Please be sure to check out the Events and Career Opportunities section below and here on our website. Several interesting new webinars coming up!

Ithaca Raises $100 Million for Building Decarbonization – “Building owners won’t make the transition from fossil-fuel energy all by themselves and state-funded incentive programs are often complex and sluggish, said Aguirre-Torres, Ithaca’s new director of sustainability. Aguirre-Torres has helped Ithaca... raise $100m by offering investors entry to a large-scale program he pitched as low risk with the potential for lots of cashflow. The goal is to create a lending program providing low- or no-interest loans and quick implementation of sustainable technology... The city is...trying to reduce risk. It aims to create an economy of scale by sizing the program for 1,000 commercial and residential buildings in the first 1,000 days, which will mean more consistent work for contractors and lower material costs. Ithaca plans to use a $10m loan loss reserve, backed by New York state, that would act as a guarantee for lenders in case any borrower defaults. Because the loans will be backed by the city, low-income families can participate, even though their credit history might disqualify them for private loans.” Full Article here. Thanks to Lisa Marshall, Program Director of Heat Smart Tompkins for this tip.

Ithaca has turned to private investors to help it decarbonize thousands of residential and commercial buildings

▲ Downtown Ithaca, New York. The city has a plan to lower the climate footprint of thousands of buildings across the city. Photograph: benedek/Getty Images
California Fossil Fuel Sunset - The California Air Resources Board recently launched a series of workshops to develop its 2022 Scoping Plan, which lays out the path to meet the state’s ambitious climate targets. Previous scoping plans included few, if any, provisions to decarbonize buildings. Now, for the first time, CARB is considering a range of targets for the buildings sector aimed at aligning the state with carbon neutrality by 2035 or 2045. The most ambitious of these options would include: all new buildings use electric appliances by 2026, 100% all-electric appliance sales for all buildings by 2030, and all buildings retrofitted to electric appliances by 2035. Thanks to Denise Grab, Manager of the RMI Carbon-Free Buildings Program for this analysis. In general the CARB sunset recommendations look quite similar to ones advanced to New York’s Climate Action Council by its Energy Efficiency and Housing Advisory Panel.

More on Timely Payments for Contractors – To prevent delays in rebate payments, NY-GEO has proposed a 3 business day limit for responses to contractor applications and any subsequent revisions. This proposal was put forth at the August 12 meeting of the Joint Management Committee, which oversees the utility Clean Heat rebate program. The JMC’s notes from this session can be found here. NY-GEO urges contractors to take the following steps if they don’t hear back on their submission with 3 business days.

- Contact the representative at ICF who is handling your project
- If ICF does not respond or if you have a problem with their response, contact the utility program manager as listed below. These Program Managers work for their respective utilities, which have contracted with ICF to handle applications.
- Please copy NY-GEO at nygeoinfo@gmail.com on any emails. If you communicate with them by phone and want to drop us an email to let us know, that would help us in case we need to help with follow up. Please keep us apprised of your progress or lack thereof.
Central Hudson
Ray Cotto, Associate Energy Efficiency Program Manager
Phone: (845) 486-5750, Email: RCotto@cenhud.com

Con Ed
Will Xia, Program Manager
Phone: (646) 761-1851, Email: xiaw@coned.com

National Grid
Peter Hoffman, Program Manager
Phone: (518) 433-5221 or (518) 227-5655, Email: peter.hoffman@nationalgrid.com

NYSEG/RG&E
Nicole Williams - Program Manager, Conservation and Load Management
Phone: 585-484-6592, Email: nicole.williams@nyseg.com

Orange & Rockland
Mark Maloney
Phone: (845) 577-2433, Email: maloneym@oru.com

Podcast on Retrofits in Historic Buildings – from Sustainable Westchester - This 39 minute episode takes a look at the efficacy of clean heating & cooling retrofits with a focus on geothermal systems in historic building preservation. Includes geothermal retrofits at Huguenot Memorial Church in Pelham, NY and St. Patrick’s Cathedral in Manhattan, NY, both historic buildings over 100 years old.

“The Devious Plan to Keep Us Hooked on Gas” – 58 Minute Matter of Degrees podcast on the California struggle over efforts to ban gas appliances. It is an in depth look at gas industry tactics to undermine gas ban efforts.

