



## Monthly E-Sierran Newsletter

November 2019

### Scientists Agree: We're in a Climate Emergency!

This month, more than 11,000 scientists from 153 countries, together as the Alliance of World Scientists, released a study that declares that the planet “clearly and unequivocally faces a climate emergency,” and provides six broad policy goals that must be met to address it. Notably, the study stands firm in its use of “emergency” and notes the role that humans have played in increased greenhouse gas emissions. The six policy goals revolve around energy, short-lived pollutants, nature, food, economy, and population. The language of the study, meanwhile, highlights a need for a just transition to a sustainable and equitable future, ensuring that the most vulnerable populations (with the least access to resources) are not left behind.

[Read the Study](#)



Across the country, youth climate activists are again leading the way with another call for massive strikes. The next strike will take place on December 6th. Here in Massachusetts, activists will meet in Copley Square, Boston for a march and rally. Join us to call for a Massachusetts Green New Deal for sustainable jobs and a just transition so we can put an end to this climate emergency!

[RSVP to join the December 6th Strike](#)

## What's Happening at the Massachusetts Chapter

**You're Invited: Annual  
Sierra Club Holiday Party**  
Thursday, December 12 at 5:30pm  
Sierra Club Office, 50 Federal  
Street, 3rd Floor, Boston

Please join us on December 12th as we



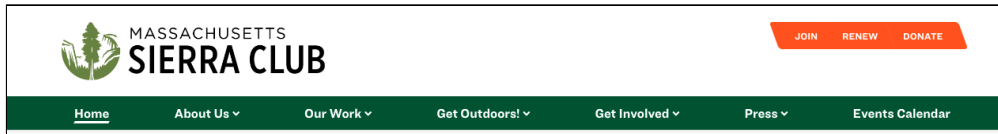
celebrate the season, our members, friends and partners, and our many shared accomplishments in 2019. There will be hors-d'oeuvres, wine, beer, soft drinks, and entertainment.

RSVP Here

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## A new look for our website!

Head over to the [Sierra Club Massachusetts Chapter](#) to see our new website! Featuring a cleaner look and easier navigation, we hope you spend a few moments engaging with the site!



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## Clean Energy & Climate

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### Senators Pacheco, Eldridge, Rep. Robinson, and Youth Activists Call for Urgent Climate Action

Earlier this year, 36 of 40 senators in Massachusetts signed a pledge to support a variety of climate solutions in 2019. As the Senate formally rested for the year after November 20th, another year has come and gone without bold climate action. Earlier this month, [Senator Pacheco lamented the lack of action and urged his colleagues to work together quickly to move forward with a bill](#). Meanwhile, Senate President Karen Spilka and Telecommunications, Energy and Utilities Committee Co-Chair Michael Barrett both said a bill would come before the Senate early in 2020.

This urgency was echoed by Senator Eldridge and Representative Robinson [in a joint press conference with student climate activists on Wednesday](#). “We’re putting forward the voices of our youngest in our community, who are really putting everything on the line,” said Robinson, D-Framingham, “because they recognize, as we do, that without any major change in climate policy, we won’t have an Earth to live on.”

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### Massachusetts Mayors Call for Transition to 100% Renewable Energy

On Monday, the Sierra Club, Environment Massachusetts, and State Senator Jamie Eldridge issued a joint statement with several Massachusetts Mayors seeking a rapid transition to renewable energy. We believe a goal of 100% renewable across all sectors



Left to right: New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell, State Senator Jamie Eldridge, Sierra Club Organizer Jacob Stern, Environment Massachusetts State Director Ben Hellerstein, and Somerville Mayor Joseph Curtatone

(electricity, transportation, and buildings) is necessary to reduce our emissions and avoid the worst impacts of climate change. [Click here to read more.](#)

## Community Choice Energy coming to Worcester!

Beginning in February 2020, Worcester residents will have the option to purchase energy through the Worcester Community Choice Electricity Aggregation program. This program allows the city to purchase their electricity from the supplier(s) of their choosing, rather than having a utility company (such as National Grid) make the purchasing decisions. By doing so, cities can choose higher proportions of local and renewable energy sources, which helps reduce their overall carbon footprint. In Worcester, participating customers will receive an additional 20% renewable electricity from renewable energy projects in New England, over and above the minimum amount required by state law, for a total of 36% renewable electricity in 2020, 38% renewable electricity in 2021, and 40% renewable electricity in 2022. [Mayor Petty has also been on record supporting a state transition to 100% renewable energy.](#)



### Worcester Community Choice Electricity Aggregation Program Launching Soon!

Worcester Community Choice Aggregation is a form of municipal group electricity purchasing permitted by state law. Worcester will use the bulk buying power of the community to:

- ✓ **Increase community sustainability and reduce Worcester's carbon footprint**  
Participants will receive at least double the amount of locally produced renewable energy, compared to the state required minimum amount, at approximately the same average yearly price as National Grid's Basic Service.\*
- ✓ **Provide stable electricity supply costs**  
Prices will remain fixed for longer than National Grid's Basic Service price (which changes every six months or less), making the program different from many commercial electricity supply offers in the marketplace.\*
- ✓ **Protect consumers**  
The program is a city-vetted, consumer-friendly alternative to existing electricity supply offers that Worcester residents and businesses may be receiving in the mail or by phone. There will be no hidden costs, and participants will be able to leave the program at any time.

