



February 2023

CLIMATE LEADERSHIP NEWSLETTER

NOTES FROM MASSACHUSETTS CITIES AND TOWNS

Dear Emma,

The Climate Leadership Newsletter features stories of environmental and climate action in Massachusetts. It provides a platform to highlight work being done by municipalities, climate leaders, and local groups in communities across the Commonwealth. To share local climate actions in your community, email [Emma Brown](#).

Opportunities for Action

Partner in our advocacy to fast track electrification of the commuter rail system

Our commuter rail system connects 75% of the state's population but service remains inadequate, fares are out of reach for many, and it continues to be powered by polluting diesel locomotives. These economic and public health inequities impact environmental justice communities and low-income families the most. It also results in our commuter rail system being underutilized and contributes to the worsening traffic congestion in the region.

Electrification of the commuter rail will not only enhance system reliability, it will support faster service, lower maintenance and operation costs, and reduce toxic air pollution for communities all along the route. However, the MBTA has made limited progress to modernize and electrify the rail system and needs to directly hear from municipal leaders like you. [Let us know](#) if you would like to be added to a list of municipal advocates for commuter rail electrification. We will contact you as opportunities to weigh in arise, along with resources to support your advocacy.

Funding Opportunities

Emerald Connections: Community Centered Weatherization Plus Health Program

A grant award from the Department of Energy for weatherization and healthy homes. [Learn more](#). **Deadline:** March 10, 2023. *Open to communities in Essex County only.*

Lead Hazard Reduction Grant Program

A grant award to maximize the number of children under the age of six protected from lead poisoning. [Learn more](#). **Deadline:** March 14, 2023

Low or No Emission Grant Program

A competitive grant program for the purchase or lease of zero-emission and low-emission transit buses. [Learn more](#). **Deadline:** April 13, 2023

Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Program

A program to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities. [Learn more](#). **Deadline:** April 13, 2023

Housing-Related Hazards & Lead-based Paint Capital Fund Program

A program to evaluate and reduce residential health hazards in public housing, including lead-based paint, carbon monoxide, mold, radon, fire safety, and asbestos. [Learn more](#). **Deadline:** April 13, 2023

EmPower Massachusetts Spring 2023 Grants

Provides investment in communities and community-based organizations so that they can explore, develop, and implement program models or projects that provide access to the benefits of clean energy for previously underserved populations. [Learn more](#). **Deadline:** April 14, 2023

Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program

A program to assist states, local governments, and Tribes in implementing strategies to reduce energy use, to reduce fossil fuel emissions, and to improve energy efficiency. [Learn more](#). **Deadline:** April 28, 2023

School Bus Electrification Funding

There are several mechanisms for districts who wish to electrify their school bus fleet. [Learn more about these programs and their deadlines](#).

Events and Webinars

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Climate Planning

Climate change disproportionately impacts certain communities, that is why diversity, equity, and inclusion are crucial to consider when creating a climate action plan. Learn how Better Buildings partners ensure their actions respond to the needs of those most impacted by climate change and policy.

February 28 at 11:00am | [Register](#)

MAPC Accelerating Climate Resilience Webinar: Resilience Hubs

Join us to learn more about resilience hubs, including different types of resilience hubs, their co-benefits, and their connection to climate resilience planning. During this virtual panel discussion, you'll have a chance to hear from three municipal representatives around the country who are currently working on building resilience hubs in their communities. You'll also learn about the potential usage of clean energy in resilience hubs and will learn about the benefits and opportunities of effectively establishing and promoting resilience hubs in your own community.

February 28 at 11:00am | [Register](#)

Mass Fleet Advisor Information Webinar

During this exciting roundtable discussion, participants will hear testimonials from two member fleets that have completed the Phase I intake process and have received their Electrification Reports.

February 28 at 11:00am | [Register](#)

FY2023 Low-No and Bus Webinar

Join this webinar to learn about the Low-No Program and the Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Program.

February 28 at 2:00pm | [Register](#)

Mass Save Electrification Incentives

Join MAPC, Eversource, and National Grid for a webinar to learn more about Mass Save incentives that support the Commonwealth's building and vehicle electrification goals.

