before they spend a lot of money on things that may not give them the best results,” says Patt. “But with that said, there has never been a time with as many incentives available to do serious residential energy efficiency work.”

You can get started by calling CVCAC’s weatherization program (476-2093) if you believe your income qualifies you for the program, or by calling Washington Electric, where Bill Powell, director of products and services, can get you pointed in the right direction. 

“There has never been a time with as many incentives available to do serious residential energy efficiency work”

— Avram Patt

Specific Tax Incentives in the Stimulus Act

Listed here are several key provisions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), some of which will be useful to WEC members seeking energy savings or ways to defray costs of investing in renewable energy for their homes. Also see provisions for alternative-fuel cars and for commercial properties. Sources for this information include ENERGY STAR, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, Cooperative.com, and the Alliance to Save Energy.

Tax Credits

Insulation: 30 percent of cost, up to \$1,500

Storm windows: 30 percent of cost, up to \$1,500 (for qualified products)

Storm doors: 30 percent of cost, up to \$1,500 (for qualified products)

Home heating: 30 percent of cost, up to \$1,500 (for qualified ENERGY STAR gas, propane, or oil boilers); same credit for biomass-fueled stoves

Water heaters: 30 percent of cost, up to \$1,500 (for qualified ENERGY STAR gas, oil, or propane water heaters)

Solar water heating: 30 percent of cost

Residential (small) wind energy systems: 30 percent of cost

Automobiles (hybrid gasoline-electric, diesel, battery electric, alternative fuel, fuel cell vehicles): Tax credits will be determined by a formula based on vehicle weight and other factors. There is a 60,000-vehicle limit per manufacturer, and sales of Toyota and Honda products have already reached that limit and have been phased out; credit still available for Ford, GM, and Nissan.

For Commercial Buildings

A tax deduction of up to \$1.80 per square foot is available to owners or designers of new or existing commercial buildings that save at least 50 percent of the heating and cooling energy of a building that meets ASHRAE Standard 90:1-2001. Partial deductions of up to \$.60 per square foot can taken for measures affecting the building envelope, lighting, or heating/cooling. These tax deductions are available for systems “placed in service” from January 1, 2006, through December 31, 2013.

Websites

WEC recommends the following websites for further information.

- www.recovery.gov
- www.recovery.vermont.gov
- www.energystar.gov/
- www.efficiencyvermont.com (see Home Performance links)