\* Please note: While the program aims to be equal to or lower than the average of the regularly fluctuating National Grid prices, it cannot guarantee that it will be equal to or lower than National Grid's Basic Service price because future Basic Service prices are unknown.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CURRENT PROGRAM TERMS, RATES, AND OPTIONS AT [WorcesterCommunityChoice.com](http://WorcesterCommunityChoice.com)

Program participants will be automatically enrolled in:

#### Worcester Standard Green:

**20% of local renewable electricity on top of the state-required minimum!**

Or you can choose:

#### Worcester 100% Green:

**100% renewable electricity**

#### Who can participate?

The Worcester Community Choice Aggregation Program will be open for automatic enrollment (per state law) to all electricity customers in Worcester who are on National Grid's Basic Service. Those customers will soon receive a postcard and a letter from the City with more details. Non Basic Services electricity customers may also join the aggregation - learn how at [WorcesterCommunityChoice.com](http://WorcesterCommunityChoice.com).

#### Can I Opt-Out?

Participation in the Worcester Community Choice Electricity Aggregation is not required. You will be able to opt out before being enrolled (with your February 2020 electricity meter reads), as well as any time after enrollment, with no fee or penalty.

Flyer: Worcester Community Choice (Electricity) Aggregation Program, October 2019

[Learn more](#)

## Beyond Fossil Fuels

### Town of Brookline Votes to Ban All New Gas Hookups

On Wednesday, in an exciting effort led by community members, [a Brookline town meeting approved legislation that would prohibit the installation of new fossil fuel construction](#). Through a bylaw, the city will see a 15% decrease of carbon emissions in buildings over the next 30 years. The town is the first city on the East Coast to pass a ban and is the only one that prohibits fossil fuels even in renovation projects. Over 15 cities in California have passed a similar ban. Other communities in Massachusetts are lining up to take similar action.

## Weymouth Compressor



## Station Update

Earlier this month, activists and environmental groups learned that utilities told the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) that they do not need any more gas from the Atlantic Bridge project. This huge news means that the Weymouth compressor station is not necessary to meet their demand for the next fourteen years. Meanwhile, the Town of Weymouth, [Fore River Residents Against the Compressor Station \(FRRACS\)](#), and the Mass Pipe Line Action Network have filed to request FERC revisit the extended approval given the lack of need for the gas.

Unfortunately the compressor station project has been given a green light by the Baker Administration as the MassDEP and CZM have issued the permits for the Weymouth compressor station. [FRRACS is currently asking activists to contact MassDOT and Baker and Ask for a Risk Assessment.](#)

Take Action to [#StopTheCompressorStation](#)



## Under Pressure

### Upcoming Film Screening

Numerous communities in MA are facing local battles -- with regional and global consequences -- to stop expansion of gas pipelines and infrastructure. We are co-sponsoring screenings of the powerful 2019 student-produced documentary [Under Pressure](#) to educate about the dangers of fracked gas in an era of climate change. To inquire about hosting an **Under Pressure** screening, please visit [Under Pressure online](#).

Watch the Trailer Here

### Reading Film Screening

Thursday, December 12 at 7:00pm  
239 Woburn Street, Reading

RSVP Here

## Plastic Free Mass

### MA Senate Votes for a Statewide Plastic Bag Ban (Again)

[On Wednesday the Massachusetts State Senate voted \(as they have in past sessions\) to advance a bill banning plastic bags statewide.](#) The Senate's bill would require businesses to charge at least 10 cents for a recycled paper bag at checkout, but would preempt existing local plastic bag bans already implemented in cities and towns. 128 Massachusetts cities and towns

have already passed local laws banning plastic bags.

