

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 fuelgaugereport.com]	Crude oil futures [compiled from nymex.com]
This week (Jan 10-16)	\$2.377/gallon	\$52.525/barrel
Last week (Jan 3-9)	\$2.400/gallon	\$56.227/barrel
2 weeks ago (Dec 27-Jan 2)	\$2.405/gallon	\$60.703/barrel

NEWS & INFO BY SECTOR

- Fuels
 - Ethanol
 - Hydrogen
 - Plug-In Electric Hybrid Vehicles
 - Alternative liquid fuel tax credit
- Alternative Modes
 - 2007 community enhancement grants announced

ON THE HORIZON

- Policy Watch
 - Governor Douglas' inaugural address and biofuels
 - Climate change hearings at the VT legislature
- Funding Opportunities

- Fuels: Ethanol

Is the U.S. demand for ethanol partly to blame for the current price hikes in Mexico's food staple, i.e. tortillas? Reports vary in their assessment. Critics point out that ethanol is made from yellow corn, whereas tortillas and cornmeal are made from white corn. Intermediaries and monopolistic companies appear to be the prime culprits. However others point out that food and fuel markets are intertwined in complex ways and our demand for ethanol may have effects even outside U.S. borders. (Ethanol is not currently available in Vermont.) [Sources: [L.A. Times](#), [Reuters](#), [NPR](#), [Grist](#)]

- Fuels: Hydrogen

Vermont's first experimental hydrogen fueling station was built last year. If you missed the grand opening, you can read a recent article in about it in [Environmental Science and Technology](#). [More info at [EVermont](#)]

- Fuels: Plug-in hybrid electric vehicles

American automakers are newly interested in plug in electric hybrids. GM brought its new Volt at the 2007 Detroit Auto show, which, however, is still without the right battery technology. Ford has also recently expressed interest in developing these types of vehicles. Correspondingly, GM, Ford, and Chrysler have all begun lobbying hard for federal support to develop and produce alternative fuel vehicles, particularly battery technology for electrics. Testimony at the Vermont legislature's climate change hearings have also featured plug-in hybrids prominently. [Sources: [Detroit Free Press](#), [CNN](#), [Wall Street Journal](#), [Consumer Affairs](#), [Burlington Free Press](#)]

- Fuels: Alternative liquid fuel tax credit

A federal alternative fuel tax credit went into effect October 1, 2006, as part of the 2005 Transportation Act. Government fleets and other tax-

exempt organizations can now receive \$0.50 per gallon of liquid alternative fuel or gasoline gallon equivalent of compressed natural gas. To claim the credit, alternative fuel users must register with the IRS and file a request for payment. [Source: [Clean Cities Now](#).]

- **Alternative modes: 2007 community enhancement grants**

The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) and Governor James Douglas has announced the 17 community recipients of transportation enhancement project grants for 2007, for a total of \$2.8 million. \$2.4 million went to 15 pedestrian/bicycle facilities. [Source: [VTrans](#)]

- **Policy Watch: Governor Douglas' inaugural address and biofuels**

Governor Douglas devoted most of his inaugural address to describing his "Vermont Way Forward" approach, which includes environmental leadership, particularly in the realm of greenhouse gas emissions. He noted that emissions from motor vehicles make up 45% of Vermont's greenhouse gas emissions. His four proposals to address this problem were a purchase and use tax rate reduction on fuel-efficient and hybrid vehicles; a tax rate reduction on biodiesel for transportation; a rebate for home heating biofuels; and an increase of alternative fuel use by state government for both transportation and heating. [Source: [Governor Douglas press release](#)]

- **Policy Watch: Climate change hearings at the VT legislature**

The Vermont Legislature has also been looking closely at issues around climate change, transportation and possible state policy measures. The Legislature initiated the discussion with a joint session with Bill McKibben and Amory Lovins. Hearings continue through the next few weeks. To see future speakers, look at the Legislative Home page under the agenda for the Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committee.

- **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](#)]
- UVM Transportation Center Fellowships: Transportation-related research. Graduate students are eligible. Closes 2/15/07. [[View](#)]
- Federal R&D, technology: E85 optimized engine. Closes 3/15/07. [[View](#)]
- Federal R&D, technology: Enabling technologies for fuels and lubricants. Closes 3/15/07. [[View](#)]
- Federal R&D, technology: Efficiency, clean combustion and fuels co-development. Closes 3/15/07. [[View](#)]

USEFUL CALENDARS

[10% Challenge](#)

[Vermont Peak Oil Network](#)

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

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Best regards,
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[Vermont Clean Cities Coalition](#)