



CITY OF ROCHESTER'S MAYOR WARREN SIGNS SIERRA CLUB 100% CLEAN RENEWABLE ENERGY PLEDGE

ROCHESTER REGIONAL GROUP—Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

SIERRA CLUB ECOLOGUE

*Statement read at Mayor's Press Conference,
Cobbs Hill Reservoir, Rochester, NY 8/16/17*

The Sierra Club is the oldest and largest conservation group in the United States. With over two million members and 125 years of service we are today at the forefront of the effort to prevent catastrophic Climate Change. Science is the foundation of modern civilization. We believe in science. Science tells us we are making the biggest mistake humans have ever made. Billions of people for thousands of years will suffer from events taking place in our lifetimes. Unless we stop it.

While we recognize there is always more to learn, we can not let the unknown be used to cast doubt on what is known. Climate Change is the greatest crime against humanity ever committed. Climate Change is human rights abuse on a global and generational scale.

At the national, state and local level the Sierra Club has a history leadership on environmental issues and also understands the intersection of these issues with social justice issues. Leadership is what has brought us here today.

We as a society have contributed to the mess we are in today with climate change. We as a society must change our course to prevent disaster. In a democracy it is the responsibility of citizens to make their government set policies that protect and serve the common good, not common greed. That takes leadership and the leadership of the Sierra Club is helping to make that happen.

The Rochester Regional Group of the Sierra Club recognizes the achievements of Mayor Warren in working with the Sierra Club and other organizations to make changes in our City to become a Climate Smart Community, by conserving energy and reducing carbon emissions.

Though the signing of this pledge is but a sym-

bolic step in the right direction it's full implementation will be an achievement of great impact- an achievement of great leadership, truly an example for others to follow.

Mayor Warren, yours is a difficult job and implementing this pledge in a fair and effective manner --one more task on your list of many. We believe it will be a lasting legacy as Mayor.

We applaud Mayor Warren for signing Sierra Club's 100% Clean Energy Endorsement. She now stands with 141 other Mayors from across the country who are leaders in climate change action. Now, the vision of our city using 100% renewable energy needs to be made a reality with all of the determination, resources, and skill of a full WWII mobilization. That's what the climate crisis demands. The members of the Sierra Club and all the concerned citizens of Rochester look forward to working with you to make Rochester a continuing leader in environmental issues, particularly in ensuring a level one cleanup of the Vacuum Oil brownfield site, so this area can finally be improved and safe for use by the PLEX neighborhood and city residents.

Peter Debes, Secretary, and Robert Withers

See the whole press conference on You Tube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AC1si94PLgM>

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From The Chair— By Jessica Slaybaugh

Our Votes Can Make a Difference

Election season is coming up, so we need to talk about something.

I'll admit that it's easy for environmentalists to get discouraged these days. It seems like there's bad news coming from the federal government almost every day that can easily make it feel like our efforts to combat climate change are nothing but a pipe dream.