Zero Emissions Homes Act of 2021, H.R. 4872 was filed on July 30 and has been published. NY Rep. Paul Tonko is a co-sponsor. The act would provide up to $14,000 in combined rebates for homes that install heat pumps for space or water heating and for clothes drying, electric cooking, etc. Thanks to NY-GEO member Bob Wyman for this tip and to Rachel Grace of Rewiring America for the chart below.
Utility Rebate Policies & Procedures – from the Utility NYSERDA Joint Management Committee (JMC) – “A new version of the NYS Clean Heat Quality Policies and Procedures document is now posted on the NYS Clean Heat Resources webpage. Changes included in the new version reflect clarification of contractor statuses, updates to language around Field Assessments, and additional corrections to reflect current program procedures. The new document can be found under the Standards and Field Assessments drop-down section.” The document provides a minimum 5-day advance notice to contractors on field assessments when the site owner/customer chooses to have the contractor present.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QEP</th>
<th>Rebate - non-LMI</th>
<th>Rebate - LMI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Max Rebate Level</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$14,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max % of Costs Cap (including installation)</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HP HVAC, &lt;27.5K Btu/hr heating capacity</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HP HVAC, ≥27.5K Btu/hr heating capacity</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPWH</td>
<td>$1,250</td>
<td>$1,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric stove/cooktop</td>
<td>$600</td>
<td>$840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HP Clothes Dryer</td>
<td>$600</td>
<td>$840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insulation, air sealing</td>
<td>$800</td>
<td>$1,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circuit panel</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contractor FAQs and concerns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why am I being graded?</td>
<td>The electric utilities conduct routine field assessments to support quality installations and ensure that contractors comply with program rules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What does this mean and how does this impact my record and standing in the program?</td>
<td>All Clean Heat contractors have three initial projects selected for assessment, followed by periodic selection upon successful demonstration of program standards. All contractors are eligible to participate and provide program rebates unless otherwise notified due to continued lack of correction of identified nonconformities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor items that don't impact safety or function are resulting in failures.</td>
<td>The Joint Management Committee has identified issues raised and updated the Assessment Checklists accordingly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have no communication or notice of assessments before they occur.</td>
<td>We have worked with Quality Service Providers to encourage customers to allow for contractors to participate in onsite assessments, and provide advance notice (≥15 days) of such visits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reports being received are not always consistent in the same format.</td>
<td>The Joint Management Committee is working with the Quality Service Providers to unify the format of Assessment reports for increased clarity and transparency.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quebec's proposed hybrid heat-pump /gas model for building carbon reduction - By Jeff St. John – Canary Media – 6 minute read – Gas and electric utilities in Québec are asking energy regulator Régie de l’énergie to approve a carbon emissions reduction plan that combines government incentives for electric heat pumps with a continued role for natural gas in buildings. The plan apparently is focused on air source heat pumps as opposed to ground source because the article notes “when temperatures plunge to lows that would force heat pumps to turn on energy-hungry auxiliary electric resistance heating elements, heaters running on natural gas will kick in… Mike Henchen, a principal on the Carbon-Free Buildings team at nonprofit RMI…” says the organization “supports a complete phaseout of fossil fuels in buildings in the long run… He says it’s particularly important to stop building natural-gas infrastructure for new buildings. At the same time, partial electrification efforts like the Hydro-Québec and Énergir partnership that can slash 70 percent of building emissions ‘can be a helpful step in the right direction’ — although ‘ultimately you’re going to need to address the other 30 percent as well.’ (Canary Media is an independent subsidiary of RMI.)” Thanks to Irene Weiser, Co-ordinator of Fossil Free Tompkins for this tip.

NYS Republican Bill on CLCPA Costs Introduced to the Legislature – “Republicans want to know the impact of CLCPA renewable energy target compliance on electricity wholesale prices, delivery rates and total bills that energy consumers in this state will pay, including indirect energy costs. The analysis would include the impacts of subsidies to site land-based and offshore renewable energy projects, the build-out of the electric infrastructure to receive and transmit renewable power, subsidies of energy storage projects, and the addition of new loads associated with deep electrification efforts in the residential, commercial, industrial and transportation sectors. The GOP
legislators also want to know more about the direct and indirect costs associated with the transition to heating and cooling provided by heat pumps powered by renewable energy systems…” Read the full article here.

“Oil Firms Made False Claims On Blue Hydrogen Costs, Says Ex-Lobby Boss • Oil companies have used false claims over the cost of producing fossil fuel hydrogen to win over the Treasury and access billions in UK taxpayer subsidies, according to the outgoing hydrogen lobby boss. He quit because the schemes “make no sense at all.” [The Guardian]” (from 2021 08 20 Green Energy Times)

Chris Jackson believes companies promoted ‘unsustainable’ fossil gas projects to access billions in taxpayer subsidies

▲ A vehicle at a hydrogen production plant in Germany. Hydrogen is far more expensive to produce than conventional fuels. Photograph: Friedemann Vogel/EPA

Climate Updates

There are many reasons our customers prefer geothermal heat pumps – saving money, superior comfort, health and safety. Their impact in totally eliminating greenhouse gas emissions is also a key benefit for many customers, and a key reason New York State is providing incentives and attempting to rev up the heat pump market. Just In! provides a limited number of important climate updates most weeks to keep you in the know on this crucial topic that is important to so many New Yorkers.
“July Was The Hottest Month On Record • We just had the hottest month, as a planet, in any of our lifetimes, and we saw the weather extremes that came with it. The global temperature in July 2021 was the highest for any July in the 142 years of records, according to data released today from NOAA’s National Centers for Environmental Information. [CNN]” (from 2021 08 14 Green Energy Times)

“The Planet’s Water Cycle Is Changing Rapidly. Here’s What That Means For Us • A number of factors are intensifying the water cycle, but one of the most important is that warming temperatures raise the upper limit on the amount of moisture in the air. That increases the potential for more rain. Oddly, it also increases the potential for drought. [Popular Science]” (from 2021 08 14 Green Energy Times)
“Rain Fell At The Summit Station In Greenland For The First Time On Record • For the first time on record, precipitation at the National Science Foundation’s Summit Station was rain and not snow. Summit Station is at Greenland’s highest point. It has been staffed since 1989, and it has been under observation by satellite since the 1970s. [CNN] " (from 2021 08 20 Green Energy Times)

You’ve Got to Be Kidding…
A rare clean heating and cooling joke!

Q - If you’re in a room where you’re not warm enough, what should you do?
A - Go to a corner – it’s always 90 degrees there.

Thanks to Wendy MacPherson from NYSERDA for this tip.

Frequent Sources for Just In!:
Green Energy Times) -
City & State First Read)
POLITICO Weekly NY & NJ Energy email)
Bill McKibben’s weekly New Yorker Climate Crisis Column
Canary Media
Sage Welch - National Building Electrification Network & Sunstone Strategies
The Guardian