

Clean Cities Vermont eNewsletter 12.15.2006

Your clearinghouse for news, programs, and funding related to reducing the consumption of petroleum for transportation in Vermont.

Clean Cities is a national program, coordinated by local coalitions in states and large cities, committed to advancing "the economic, environmental and energy security of the U.S." through cutting back on "*petroleum consumption in the transportation sector*". [More at the [Clean Cities](#) website].

Weekly Petro-Stats

| | Gas at the pump, VT [compiled from gasbuddy.com] | Crude oil futures [compiled from nymex.com] |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| This week (Dec 6-13) | \$2.324/gallon | \$61.822/barrel |
| Last week (Nov 29-Dec 5) | \$2.302/gallon | \$62.778/barrel |

NEWS & INFO BY SECTOR

- **Announcement: Vermont Clean Cities host**
- **Electric vehicles**
- **Hybrids**
 - Correction
- **No Idling**
 - Congestion reduction strategy?
- **Alternatives modes**
 - Good neighbors reducing fuel use
 - Burlington efforts

ON THE HORIZON

- **Policy Watch**
 - Burlington
 - Draft State Rail and Policy Plan completed
 - Laws enacted in the 2005-6 legislative session
- **Funding Opportunities**

- **Announcement: Vermont Clean Cities host**

The Department of Public Service announced today that the University of Vermont Transportation Center (UTC) has been selected to host the Vermont Clean Cities Program (VCCP). The Department feels that the VCCP will be a great addition to the UVM Transportation Center due to the considerable overlap of the goals and objectives of these programs in promoting sustainable transportation. The UTC is starting work on a transition plan and will convene a meeting with stakeholders soon to discuss the new coalition structure, goals, future opportunities, and ideas for moving the program forward.

- **Hybrids: Correction to "Attention hybrid buyers"**

Clean Cities reported last time that 2006 tax credit for Toyota hybrids ended on October 1st. However it has only been halved, and there is a possibility that the tax credit will be restored (and maybe even expanded) during the upcoming 110th Congress. Thanks to George Little at the Vermont DEC for pointing this out.

- **No Idling: Congestion reduction strategy?**

The federal Department of Transportation is piloting a Value Pricing program within the Administration's Congestion Initiative. A relatively new strategy of converting High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes to High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes is seeing success in Minneapolis, San Diego, and Denver, reducing air pollutants and increasing carpooling rates. Although this particular method would not work for Vermont, the few areas in the state which are seeing congestion may be able to learn from other pilot programs, such as car sharing, pay-as-you-drive auto insurance, or "parking cash out". [Source: [NPR](#). More info: [Federal Highway Administration](#)]

- **Alternatives: Good neighbors reducing fuel use**

Some neighbors in Chittenden County are burning less petroleum on the roads due to a little local self-reliance at the neighborhood level. Using a new free online service called Front Porch Forum which virtually gathers folks living within a self-defined 'neighborhood', nearby neighbors easily connect with each other. Many have used it for carpooling and truck sharing. People also borrow, barter and buy from someone in the neighborhood as an alternative to driving out to buy goods shipped long distances. Current towns that have this service are Burlington, Hinesburg, Huntington, and Westford. Other towns projected to have neighborhood forums in 2007 include Cabot, Rutland, Vergennes, St. Albans, and White River Junction. [Source: [Front Porch Forum](#). See if your neighborhood has one today!]

- **Alternatives: Burlington efforts**

As Vermont's most populated city, Burlington's transportation and commuting issues need continual attention. Initiatives currently underway include a city-level transportation planning process and a new transit center. [Source: [City of Burlington Department of Public Works](#)]

- **Policy Watch: Draft State Rail and Policy Plan completed**

The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) has completed a draft plan to promote the efficient operation of state rail networks as a competitive and integrated component of the state's multimodal transportation system. Draft development took two years and included public input. [Source: [VTrans](#). View [summary](#)]

- **Policy Watch: Laws enacted 2005-6 legislative session**

- A diesel exhaust smoke emissions law was approved back in May, which directs the Agency of Natural Resources to establish a standard of exhaust-smoke emission for all diesel-powered commercial motor vehicles operated on state highways. Fines are authorized for violators. Enforcement is set to begin July 1, 2007. [Source: [Vermont General Assembly](#). View [Act summary](#)]
- The fiscal year 2007 Transportation Program budget includes over \$45 million for alternative transportation (public transit, pedestrian & bike facilities, park & rides, multi-modal facilities, and rail infrastructure), or 10% of all transportation program funding. This is up from \$27 million last year, or 8% of total transportation funding. [Source: [Vermont General Assembly](#). Summaries: [FY07](#), [FY06](#)]

- **Funding Opportunities:**

- Vermont Community Development Program: Fundable projects include public facilities and public services. Vermont local governments are eligible. Closes 1/30/07. [[View](#)]
- Sustainable Future Fund: Projects that help address the challenges of building a sustainable society; projects that develop models of sound ecological practice. Closes 2/1/07. [[View](#)]
- New England Grassroots Environment Fund: air quality, energy, land use, consumption, urban environment grants. Small not-for-profit organizations are eligible. Closes 1/15/07. [[View](#)]

USEFUL CALENDARS

[10% Challenge](#)

[Vermont Peak Oil Network](#)

We strive to provide you with useful information, and welcome your comments at clean-cities@snellingcenter.org.

- To subscribe: send a blank email to clean-cities@snellingcenter.org with 'subscribe' in the subject line.

- To unsubscribe: send a blank email to clean-cities@snellingcenter.org with 'unsubscribe' in the subject line.

Best regards,
Elaine Wang
Snelling Center Intern

Vermont Clean Cities Coalition