

Hinesburg Energy Resolution

As a town, Hinesburg has committed, in our town plan, to have at least 90% of total energy production come from renewable energy sources by 2050. There are several important reasons for making that commitment;

1. Climate change is very real, and it needs to be addressed now
 - a. Climate scientists are at a consensus that across the globe, we are experiencing warmer average temperatures in the winters and summers.
 - b. The Vermont Department of Health states that the state has had 18 federally-declared disasters in the past 10 years, up over 50% from the preceding 10 years. Most of these disasters were a result of severe storms and flooding. This means weather events like Hurricane Irene are more likely to impact Vermont in the future.
 - c. Climate change has direct impacts on Vermonters
 - i. Maple Sugar
 1. The UVM Proctor Research Center states that warming temperatures make it difficult for producers to know when to tap the trees.
 2. It was also found that abnormal changes in freeze-thaw patterns will lower productivity.
 3. Vermont is responsible for 47 percent of maple- based products sold in the U.S., making it an important industry for the state.
 - ii. Dairy
 1. Increased temperatures will reduce milk production due to cows experiencing heat stress.
 2. Researchers at the University of Arizona found that heat stress can cause a 10-25% decrease in the amount of dairy produced.
 3. The Food Systems Research Collaborative from the University of Vermont found that dairy makes up an estimated 70-80% of Vermont's agricultural sales annually.
 - iii. Pests
 1. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection warns that warmer temperatures will lead to increased populations of ticks and other pests such as Flea Beetles.
 2. The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (VANR) states that this will require heavier application of pesticides, or "more labor-intensive weed and pest control."
2. Vermont needs to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions in ways that create a more just, thriving, and sustainable future for Vermonters
3. There are viable alternatives to fossil fuel as the source of energy generation. Renewable energy is essential to ending our reliance on fossil fuels and stopping climate change.
4. Currently, only 20% of VT's energy is renewable, with only 20% of thermal energy use, 5% of transportation energy use, and 43% of electricity energy use being renewable

To take immediate action, the Hinesburg Energy Committee is submitting the proposed resolution to promote by example the transition to renewable in town buildings and to halt the expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure in our Town. Investing in the expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure will setup a long-term continuance of fossil fuel use in our town, making the transition to renewable energy extremely difficult in the next 30 years. This resolution will be presented for consideration at Town Meeting March 4th under other business Article 12.

Hinesburg Town Energy Resolution March 4, 2019

WHEREAS extreme and erratic temperatures and increasingly severe storms demonstrate that climate change is one of the most urgent problems facing our state, nation, and the planet, and WHEREAS the State of Vermont and the Town of Hinesburg have goals in the Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan and the Hinesburg Town Plan to achieve 90% of its energy from renewable sources by 2050, yet is making insufficient progress towards achieving that goal; Now, therefore, be it resolved:

1. That the Town of Hinesburg urges the State of Vermont to:
 - a. Halt any new or expanded fossil fuel infrastructure, including but not limited to energy transmission and distribution pipelines;
 - b. Firmly commit to at least 90% renewable energy for all thermal, electrical and transportation energy needs for all people in Vermont, with firm interim deadlines; and,
 - c. Ensure that the transition to renewable energy includes the reduction of total energy demand through energy efficiency measures.

2. That the Town of Hinesburg will do our part to meet these demands by committing to the following:
 - a. Prohibit new construction of fossil fuel infrastructure on town-owned lands, with infrastructure defined as a structure and ancillary facilities used to move fossil fuel from one location to another, such as a natural gas or oil pipeline and other natural gas facilities. The exception being connections to individual properties that abut an existing fossil fuel pipeline;
 - b. Weatherize all town owned buildings and schools and promoting programs and regulations that support all non-town owned buildings to incorporate efficiency and weatherization ;
 - c. Install renewable energy generation technologies on municipal buildings when financially viable;
 - d. Pursue initiatives that would reduce the use of single occupancy vehicles while encouraging carpooling , mass transportation and the transition to electric vehicles;
 - e. Strategically review all town government energy use and transition to new ways to provide necessary services in an energy sustainable