

SUSTAINABLE ENERGY RESOURCE GROUP 2008/2009 ANNUAL REPORT

SERG formed in 2002 to help homeowners and towns reduce the amount of energy they consume, avoid the hardship caused by ever-rising energy prices and reduce their impact on climate change. In these difficult financial times, SERG understands that we need to pull together and work as a community to help turn challenges into opportunities. Here are a few of the important projects we accomplished this year to create a more sustainable region.

Thetford Center Community Center Weatherization – SERG received a Vermont Community Climate Change Grant in the spring of 2009 to educate and train volunteers in building weatherization, using the Thetford Center Community Center as our training ground. Thus far over 30 volunteers have provided almost 300 hours to air seal, insulate and deal with moisture problems in Thetford's most-used historic community. We thank the many community volunteers for their time; the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, New England Grassroots Environment Fund, Ben and Jerry's Foundation, Town of Thetford and local donors for their financial contributions; and the Thetford Energy Committee and Thetford Center Community Association for organizing assistance with this great project.

VCEM/HEAT – Last winter, SERG coordinated 26 Home Energy Assistance Team volunteers from Thetford and Norwich to install weatherstripping, plastic window applications, compact fluorescent bulbs, programmable thermostats and water saving devices in 52 Thetford homes through Efficiency Vermont's "Vermont Community Energy Mobilization" program. HEAT volunteers also conducted visual inspections of homes and provided information on available technical and financial resources for additional weatherization.

Button Up Energy-Saving Workshops – In 2008 SERG helped create the hugely successful Button Up Vermont Home Energy Saving Workshops, which were held in 100 communities throughout Vermont. The series is being repeated in at least 75 Vermont communities again this fall and SERG is once again presenting workshops throughout the Upper Valley area. Communities, businesses, civic groups and organizations wishing to organize a workshop can contact SERG to present. SERG is now working with Clean Air – Cool Planet to expand this program to New Hampshire.

SERG Residential Energy Audits and Assessment Services – Requests for energy audits declined last fall as the price of heating fuel fell and the economy sputtered. SERG continues to offer Home Performance with ENERGY STAR assessments including blower door tests, infrared scans, combustion efficiency tests, and health and safety checks.

Mow Down Vermont– SERG collaborated with Community Climate Action and Brattleboro Climate Protection to organize a series of 5 one-day sales around the state of battery-powered electric Neuton mowers. In addition to selling 479 of these clean, efficient and quite Neuton mowers, we also recycled 295 polluting gas-guzzling mowers. These mowers will reduce air pollution, save energy and they are much quieter.

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Vermont & New Hampshire Town Energy Committees – SERG was created in 2002 with a mission to develop and consult with town energy committees. This model we developed was so successful that today there are more than 90 energy committees in communities in each Vermont and New Hampshire. In Vermont, we are networking and providing programs and resources to energy committees through the Vermont Energy & Climate Action Network (VECAN). Our goal is to have an energy committee or initiative in every Vermont town by 2012. VECAN is hosting its second annual day-long statewide conference of energy committees Dec. 5th, 2009 at the Lake Morey Inn, Fairlee. More information about VECAN and the annual conference is available at: www.vecan.net. In NH, SERG has been networking with energy committees through the NH Local Energy Committee Working Group. SERG also organizes twice annual meetings of energy committee representatives from throughout the Upper Valley to share information updates and to discuss collaborative regional projects.

Municipal Energy Assistance Program – SERG and our Energy Program Assistant Laura Chesnut are working with Clean Air – Cool Planet and Vital Communities to provide municipal energy inventories and audits to 6 communities throughout the Upper Valley region of New Hampshire and 48 communities across the state.

Norwich District Heat and Power Project – SERG and our interns, Alden Adolph and Mitch Kewer, are working with the Norwich Energy Committee to conduct a study to determine the interest in and technical feasibility of developing a renewably generated heat and power district for the town of Norwich, Vermont.

SERG Energy Alliance – SERG maintains a list of Energy Alliance businesses who offer discounts on energy efficiency and renewable energy products and services, such as wood stoves, solar hot water and PV systems and weatherization supplies, to those who make a tax-deductible contribution of \$50 or more to SERG. You can view the complete list of Energy Alliance business partners and the discounts they offer at www.serg-info.org/energy-alliance.

Public Education and Policy – SERG continues to educate the public through public forums and workshops, compact fluorescent bulb sales, letters to the editor and regular outreach to our database of over 1,800. We continue to work with town energy committees, individuals, state agencies and other organizations to support and promote energy conservation, efficiency and renewal initiatives.

SERG Board –

- Jeff Bernstein, President and Managing Director of the law firm BCK Law, P.C.
- Alan Berolzheimer, historian, editor and chair of the Norwich Energy Committee
- Bruce 'Buff' McLaughry, Chief Operating Officer of the Real Estate firm, Lang McLaughry Spera
- Jeff Wolfe, CEO of the renewable company, groSolar
- Bob Walker, SERG Director

*For more information on SERG and our programs, contact
802-785-4126, SERG@valley.net or www.SERG-info.org.*