March 1 at 12:00pm | [Register](#)

Gearing Up for 2030: Building the Offshore Wind Supply Chain and Workforce Needed to Deploy 30 Gigawatts and Beyond

Join the U.S. Department of Energy Wind Energy Technologies Office's WINDEXchange initiative for a webinar on the current state and future needs of the U.S. offshore wind energy workforce and supply chain.

March 2 at 1:00pm | [Register](#)

It's Electric! Electrified Alternatives to Industrial Fossil Fuel Systems

Electrifying fossil fuel powered processes is a key decarbonization strategy for manufacturers. Electrification has the potential to provide other benefits too, such as higher energy efficiency, reduced maintenance costs, and even product quality improvements. Learn from Better Plants partners about the benefits and challenges in implementing electrified systems in your facilities.

March 7 at 11:00am | [Register](#)

How Healthy Homes are Tackling the Housing and Climate Crises

MAPC, MassHousing, and the Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA) invite you to hear from partners who have delivered innovative affordable housing

projects that dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create healthy homes for Massachusetts residents.

March 7 at 1:00pm | [Register](#)

DOE Buildings Upgrade Prize 101 from Residential Retrofits for Energy Equity

Join us for an informational session to learn more about the prize and how you can take advantage of this opportunity. We will discuss the prize in detail, including the Equity-Centered Innovation Track, as well as training and technical assistance opportunities that are available.

March 7 at 1:00pm | [Register](#)

March 9 at 12:00pm | [Register](#)

Gas Utility Reform: RAP Webinar Series

How should policymakers start to reform the regulation of gas utilities to limit risks to ratepayers and promote equitable and efficient decarbonization of the building sector? In this webinar Mark LeBel and Megan Anderson from the Regulatory Assistance Project (RAP) will explore the topic of gas utility reform and conduct a discussion with participants.

March 9 at 1:00pm | [Register](#)

From Measuring to Managing: Submetering Strategies for Plug and Process Loads in Healthcare Facilities

Join this webinar to learn about how Better Buildings healthcare partners deploy submetering strategies to identify energy savings opportunities.

March 14 at 11:00am | [Register](#)

Fundamentals of Utility Planning: RAP Webinar Series

In this webinar Elaine Prause and Jessica Shipley from the Regulatory Assistance Project (RAP) will explore the fundamentals of robust utility system planning to support public participation and decision-making in the public interest.

March 23 at 1:00pm | [Register](#)

Recent News

[Baker-Polito Administration Awards Over \\$6 Million in Green Communities Grants](#) (Mass.gov, 1/3/23)

[‘There’s a dam breaking:’ Cities and towns start to kick fossil fuels with new building code](#) (Boston Globe, 1/17/23)

[DOE Launches New \\$50 Million Program to Help Communities Meet Their Clean Energy Goals](#) (Energy.gov, 1/18/23)

[City Declares Copley Open Street Pilot a ‘Success’ and Plans Permanent Improvements](#) (Streetsblog MASS, 1/19/23)

[U.S. Rep Clark Presents Watertown with \\$240K for Project to Protect River, Increase Climate Resiliency](#) (Watertown News, 1/24/23)

[DOE Analysis Highlights Opportunities to Expand Clean, Affordable Geothermal Power](#) (Energy.gov, 1/25/23)

[National Grid program promises 32,000 EV charging ports in Mass.](#) (Telegram & Gazette, 1/26/23)

[Making Clean Energy More Accessible and Affordable](#) (Energy.gov, 1/26/23)

[City of Springfield Wins \\$15 Million to Improve Street Safety Citywide](#) (Streetsblog MASS, 2/1/23)

[Fitchburg set to launch Community Electric Aggregation program in March](#) (Sentinel & Enterprise, 2/5/23)

[Electric school buses in Boston key to cutting down on emissions, Mayor Wu says](#) (Mass Live, 2/6/23)

[Historic moment: Northampton creates climate action department](#) (Daily Hampshire Gazette, 2/21/23)

Additional Resources

- [Mass Towns for Climate](#)
- [Updated Map of Stretch and Specialized code communities](#)
- [White House Inflation Reduction Act Guidebook](#)

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