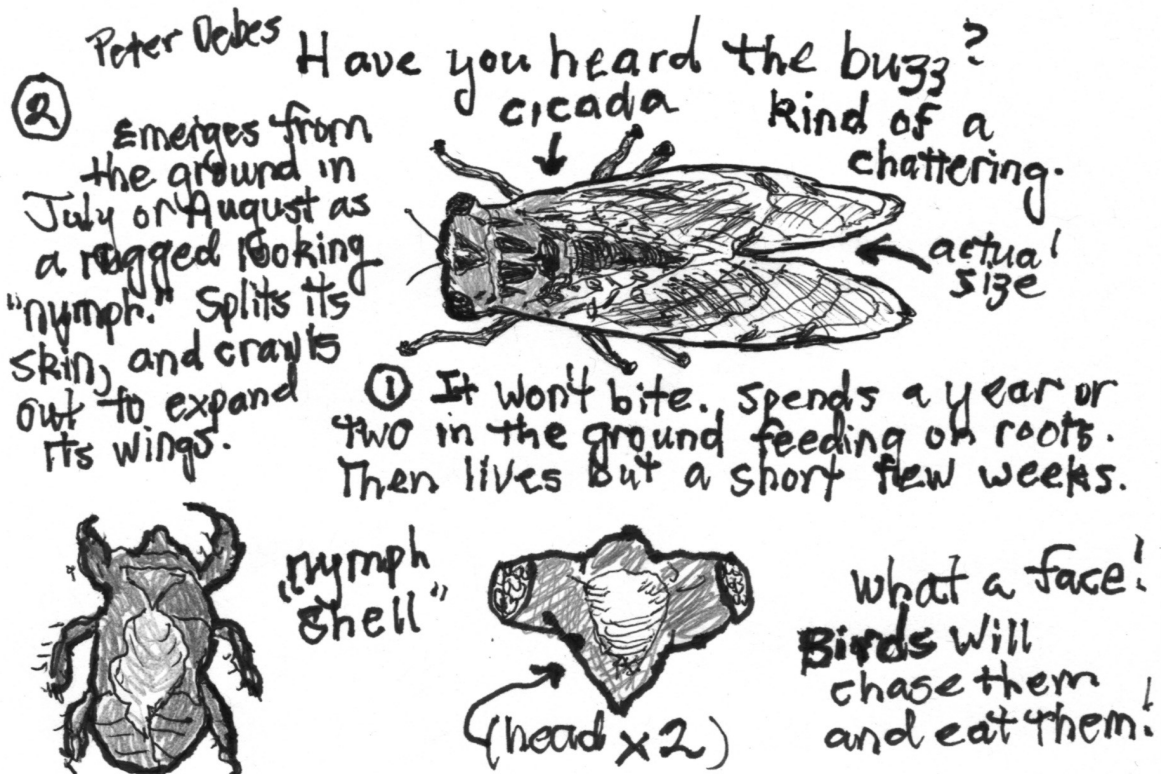
Trump has proven himself time and again to be a climate change denier, and is using his position to do some alarming things. His new executive order on infrastructure includes rolling back environmental regulations. He's an avid supporter of "beautiful, clean coal" (his words), and has rolled back regulations on it as well. He cleared the way for the Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines. Thanks to him, we are one of only three countries in the world not participating in the Paris Agreement (and one of those countries – Nicaragua – refused to sign because they felt it wasn't tough enough). He gave the role of Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to Scott Pruitt, a man who has sued the EPA 14 times and rejects the science behind man-made climate change. Together, Pruitt and Trump (who has outright threatened to dismantle the EPA entirely) are proposing massive cut-backs, including the elimination of the Clean Water Act. And the list goes on – and on and on.

However, there's still hope. Over ten states and 350 cities have vowed to honor the Paris Agreement. Many (not enough, but many) politicians are speaking out against the actions that the Trump administration is taking. This August, Rochester Mayor Lovely Warren signed the Sierra Club's Mayors For 100% Clean Energy pledge.

You see, big things can happen at a more local level, and this is where all of us come in. This November, several important local elections will be held, elections that will bring – or keep – people in office who can help make a difference, regardless and in spite of what the Trump administration is doing. Please get out there and cast your vote for people who have committed to – or can likely be persuaded to – take action in the interest of addressing climate change. Research the candidates who will be on your ballot. If you live in Rochester, keep an eye out for the Rochester Regional Group's endorsements for mayor and city council; we have people hard at work analyzing the candidates to determine who we can stand behind.

The reality is that we will likely never convince Trump to do the things he should be doing to address climate change, but we *can* make an impact at the local level this year. So please, *get out there and vote*. It's one of the most important things that we as environmental activists can do this year.

Naturalist's Corner— By Peter Debes



Why Buy Local? By Tom Krahl

Buying locally-produced products creates jobs, strengthens the area economy, and gives us fresher and better quality food. These all add up to improving our own quality of life. But area-sourced merchandise also brings important benefits to the environment. Reduced transportation costs are cited as a primary advantage of “home-grown” stuff, but there are other benefits which are less obvious.

Local products are often grown/manufactured at smaller sites, which are friendlier to the earth due to concentration effects. Small farming operations produce a less concentrated burden to the environment in terms of water usage. Run-off effects are less damaging for small local farms when compared with intensive mega-farm operations which can create serious toxic waste plumes in the local water table. Smaller local manufacturing plants also have a disproportionately lower environmental impact in their operations, with reduced infrastructure requirements for power, parking, waste management and commuting.

