

News Update From
Your
Groton Sustainability Commission

Back in the Fall of 2021, the Groton Sustainability Commission added Climate Change to their purview. Since then, 5 new members have been added to the committee to help address the climate crisis issues facing us. We are working on some ideas and initiatives with the purpose of lowering Groton's greenhouse gas emissions and making our town as "green" as possible.

With that in mind, here are some actions that individuals can take to start making a difference immediately.

Recycling

- Reduce consumption, reuse anything that you can, recycle everything that you can. See Groton's website on the Transfer Station for more information on how to recycle: <https://www.grotonma.gov/government/departments/department-of-public-works/transfer-station/>
- Bring reusable bags with you when you do your shopping.
- Collect your food scraps and throw them in a compost bin or take them to the Transfer Station (which allows free drop off of food scraps). If you don't want the hassle of doing the composting or transporting yourself, consider signing up with Black Earth Compost (blackearthcompost.com). For a minimal fee, they will pick up your food scraps weekly and use it to make wonderful compost (some of which you can retrieve at the Transfer Station to use on your garden). Removing food waste from our trash stream will reduce the costs for the transfer station and reduce how much trash must be incinerated.
- Reduce your use of plastics of all types but especially plastic bags and bottles.

Driving

- Walk or bike instead of driving, whenever possible.
- Do not let your car sit and idle for any length of time.

Electricity Reduction

- Do not leave outside lights on during the day. In fact, outside lights do not need to be on all night long either. Consider putting your outside lights on a motion sensor or a timer. You'll save money and help the environment in doing so.
- Swap out incandescent lightbulbs for more efficient LED bulbs.

Lawn Care and Carbon Sinks

- Consider using less water on your lawn in the summer months so we can collectively conserve our water resources. Perhaps also consider getting rid of some of your lawn and planting some native plants and wildflowers. Pennsylvania sedge is a type of grass that thrives with less water. Garden in the Woods did a good presentation on killing your grass and replacing it with more

native plantings. The Native Plant Trust has lots of information on their web site about alternative plantings and an entire section about the reasons to replace you lawn and what to plant in its place: [Ecological Gardening - Native Plant Trust](#)

- Plant pollinator gardens and plant more trees to attract bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, and birds of all types.
- Limit the use of pesticides, fertilizers and weed killers or pick an organic option. An easy, effective weed killer that you can mix yourself is vinegar with salt and some Dawn dishwashing liquid.
- When it is time to replace your power/lawn equipment, replace it with electric models instead of gas-powered models.
- Limit the use of gas-powered leaf blowers – they are loud and pollution emitting. When it's time to replace one, consider an electric/battery-powered model or the old-fashioned rake. They're less expensive, result in far less pollution and fuel consumption, are more convenient, and are better for both your ears and the noise level in your neighborhood.

Heating/Cooling

- Replace traditional thermostats with Smart Thermostats, which can save you 10 – 15% on your heating and cooling costs.
- What temperature is your thermostat set to? Consider setting it a few degrees cooler in the winter and a few degrees higher in the summer in order to reduce your bills and conserve energy. It is especially important to reduce electricity usage in the summer during peak hours (4:00pm – 8:00pm according to Groton Electric) in order to lower all GELD ratepayer's bills.

If you have ideas of initiatives you would like us to consider, please email us at:

sustaining@grotonma.gov.

We will have a booth at RiverFest which is on June 12th from 9:00 – 4:00. Stop by and say hello!

Alison Dolbear Peterson, Chair; Phil Francisco, Vice Chair; Katrina Posner, Clerk; Bruce Easom, Member; Deborah Wakrat Schwartz, Member; Jim Simko, Member; James Allen, Member; Ginger Vollmar, Member; David Southwick, Member