

GREEN ENERGY COMMITTEE

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Established in 2007, the Green Energy Committee (GEC) serves as the Town's primary resource to identify and promote ways to reduce Lincoln's emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs), the gases that drive global warming. The GEC's work is supported by a strong bench of active volunteers who are not formal members. Jennifer Glass is the Select Board Liaison to the GEC.

Climate action planning

Climate Action Lincoln, a subcommittee of the GEC supported by additional volunteers, is working on a town-wide, collaborative process to develop a Climate Action Plan for the Town of Lincoln. This process aims to produce a set of actionable goals and a timeline for how Lincoln will reduce its GHG emissions consistent with the goals set in recent state legislation. Jennifer Curtin, Assistant Director of Planning and Land Use, with support from Climate Action Lincoln, secured a \$100,000 state grant to pay consultants from MAPC (Metropolitan Area Planning Council) to support this planning process. They aim to host public hearings and other outreach this winter and spring, leading to a plan by June 2023.

Support for residents

The GEC's Residential Subcommittee has renamed itself the Committee for Residential Emissions Elimination ("CFREE") and has attracted a lot of great volunteer talent. They continue to provide information to Lincoln residents about how they can reduce their climate impact through means such as switching to electric vehicles (EVs); getting free home energy assessments; improving home insulation; switching to heat pumps; adding solar panels; and opting up to "Lincoln 100% Green". They are also tackling new challenges such as how to make Deck houses more energy efficient. They have shared this information through Lincoln Talk, webinars, tabling events, and the website www.lincolngreenenergy.org.

Electricity supply

The Lincoln Green Energy Choice Program took effect in early 2021, enabling Lincoln residents to use more clean renewable energy at reasonable cost. The program buys "Class 1 Renewable Energy Credits" (RECs), thereby driving the construction of additional wind, solar, and other renewable energy production facilities. Shifting to renewably generated electricity is necessary to eventually make our homes and electric vehicles in Lincoln carbon neutral. The Town entered into its second contract when the first one expired at the end of 2022. Although electricity prices have gone up everywhere, compared to the Eversource price that took effect January 1, 2023, "Lincoln 100% Green" again is less expensive! (Future savings compared with Eversource cannot be guaranteed.) To "opt up" now, just find your electricity bill and go to LincolnGreenEnergyChoice.com or call customer support at 1-844-651-8919.

Minimizing new fossil fuel infrastructure

The GEC, working with Lincoln Mothers Out Front and others, campaigned in favor of a citizen petition that ultimately won broad support at the March 2022 Town Meeting. There, the Town voted to petition the state legislature for authority to prohibit or restrict the use of fossil fuels in new construction and major renovations. Several months later, the legislature based a broad climate law that allows up to ten towns to do that, designed to make Lincoln one of the towns eligible to apply.

The GEC will follow up by presenting a specific bylaw for adoption at the March 2023 Town Meeting, as necessary to take advantage of the above grant of authority. At that Town Meeting, the GEC will also propose that the Town adopt the new “specialized energy code” recently published by the state, applicable to new construction and major renovations.