Buying local food reduces waste. The United Nations estimates that 20 to 30 percent of food grown is wasted due to cosmetic imperfections, which are far more likely if it's shipped. Food purchased from big-box stores is probably packaged in large quantities, further increasing the likelihood that it will not all be consumed before falling below the yuck threshold. Food from local sources is not typically sold in these types of stores.

Usually we think of farmer's markets as the best venue for local goods. Small markets support their local community, compared with low-cost warehouse format stores which tend to inhabit suburban plazas and contribute to sprawl. Locally owned grocery retailers (Wegman's, Tops) are increasingly good sources for some local things, especially if we broaden the definition of “local” to include “regional.” Finding locally produced things in grocery stores may require some reading of labels. Products do not need to be sourced within our own county or the next to confer environmental advantages.

Searching for regional gems I have discovered a few are listed here.

- Cheese – From ordinary cheddar to some very interesting blue and soft varieties, New York and Vermont cheeses are a big step up from the Wisconsin alternatives 800 miles away.
- Beer, wine, spirits – Without a doubt New York has world-class breweries. Most grocery stores are now stocking vast assortments. Of course we know New York produces great wine from Niagara to Long Island and the distilled spirits industry is growing.



- Beef, pork, chicken – New York-produced meats range from garden variety to grass-fed, free-range high end. While meat is less environmentally friendly than veggies, many of us still favor it and finding local can reduce the impact.
- Honey and maple syrup – I like to pick these up at markets and roadside stands to support the producers directly.
- Furniture – Ranging from high-quality Amish pieces to one-of-a-kind items found in boutiques or made by craftspeople and sold at festivals, furnishing your home with locally crafted furniture adds so much.



- Art – As with furniture, New York is rich with creative artists and unique art. I am fortunate to live with an artist and our house is full of her watercolors, each of which has a story.

- Power – Your utility company can probably plug you in with electricity sourced from New York wind or New York solar.

Supporting local producers takes on more urgency in this age of political turmoil when environmental concerns are being sidelined. As the bumper sticker says, “no farms, no food.” We should support our local producers for our own well-being and to cast a vote, as it were, for our values.



How to Avoid Common Crash Situations While Bicycling

By Deanna Power

Cycling is one of the healthiest ways to get from A to B. Unfortunately, even the most cautious cyclist could be in a crash with a motorist. While there's no stopping reckless drivers, there are some common situations you can avoid to reduce your chances chance of getting hit by a car:

#1: The Right Hook

This common crash occurs when you're on the right-hand side of a motorist and he turns right, running into you.

You should *never* approach a signaling car at a stoplight from the right. You're asking for disaster if you do this—A much wiser decision would be to approach from the left, or to simply wait for the light to turn green. I personally park myself behind a line of parked cars unless I'm *positive* I know the light rotation (on my daily work commute).

#2: Getting Doored

The best way to avoid getting doored is to ride far enough away from parked cars that it's mathematically impossible to get hit. The average car door is 5' long, so riding 4' away from parked cars is plenty. If you can reach out and touch a mirror, you're too close.

If your bike lane is too close to parked cars, it's completely legal for you to ride in the vehicle lane. I usually do so to avoid a stretch of bike lane next to a mile-long row of parking meters.

#3: The Left Cross

This crash occurs when you're passing an intersection and a motorist tries to turn left, turning directly into you.

Avoiding the left cross is all about visibility. In nearly every state, it's illegal for your bicycle to *not* have a white headlight visible from 300 feet away. Keeping your light on during the day may make you even more noticeable. Additionally, wear bright clothing to make sure you're seen, or attach reflectors to your helmet.

Again, don't pass cars from the right. A motorist turning left will not be able to see you behind the other car. Ride directly behind traffic for the highest visibility.

#4: Rear-Ended

This crash is actually pretty uncommon, but absolutely deadly when it happens. Riding predictably goes a long way in stopping cars from rear-ending you.

