



# Getting Ready NEWSLETTER

December 2019, Issue 1



## Welcome to the Inaugural Issue of *Getting Ready*

In the short life of York Ready for 100% we have attracted interest from hundreds of York residents, all drawn to our vision of a healthy, thriving community powered by affordable 100% clean, renewable energy. We offer this Newsletter as a way to inform our 350+ members about the goals of our committees, the progress of our work, and upcoming educational events, which we offer every month, all free and open to the public. Sometimes, our work will benefit other towns and regions and the whole State of Maine (as in our support for the Gulf of Maine Windfarm Project). Our activities are also publicized in local newspapers and on our Web and Facebook pages. We welcome volunteers, questions and ideas. We're new to newsletter-writing and appreciate advice on making *Getting Ready* an effective and informative publication. For more information about us, please see [yorkreadyfor100.org](http://yorkreadyfor100.org) or [info@yorkreadyfor100.org](mailto:info@yorkreadyfor100.org) or contact Mac McAbee at [Macmcabee5@gmail.com](mailto:Macmcabee5@gmail.com).

### FROM THE CHAIR

#### The Origins and Goals of York Ready for 100%



We have heard comments that go something like this: "We heard about York Ready for 100% but don't know what you guys do." I would like to answer this question.

Eight or so of us began meeting 18 months ago. We had a common concern about climate change and wanted to act. We knew about the Sierra Club initiative called Ready for 100, a program to get communities to commit to 100% clean, renewable energy by certain dates. We decided to sign on. We began to support our active town Energy Steering Committee, which has a similar vision. Most of our work initially was to keep the subject of climate change on people's minds by sponsoring films and lectures and through information on social and print media. We also advocated at Selectboard meetings. In July of this year, the Energy Steering Committee proposed joining the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, and the Select Board agreed unanimously. With this act we achieved our immediate goals.

In August we had a brainstorming session to look at new directions for our group. As a result, we expanded our

priorities to include four additional areas of interest and direct climate actions:

- 1) Encourage and support individuals as they reduce their carbon footprint.
- 2) Promote actions related to sustainability, such as food waste composting, recycling, and reducing single-use plastics.
- 3) Engage youth, beginning with conversations with school leadership and students about curriculum related to climate change instruction.
- 4) Support the development of a town "Climate Action Plan," a blueprint to turn the Covenant of Mayors commitment into reality.

This pivot in our group's direction happily coincides with the arrival of AmeriCorps member Molly Agrimson. She is working on weatherization projects, energy educational events and sustainable energy job fairs aimed at individuals and families with lower income.

There is much work to be done. To meet our carbon reduction goals we are going to need the help and support of many in our community. We hope our fellow townspeople will join up with us – we'll be happy to have you.

Mac McAbee, Chair, York Ready for 100%  
[Macmcabee5@gmail.com](mailto:Macmcabee5@gmail.com)

IN THE NEWS

Maine Aqua Ventus Contract Approved

Many of you will remember Dr. Habib Dagher’s talk last August in York where he spoke of Maine’s 156 gigawatts of wind capacity within 50 miles of the coast. By harnessing 3% of the offshore wind resource there would be enough energy to heat every home in Maine using electric heat pumps, and convert the state to electric cars. That vision is now *becoming a reality*.

November 5, 2019

Hallowell, Maine - November 5, 2019 The Maine Public Utilities Commission (Commission) voted unanimously to



approve the Maine Aqua Ventus Contract. Maine Aqua Ventus (MAV) is a deep-water offshore wind energy project being developed by the University of Maine and its partners. MAV includes up to two floating wind turbines to be located in the Gulf of Maine.

"The Commission is pleased to approve this contract which will allow MAV to demonstrate the commercial viability of this technology while also providing Maine with a new clean renewable energy resource"

said Chairman Philip L. Bartlett. MAV also has the potential of providing significant benefits to Maine's economy.

Background: In 2019, the Legislature enacted into law Resolution 2019, Chapter 87, To Require the Approval by the Public Utilities Commission of a Proposal for a Long-term Contract for Deep-water Offshore Wind Energy.