Both the Senate and the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture have made progress on plastic bag legislation this session. Sierra Club is currently awaiting consensus among all stakeholders and will continue to advocate for an even stronger bill

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## Six More Towns Vote to Regulate Single-Use Plastic Bags

This past October residents in Chelmsford, Auburn, Hanson, Millis, and Pepperell voted to regulate the use of plastic bags in retail. Advocates for the Chelmsford resolution argued that plastic bags hurt the local ecosystem, take an excessively long time to break down, and that plastic particles are ubiquitous in our society. A big shout out to Sierra Club volunteer leader Kevin Goscilla, for advocating for the change his town. [Read more about the Chelmsford ban.](#)

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## Protecting our Planet

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### Monatiquot River Herring Fighting to Make a Comeback



Watch the Video

Sierra Club MA Outings Chair, Robert Kearns, is working to help restore the Monatiquot River in Braintree. As humans have induced change in the river landscape has changed over centuries, the herring spawning ground is no longer accessible, even as their instinct to swim upriver to spawn continues to guide them. Robert's work doesn't end at the shores of the river, as he fights alongside youth activists to fight for the planet's future. Robert says, " *I believe that we can look to the future and see how we can really work with nature, rather than against it.*" Hear more from Robert by watching [this video](#).

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### Plant-Based Planet Potluck Dinner

**Sunday, December 8 at 5:30pm**  
**6 Eliot Street, Jamaica Plain**

Put your concern for the environment into action by minimizing the carbon footprint of your food, and saving habitat for wildlife. Join your fellow Sierra Club members for a plant-based potluck dinner, in partnership with the First Church in Jamaica Plain Unitarian Universalist's Social Justice Action Committee. Please bring a plant-based dish (vegan), free of meat, chicken, fish, meat or fish stock, eggs, dairy products, or honey. Free, but registration is required.



RSVP Here

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### Plant-Based Planet Talk

**Wednesday, December 11 at 1:00pm**  
**209 Ashmont Street, Boston**

Save the Earth and your health by eating a nutritious plant-based (vegan) diet of whole grains, legumes, vegetables, and fruit. Find out how eating plant-based food not only improves your

health, but also lowers your carbon footprint, and even saves natural resources. Free and open to the public.

[RSVP Here](#)

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## Transportation Matters

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### Sierra Club Releases First Ever Nationwide Investigation into Electric Vehicle Shopping Experience



[Read the Full Report](#)

The Sierra Club recently [released a report](#) conducted nationwide about the accessibility of new and used electric vehicles (EV) at auto dealers. The study covered approximately 900 dealerships and found that 74% of those dealers did not have a single EV in stock; many of those dealers had no more than two EVs available on their lot, and 10% of the time when volunteers asked to test drive an EV, the vehicle was insufficiently charged and unable to be driven. Overall, salespeople were unable to provide thorough or accurate information regarding electric vehicle charging, technology, and state and federal incentives for purchasing an EV. Ultimately, the report illustrates the need for automakers to not only invest in EVs, but to make those vehicles readily available to consumers. “ *The auto industry needs to end its greenwashing claim that it’s committed to an electric future when, in reality, automakers and dealerships are dragging their feet to offer consumers the electric vehicles they want and deserve. It’s past time for the auto industry to put some action behind its promises of progress and work to tackle emissions from transportation,*” said Hieu Le, a campaign representative with the Sierra Club’s Clean Transportation for All campaign and the main author of the report.

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## Chapter Committee and Team Meetings

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### Legislative Advocacy Team Meeting

**Monday, November 25th at 6:00pm**

**Sierra Club Office, 50 Federal Street, 3rd Floor, Boston**

Join one of our newest teams to strategize how to influence the state legislature to pass critical environmental and clean energy legislation.

[RSVP Here](#)

### Energy Committee Meeting

**Thursday, December 12 at 1:30pm**

**Sierra Club Office, 50 Federal Street, 3rd Floor, Boston**

The monthly meeting of the Massachusetts Chapter Energy Committee. All are welcome!

[RSVP Here](#)

### Executive Committee Meeting

**Monday, December 16 at 5:30pm**

**Sierra Club Office, 50 Federal Street, 3rd Floor, Boston**

The monthly meeting of the Massachusetts Chapter Executive

[RSVP Here](#)

Committee. Sierra Club members welcome and encouraged to attend!

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## Our Reading List

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*Read the latest environmental news from Massachusetts and beyond...*

- [Attorney General Healey announces she is suing ExxonMobil over climate change](#) (10/24/2019 Boston Globe)
- [Officials celebrate offshore wind training facility at MMA](#) (10/24/2019 Cape Cod Times)
- [State taps Mayflower for second offshore wind project](#) (10/30/2019 Cape Cod Times)
- [Massachusetts communities press Gov. Baker to make bigger share of solar, clean energy programs available to low income and working class families](#) (10/31/2019 MassLive)
- [Leaders call for North Shore transportation fix](#) (11/2/2019 The Salem News)
- [Massive turbine blade unveiled in Charlestown](#) (11/5/2019 Boston Herald)

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*Always be sure to check our [website calendar](#) for more upcoming events. If you'd like the Sierra Club to co-sponsor your event (and add it to our events digest) , [please email us!](#)*

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