Whenever you turn, be sure to *clearly* signal your intent. Most motorists are unfamiliar with the traditional [hand signals](#) (e.g., using your raised left arm to signal a right turn). I prefer to point wildly at the exact street where I'm about to turn with the arm on the same side.

Keep Your Route in Mind

One of the biggest things to keep in mind when commuting alongside traffic is a safe route. There are three basic factors here:

- Low traffic
- Ample space
- Slow traffic

Low-traffic routes are clearly ideal. If your route is busy, try to pick a route with a bike lane or wide shoulder. Finally, if your only options are narrow streets (my case in Boston), pick roads where cyclists travel at the same speed as cars. That way, nobody will rush to get around you, threatening to sideswipe you.

If You're In a Crash...

It's possible to file an insurance claim after a crash, but you'll need to show that you didn't cause the crash. Avoiding common crash situations will go a long way in proving you strove to avoid injury. Here are two examples of cyclists' claims:

1. \$300,000 awarded to cyclist after a runner stepped in front of her on a jogging path. The cyclist suffered severe head injuries and hearing loss. The cyclist did absolutely nothing wrong—She was simply riding to the left of a runner as expected when the runner stepped into her path.
2. Another cyclist was injured on a forest trail and sought damages against the city, but her claim was dismissed because was on an unauthorized trail, with signs saying the area was prohibited for cyclists. The moral: Always obey the law. If you're in a crash and you didn't have required reflectors on your bicycle, or were riding while intoxicated, you may be blamed for the crash.

By avoiding some common crash situations, you'll hopefully never find yourself needing to find blame for the incident! Stay safe, and ride smart.

*The content of this article was written by Deanna Power of Personal Injury Help (<http://www.personalinjury-law.com>) and was not provided by a legal professional. Be sure to review your local cycling ordinances to ensure you ride safe and legally!



Cutting Waste in your Kitchen: Time, Water, Energy, Packaging, Food

By Margie Campaigne

Whether you have a large family, are young couples, empty nesters, or single, you can adapt and use these tips to your benefit. Your kitchen is potentially the source of a lot of waste, whether time, energy, water or your food itself. How can you reduce that? Let's look at some of the categories of what's wasted, and ideas on how to cut down.



1. Certainly **TIME** is a category we are all interested in, especially surrounding meal preparation. Are some of your family's favorite meals ones like chili, hearty soups, or grandma's famous stew recipe? Next time you prepare them, make a double or triple recipe, and refrigerate or freeze the extra for another day.

If you're the cook, are your spouse and the kids helping with meal prep, cleanup and/or setting the table? Teach them how so they can manage on their own when necessary, plus help meals to be ready sooner. Perhaps you can rotate responsibilities as your schedules dictate. You will all enjoy your time together better when the cook is less stressed.

Do you cook with the lids covering your pots and pans? Not only will you reduce the cooking time by doing this, but you will use less energy, whether cooking with a gas or electric stove.

You may want to upgrade to "waterless" cookware if you don't have it already. Then you are cooking more with steam, which gets hotter than water and therefore cooks faster.

When you bake in your oven, do you cook several dishes at a time? This allows you to fully utilize all the heat the oven is producing, and could enable you to be making a dish for later in the week, too. Are you fully utilizing your microwave? You could bake that squash in 15 minutes instead of an hour, and find similar time savings with many other foods also. Try heating a cup of water in the microwave for making tea or another hot beverage instead of filling the teapot and turning on the burner.

2. When thinking of saving money in the family budget, do you consider **WATER** and **ENERGY** that might be getting wasted, raising your utility bills? A couple of the time-saving ideas above also save energy. Another is to make sure the pot or pan you are cooking in covers the whole burner. Otherwise, a lot of heat that you are paying for is wasted.

Your dishwashing habits have a big impact not only on water use but energy for heating that water. Did you know that numerous studies show that running a full load in the dishwasher uses much less water and energy than doing those dishes by hand? For those dishes and pans that need hand washing, do you run the faucet while scrubbing or do you put some water in the sink, scrub, then rinse in clean water in a basin or side-by-side sink? Guess which method wastes water? It's running the faucet as you wash, by a long shot. It also is a big energy waster, making your water heater use more energy to heat all that water that's just running down the drain.