<http://maineaquaventus.com/>

YOUTH INITIATIVES

Update on Youth Initiatives

Young people in our community will be most affected by climate change, and thus they are a priority. Initially, we decided to focus on the school curriculum as it relates to climate change instruction. But first, we are gathering information: what is taught and in what grades? How might we support and work collegially with school personnel? We are asking these and other questions and will share information through this newsletter.

Mac McAbee, Chair,  
[Macmcabee5@gmail.com](mailto:Macmcabee5@gmail.com)

WASTE REDUCTION AND DIVERSION

News from WRAD

WRAD (Waste Reduction and Diversion) is a committee of York Ready for 100%. The team focuses on increasing composting, improving recycling and reducing single-use plastic.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, about 150,000 tons of food are tossed out in U.S. households each day, equivalent to about a third of the daily calories that each American consumes. This waste has an environmental toll, with the volume of

discarded food equivalent to the yearly use of 30 million acres of land, 780 million pounds of pesticide and 4.2 trillion gallons of irrigated water. Rotting food also clogs up landfills and releases methane, a powerful greenhouse gas.

**Changes at York High School**

WRAD’s first project has been to divert organic waste from York High School’s cafeteria – waste that had been going to landfill and incineration -- to compost, enriching the soil and capturing carbon. WRAD collaborated with York High School administrators, food services, head



custodian, the newly formed Eco Club and Mr. Fox

**COMPOSTING**

Interested in composting your kitchen scraps? Not sure where to start? WRAD is developing a program to provide incentive for York residents to start composting. Whether you compost at home or sign up with Mr. Fox, it’s easy and affordable. Stay tuned for upcoming announcements about the kick-off of that program.

[vsimon@maine.rr.com](mailto:vsimon@maine.rr.com)



**Some Details About Recycling**

WRAD members toured the Westbrook transfer station and the Casella recycling facility in Lewiston. The rules around recycling can be confusing. That’s because there are different types of processing equipment and different buy requirements for the finished baled products. Here are some things to be aware of: Wax-coated containers are not recyclable. Make sure all containers are clean, and paper and cardboard are DRY. Any items less than 2” in diameter do not get recycled. Leave caps on containers.



For the most current and complete information about Casella single-sort recycling see: [Recycling](#).

*Victoria Simon, Chair, WRAD*

[vsimon@maine.rr.com](mailto:vsimon@maine.rr.com)

**THE TOWN RECYCLING COMMITTEE**

The York Select Board is reconstituting the Town Recycling Committee. It will be a committee of nine York residents. Volunteers interested in helping to advise the Board on recycling so that they can set policy are encouraged to pick up an application at the Town Manager’s office. Speak with Steve Burns, Town Manager, if you’d like more information.

[<sburns@yorkmaine.org](mailto:sburns@yorkmaine.org).

Composting to introduce a pilot composting program at York High School.

A grant from York’s Sustainability Funds paid for a station to be built in the high school cafeteria so that students could separate trash, recycling and compostable material. The grant also supports a year of pick-up by Mr. Fox Composting. Head custodian, Neil Rideout built the station and the Eco club created the signage and monitors the station. The program is off to a terrific start with 80% compliance by students and an expected reduction in trash headed for landfills. WRAD plans to demonstrate waste reduction and cost savings over the course of the school year and hopes to spread composting to the other York Schools.

*Victoria Simon, WRAD Committee, Chair*

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## MAINE PARTNER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

### Insulated Windows from AmeriCorps Energy Efficiency Coordinator



Molly Agrimson is an AmeriCorps energy efficiency coordinator hosted in York for one year, ending in Fall 2020. She is working to help all members of York play a role in reducing energy consumption and fighting back against climate change. Since arriving in early October, she has been working with Efficiency Maine and Window Dressers to help supply and install free insulated window inserts to the homes of individuals and families with low income. During a home visit to measure windows, she also offers a weatherization walkthrough, which can include air sealing and supplying LED light bulbs. From January 13 to the 18th, she will lead a window-build event at St. Christopher's Church to construct insulating window inserts. Agrimson is now looking for volunteers of all ages to attend the event and help build the inserts. Food contributions for everyone to share at this event are also welcome!

