

Thetford Energy Committee 2014 Annual Report

The Thetford Energy Committee (TEC) appreciates the cooperation and involvement of our town residents. The accomplishments listed below are shared steps to meet the current and future energy needs of our families and buildings.

2014 Accomplishments

Solarize Thetford-Strafford – this collaboration with Vital Communities and our neighboring town more than doubled the amount of solar in our towns. Our agreement provided discounted pricing through Catamount Solar and Integrity Energy, and more than 250 kW of solar panels were installed for 46 households (32 from Thetford). In addition, a few folks encouraged by the Solarize push jumped on board the solar bandwagon during this program with other installers. Twelve families went with Solaflect trackers for 52 kW (9 families for 36 kW from Thetford) and one Thetford family joined onto a Sovern Solar group-net-metered array for about 3 kW. So in all we know of 42 Thetford homes installing 221.25kW through Solarize.

TES Solar Array – The TEC worked with the TES school board to select a solar developer, review plans and then helped share information via the listserv and public meetings about the project so that organizers and townspeople could agree how to proceed and to approve the project. The 140kw solar array has been installed and will provide almost all of the school's electricity for 2015 and beyond.

Community Solar Efforts – The TEC began investigating development of a community solar array to serve the town. We worked with the Vermont Law School's Energy Clinic to develop the legal structure for a solar array on public land,. This structure will be useful for all towns in Vermont.

Volunteer Assisted Weatherization – TEC organized volunteer labor, grants, and donations to weatherize a home in our town. The labor and materials costs for this work, paid for by grants from the Vermont Community Foundation and Ben and Jerry's Foundation, totaled \$2,770. Efficiency Vermont will pay \$970 in incentives, so the net cost of the job is \$1,800. The audit test-out report determined that these efforts reduced air leakage in the house by just over 10% and will reduce energy use by more than 21%, saving an estimated \$488.50 on fuel bills annually. So energy savings will pay for the cost of improvements in less than four years and the house will be much more comfortable. In addition, the reduced fuel use will cut CO2 emissions by an estimated 2,800 lbs. per year.

Town Hall Weatherization – Several improvements were facilitated by the TEC to reduce energy costs for the Town Hall. Basement vapor barrier, spray foam and insulation, Attic air seal and insulation work, Food Pantry insulation and air seal box sills were completed. The improvement costs totaled \$5,572 and were partially offset by \$1,050 in incentives from Efficiency Vermont and by the \$500 award that Thetford received for our town performance in the Vermont Home Energy Challenge. The improvements will save an estimated \$456 per year in fuel use.

Coming up in 2015:

Public forums to share information and support Thetford residents about:

PACE – Property Assessed Clean Energy loans to finance energy projects

Group Net Metered Solar Projects – How we can generate power for our town and homes

Air Source Heat Pumps – New options for home heating

Wood Pellet Heating – How VT is supporting local this local energy source