3. Do you get tired of hauling so much trash to the curb? A lot of it originates in the kitchen, and a lot of that is **PACKAGING**. Do you shop where food is offered in bulk? Not only will you save money by buying in bulk, but you will have less waste to dispose of. Do you get tempted to buy single serving packs? It's SO much less wasteful to buy normal sizes, and if need be for school lunches, etc., to repackage in your own reusable containers. For necessary packaging, how much do you recycle? What are the rules in your community? Are ALL family members on board with what gets recycled and what is truly trash? Is the trash bin more handy than the recycling bin? If so, think about relocating them to encourage proper recycling.

4. Are you eating all the **FOOD** your hard-earned dollars are buying? Many households are not, and an average estimate of what we waste is something like 25%. As families are spending hundreds of dollars monthly on groceries, it makes sense to save perhaps \$100 or more each month with a little better planning and better food

habits. If your kids are picky eaters and leave food on their plates, start doling out smaller portions of each dish at first, and have them ask for seconds if they are still hungry and like something in particular. Get everyone used to the idea that leftover food is just food that is already prepared for another meal or snack, and is not to be thrown away.

Where do peels and pits and unintended "science experiments" wind up? If your answer is the trash or disposal, there is a better option. Turn that all into your own garden fertilizer – compost! From purchased indoor and outdoor composters to do-it-yourself versions or a back corner of your yard, there are many ways to turn food and yard waste into riches. (Just make sure no meat, fat, or oil is accidentally included.)



Vampires and Phantoms and Warts – Oh My! By Margie Campaigne

Who doesn't want to pay less to their utility company and keep more money for themselves? I certainly do. For those interested in saving the 5% to 30% of their electric bill that is simply wasted on powering electronics when not in use, this is for you.

Phantom and Vampire power goes by a few other names too. (By the way, a "wart" is the name used for devices that recharge your cells phones, etc. They do need to be unplugged when not in use.) Phantom or vampire power is the power used for electronics that have an "instant on" feature, or internal and external clocks. Even when you turn them OFF, they are still partially ON. One very simple way to prevent your computer and peripherals, your entertainment center, and so on, from drawing power when not in use is to plug them all into a power strip or surge protector – then they can be turned totally off all at once, with one switch.

Some people have been led to believe that every appliance must be unplugged in order to avoid this drain, but that is not the case. Not every appliance has electronic components or clocks. For instance, many of your kitchen countertop appliances such as toasters, mixers, slow cookers, and blenders are really off when not in use, unless they are newer ones equipped with clocks, etc.

To prove this, I used a Kill-A-Watt meter to test all of my kitchen countertop appliances. The KAW meter can be programmed to show the amount of electricity being used in watts, amps, and so on. Every single kitchen appliance on my countertop tested out at using NO electricity when not turned on. The only exception was a coffee maker that has a clock built in.

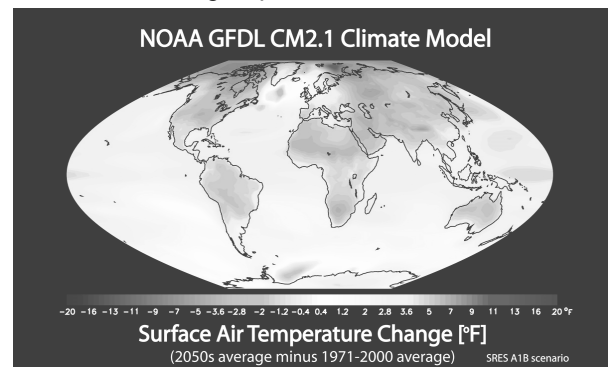
Whenever you need to replace any older appliance, be sure to shop for one that is Energy Star rated. They have been engineered to use less energy than their older and non-rated cousins. Several years ago, after an energy audit, I used available grant and loan money to replace my old furnace and a couple of older appliances with Energy Star models (washer and refrigerator). I kept track of my energy use over the next year and compared it to the year previous to the upgrades. My electric bill dropped 44%!