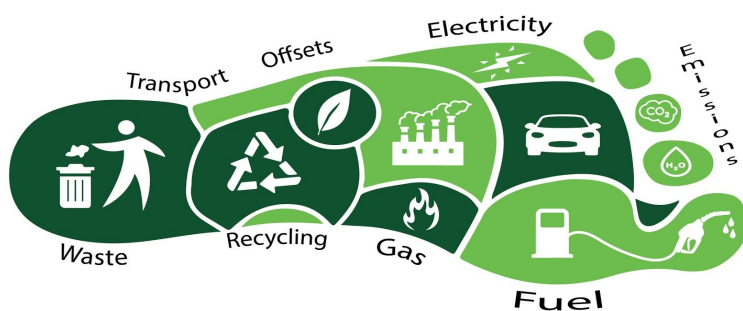
Later in 2020, Agrimson will hold two energy efficiency education events and two green job fairs. These events will encourage and inform households about ways to make behavioral and technical lifestyle changes that will decrease a home's carbon footprint.

For more information or to volunteer, email Agrimson at [molly.agrimson@maine.edu](mailto:molly.agrimson@maine.edu)

Or, sign up directly for the workshop. ["York 2019 Community Workshop"](#)

## YORK GREEN CHALLENGE

One of the new priorities of York Ready for 100% is to support and promote "individual actions to reduce climate change." Consistent with this priority, we are developing what we currently call the "York Green Challenge."



The goal is to help interested individuals and households identify, understand and track their personal actions to decrease their carbon footprint. We are reviewing a couple of web-based tools designed to support this kind of effort.

If you are interested in learning more about this effort or if you want to take part in this initiative once it is ready, please send us an email.

Fred Weston, Climate Action Team, Chair  
[fweston@maine.rr.com](mailto:fweston@maine.rr.com)

## EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

- **"Climate Change Discussions"**, Friday, January 17 from 3:30 - 5:00 p.m. in the York Public Library.  
*The first discussion group will be held at the Library on Friday, January 17. The discussion topics and format are still being considered. Subsequent discussion groups will be held on the **third Friday of the month**.*
- **"Seacoast Environmental Film Festival"**, Saturday, January 11, 2020. *Mark the date on your calendar.*  
*YRF100 will be partnering and tabling with the KLT for this event.*  
<https://kitterylandtrust.weebly.com/seacoastenvironmentalfilmfestival.html>

- **“Combating Climate Change: Maine Strategies and Initiatives”**, Wednesday, January 15, 2020, 6 PM, York Community Auditorium (700 seats). The main speakers are Dan Burgess, Director, Governor’s Energy Office, and Mark Lawrence, Maine State Senator, and Lydia Blume, Maine House Representative. **Meet our endorsers and learn about their work in sustaining our environment.** Tabling will begin at 6PM, Speakers at 7PM. Municipalities in Southern York County will be invited to participate in this event.
- **“ Meet the U.S. Senatorial Candidates: Regional Environmental Town Hall Event”** (Date to be determined), Community Auditorium, February 2020, 6 PM - 9 PM. (Tabling from 6 - 7 PM; Town Hall Meeting 7 - 8:30 PM. So far, four of the six U.S. senatorial candidates will be participating. This event will be publicized throughout Southern York County.
- **Maine Bicentennial Event** - March 2020. Program being developed.
- **Earth Day Event** - April 2020. Program being developed.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- The York Select Board is reconstituting the Town Recycling Committee. It will be a committee of 9 York residents. Volunteers interested in participating in setting policy are encouraged to pick up an application at the Town Manager’s office. Speak with Steve Burns if you’d like more information. <[sburns@yorkmaine.org](mailto:sburns@yorkmaine.org)>
- We are in need of a Table Coordinator to help organize the environmental organizations’ table set-up for the January and February events at the York Community Auditorium. <[briseboisb@gmail.com](mailto:briseboisb@gmail.com)>
- The AmeriCorp Energy Efficiency Coordinator is looking for volunteers to build window inserts. The build will take place from January 13 to January 18, 2020 in the basement of St. Christopher’s Church, York. If you are not physically able to volunteer, you can also bring a food dish for everyone to share. [molly.agrimson@maine.edu](mailto:molly.agrimson@maine.edu)
- Molly is also in need of a box truck (20ft.) to transport insulated window inserts from Rockland Maine to St. Christopher's Church in York prior to January 13, 2020. If you are able to offer the use of a truck, please contact Jackie Brisebois, 207.251. 2198 or [jacbrisebois@gmail.com](mailto:jacbrisebois@gmail.com).
- We are in need with help designing our monthly newsletter template. Contact Bob Brisebois, [briseboisb@gmail.com](mailto:briseboisb@gmail.com).



