

ENERGY COMMISSION

The Lancaster Energy Commission is a five-member board, with a charter to advise and make recommendations on energy use, energy monitoring and energy efficiency measures in the Town-owned facilities.

The Commission first started meeting in early 2010, and very quickly created a work plan for each of the Town's facilities. They also worked with the Planning Director and Town Administrator on seeking the Green Community designation and applying for several grants that were made available as a result of the designation.

One of the criteria for becoming a Green Community is that the Town's municipal facilities and vehicles must reduce energy consumption by 20% by 2015. To achieve this goal, the Commission has undertaken the following actions:

- Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant – received funding and installed two new heating systems at the Police Station and Central Fire Station, and a controller upgrade on the Library heating system.
- Green Communities Grant – received funding and completed the following energy efficiency measures:
 - Energy audits were completed for the Town Hall, Police Station, Fire Station and the three DPW buildings. Building envelope improvements were recommended for all these facilities.
 - Installed lighting upgrades in most of the Town's buildings.
 - Installed two energy controller systems at the Town's two well pumps.
 - Installed new insulation and weatherization measures at the Town Hall, two DPW facilities and at the South Fire Station.
 - Purchased an electric vehicle and electric vehicle docking station to replace the Inspectional Services/Assessor's vehicle.
 - Installed new LED lighting at the Library.
 - Installed new LED street lights.

Other “green” initiatives included:

- Constructed a Town-owned Solar Array facility at the former landfill site on Lunenburg Road. See the Solectria web site for an up-to-the-hour accounting of our energy generation.

<http://www.solrenview.com/SolrenView/mainFr.php?siteId=1549>

The Town's municipal buildings have received significant electricity credits due to the net metering of the solar array which are then applied to the building's electric bills.

- Municipal Aggregation – the program was rolled out in 2012. The opt-in rate was 90% of the town's residents that are now saving on their electricity rate compared with the rate from National Grid. The program continues to be extremely popular with an electric rate that is a third lower than the rate charged by National Grid.
- Solar Hot Water -- teamed up with Beam Engineering in 2013 to educate residents about the benefits of solar hot water systems. The "Lancaster Is Solar Hot!" program covered residential solar hot water technology, highlighted the financial incentives available for such systems, and facilitated the installation of systems at homes that make the best applications. The overarching goal of the program was to increase the knowledge and prevalence of residential solar hot water systems in Lancaster to assist the community in the transition to more financially and environmentally sustainable practices.
- Fuel Management System – the Town is monitoring gasoline and diesel fuel consumption with a new fuel management system, called *Fuel Master*. This monitoring device has been installed in all of the Town's vehicles and on the gas pumps and monitors the amount of fuel consumed by each vehicle.
- Lancaster Energy Report – all of the Town's energy usage for the last three years has been entered and monthly reports are now generated for analysis of energy consumption. Department heads and building supervisors now receive monthly reports showing their facility's electricity, oil and propane usage and how it compares with the previous three years.

It continues to be our goal to have measurable results in the reduction of electricity and fuels. 2015 was a tough year as we saw a 6% increase in our overall consumption when compared with our baseline year of 2008. This was attributed to the very cold and long duration of winter in 2015, and an increased use of oil and propane. Overall, electricity consumption and costs were much lower this past year.

The Commission will continue to monitor each facility and vehicle and maintain a reporting system that will show fiscal savings, as well as a reduction in our carbon footprint. This year we compiled an extensive list of improvements/upgrades for each of the Town's municipal buildings. We will actively seek funds to make these improvements over the next two years.

The Commission also spent a great deal of time on the analysis and selection of the HVAC system for the Prescott Building renovation project. The Commission worked with the architects, engineers, project manager and Town Administrator to plan an HVAC system that is cost-effective, energy-efficient and sustainable for a 30-40 year life span.

The Commission will continue to provide education and outreach to the Town's citizens. We have a page on the Town's web site, and an educational video on the Town's solar array facility are routinely broadcast on the local cable channel.

The Energy Commission meets on the first Wednesday of every other month at 6:30 PM at the Lancaster Town Hall. All citizens are welcome to join the Commission for these meetings and public involvement is always encouraged.

The Community Development and Planning office coordinates all meeting schedules and is open Monday through Thursday, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. As always, this office welcomes citizen's questions, comments or suggestions. Please feel free to contact us at 978-365-3326 x1311 or at npiazza@lancasterma.net. For more information on Energy issues in Lancaster, please visit us on the Town's web site: www.ci.lancaster.ma.us.

Respectfully submitted,

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