In summary, do use power strips or surge protectors to turn your electronics off completely. Don't worry about unplugging most of your kitchen countertop appliances, as when they are off, they're off (unless they have a clock/timer)! Think of what you can do to treat yourself and/or your family with your savings.



Join our revitalized Climate Change Committee, with Frank Regan

New **Climate Change Committee** forming for the Rochester Sierra Club. Frank Regan (former chairperson, Transportation and Zero Waste creator/leader, and host of RochesterEnvironment.com for twenty years) is bringing together Sierra Club members who want to work on climate solutions that will help our region mitigate and adapt to climate change. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Frank at FrankRegan@RochesterEnvironment.com with subject line "SC Climate Change Committee". We intend to be very active and work on addressing Climate Change on many fronts through efforts such as letters to the editor, enhancing social media effectiveness, coordinating with other groups and governmental authorities, petitioning, and starting our own initiatives. As soon as I get a number of responses, you will be contacted about where and when to meet as a group.



Community Choice Aggregation: Let's Do It To Enable 100% Renewable Energy for All! By Linda Isaacson Fedele

Along with signing the [Sierra Club 100% Clean Energy Endorsement](#) on Aug. 16, Mayor Warren announced that the City is working to meet that pledge in good part by adopting [Community Choice Aggregation](#) (CCA). The goal is for all City residents and small businesses to get their electricity from 100% renewable energy!

CCA, at its most basic level, is a like buying club. The participating municipality-- or a group of two or more together-- purchases electricity in bulk on behalf of all residents and small businesses except those that opt out. This aggregated demand enables negotiating power for lower rates and whatever else the municipality decides to require: renewable energy, energy efficiency programs, even locally generated renewables, if they so choose.

If you are a City resident, let Mayor Warren know that you support CCA, and that you want it to enable 100% renewable energy for all. The Villages of Lima and Scottsville and Town of Geneva are also well on their way to CCA; tell them the same. The Towns of Brighton and Pittsford and the Village of Brockport are just now considering CCA-- if you live here, please let your elected officials know that you want it!

Tom & Karen's Excellent Iceland Adventure

By Tom Krahl

We toured beautiful Iceland in July and saw geysers, sod houses, fjords, humpback whales, sheep, glaciers, and, my favorite, a bar with "Lead Us Into Temptation" on the window. Our tour guide, bus driver and various docents all told us how climate change is profoundly affecting Iceland.



Iceland is paradoxically positioned in the world as being highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change and, at the same time, a leading country in percentage of renewable energy usage. Iceland's sensitivity to climate change is related to its latitude at 66° N, where temperatures have risen at twice the global average since the start of the industrial revolution. Sensitivity to temperature change is exacerbated by the presence of, and dependence on, several glaciers on the island. The country's renewable energy production is due to abundant hydroelectric and geothermal resources.

Glaciers on Iceland are melting due to climate change, losing mass at a rate of 11 billion tons per year. The reduced mass of the glaciers is causing the earth under the glaciers to rise at an average rate of 3½ cm (1.4 inches) per year. The uplift in these regions causes other areas on the island to subside, which triggers earthquakes and may initiate volcanic activity. Volcanic eruptions in Iceland can have far-reaching effects. For example the 2010 eruption of Eyjafjallajökull grounded air travel worldwide due to abrasive ash in the upper atmosphere. The eventual loss of glacial meltwater will also impact hydroelectric energy production and the fishing and tourism industries. The top three industries in Iceland are tourism, fishing and aluminum ore processing, the latter of which is enabled by cheap electricity rates.

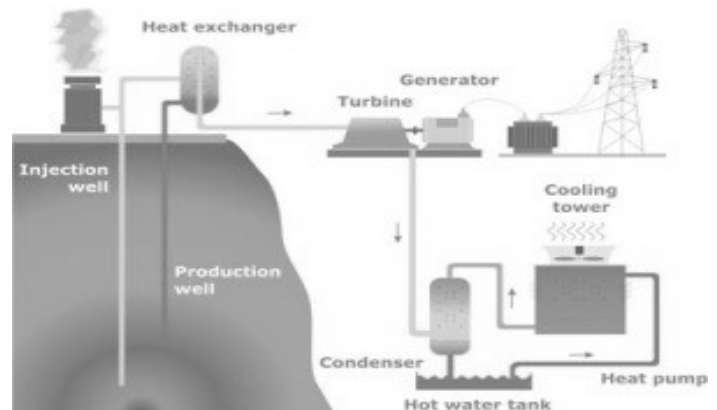
Today 100% of Iceland's electricity comes from renewables and 9 of 10 homes are heated directly with geothermal energy. Electricity is sourced from hydroelectric (75%) and geothermal (25%).