HONORABLE MENTION

We like to call attention to our fellow travelers and collaborators.

CREATION CARE COMMITTEE

This new environmental committee of York’s First Parish Church, Congregational, “hopes to serve as a catalyst, become good soil and amplify the moral call to create a better future for all life on Earth.” This active group has initiated a composting project, donated reusable produce bags to the Food Pantry, improved handling of waste from Table of Plenty dinners, organized beach cleanups, and offered public programming on living responsibly. For more information, contact Linda Drew, Creation Care Coordinator, at [p.l.drew79@me.com](mailto:p.l.drew79@me.com)

## HOLIDAY TIPS



Two hallmarks of the holiday season are decorating our homes, indoors and out, and giving gifts. Now, in mid-December, we are pondering our usual holiday celebrations and whether they are consistent with our need to reduce waste and limit carbon

emissions. With climate change in mind, we have come up with (or remembered) simpler ways to reinforce family togetherness while reducing the amount of paper, plastic and electricity use in our celebrations, and we would like to share our thoughts. And perhaps others will share theirs.

Gifts usually are store-bought, may contain plastic or be wrapped in it, and are wrapped again in yards of holiday-themed paper and ribbon. Toys often contain plastic – or are made entirely of this major pollutant. All of it is expensive, and boxes and wrappings create mountains of trash. This article offers some alternatives that can reduce our exposure to pollutants, limit single-use holiday papers and the dyes used in their manufacture, involve the whole family in holiday preparations, and offer relatively inexpensive, creative and fun times with children of any age. Whether we celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah or Kwanzaa, we think these steps make climate sense, and if you think of others, please let us know.

We plan to:

- Use LED bulbs in outdoor and indoor decorative lighting.
- Make our own holiday greeting and gift cards.
- Instead of tinsel and plastic items, make wreaths, centerpieces and house decorations with natural products such as pine cones, milkweed pods, seashells, driftwood, bittersweet berries, and holly greens and berries.

- Use natural candles; perhaps we can make them at home and use them or give them as gifts.
- For indoor decorations and fragrance, we will string popcorn and cranberries (using a sharp needle) and stud oranges with cloves.
- Gift wrap can become an arts project: we will purchase blank paper sheets, like those used for newspapers (much cheaper than commercial gift wrap), and decorate the paper using nontoxic paints, sponges and
- home-made potato stamps as printing blocks. Or
- decorate and reuse bags and papers that we already have, and tie with twine or decorate with greens and berries. For some gifts, we will forget the wrap.
- Homemade gifts, or gifts that require minimal shopping or wrapping might be:
- Baskets or tins of cookies, breads, fudge, cakes, candies, homemade jams, etc.
- Children's (or adults') artwork or crafts
- Service gifts: dog walking, house or cat sitting, wood stacking, other chores
- Online or other gift subscriptions Tickets to a movie, theater or concert
- Wine
- Gift certificates.



Other ideas are welcome! To learn more or share simple traditions, contact us at <https://yorkreadyfor100.org/>

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