We visited the geothermal plant in Svartsengi. There are 7 geothermal plants in Iceland. The geothermal fluid coming from thousands of feet below the surface is separated into steam and superheated liquid. Steam is fed into turbines which generate electricity. The liquid portion passes through a heat exchanger where heat is transferred to clean water. This hot water is then piped to customers where it is used for direct space heating and hot tap water. 87% of heating and hot water requirements are met through geothermal sources in Iceland.

Geothermal still has an environmental footprint, although at a small fraction of conventional fossil fuel wells. Hydrogen sulfide and CO₂ emissions come along with the geothermal fluid from the well. At Svartsengi 85% of the CO₂ produced is captured and converted to methanol. The geothermal fluid containing trace amounts of heavy metals is typically injected back into the earth to be reheated and used again. Reinjection of the spent fluid is similar to hydraulic fracturing and may cause earthquakes.

Iceland has taken a conservative and measured approach to development of geothermal by choosing to build smaller plants which meet immediate needs as opposed to larger plants which may be less efficient when operating below capacity, and by building plants more often which allows the design to take advantage of the latest technology. Also, this smaller, more spread-out approach results in a more agile infrastructure which is advantageous since hot spots are known to move periodically.

While Iceland is unique in its location and energy options, it may still serve as a model for the rest of the world both as a coal-mine canary vis-à-vis climate change effects and as a development lab for geothermal energy. Today



large-scale geothermal plants are situated at the edge of tectonic plates found in California, Oregon, New Zealand, Costa Rica, Mexico, and Italy as well as Iceland. However, the science of detecting underground thermal reservoirs is advancing rapidly and will someday be able to discover viable sites in areas not adjacent to tectonic boundaries.

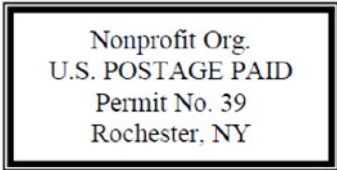
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Fall 2017 Calendar SIERRA CLUB and other environmental events

All Committees are local volunteer groups of the Rochester Regional Group of the Sierra Club.

Date	Day	Time	Meeting/Event	Place
September 5	Tuesday	6:30-8:30pm	Executive Committee Meeting	Harro East Bldg., 400 Andrews St., Ste 600
September 9	Saturday	10:00am-3:30pm	National Electric Drive Week Event	Rochester Institute of Technology, 1 Lomb Memorial
September 16	Saturday	10:00am-6:00pm	Rochester 1st Annual VegFest \$3 adults	MLK Jr Memorial Pk, Manhattan Square, 353 Court St
October 3	Tuesday	6:30-8:30pm	Executive Committee Meeting	Harro East Bldg., 400 Andrews St., Ste 600
October 7	Saturday	5:30pm-10:00pm	Genesee River Bash: River Romance	Port of Rochester Terminal, 1000 N. River Street
October 21	Saturday	12:00pm-3:00pm	EV Accelerator & SunCommon Eco Fest	Three Heads Brewing, 186 Atlantic Ave., Rochester
October 28	Saturday	TBA	Upstate NY Climate Solutions Summit	The Harley School, 1981 Clover St, Rochester, NY
November 7	Tuesday	6:30-8:30pm	Executive Committee Meeting	Harro East Bldg., 400 Andrews St., Ste 600

*****Watch our Facebook page and website for information on upcoming community meetings & other activities*****

Follow us on Facebook to keep up-to-date on new events throughout the year—www.facebook.com/SierraROC

Executive Committee meetings are open to Sierra Club members. All other meetings are open to everyone.

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