

PEQ Views

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PEQ Receives Funding for Energy Conservation

“My belief is that we will not attain sustainability until we learn to love both nature and people. To love nature you have to make a deep connection with it. If more Americans felt connected to nature they would feel a bigger stake in policies that cut resource consumption.”

Prof. Daniel Botkin, Univ. of California-Santa Barbara, a leading environmental researcher.

PEQ is pleased to announce that the organization recently gained funding by the **US Department of Energy through the New Jersey State Energy Program in the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities** to conduct work with faith-based institutions on energy conservation, energy choice and environmental awareness. The grant gives PEQ an opportunity to strengthen its position as a provider of a range of environmentally significant services to houses of worship and their affiliated institutions in New Jersey.

PEQ will work with ten congregations in depth, making them models of energy efficiency and sustainable operational practices. This part of the program will involve educational and operational components, with PEQ President Fletcher Harper providing preaching and religious education for children, teens and adults about earth stewardship and environmental justice and Program Director Nathalie Shapiro coordinating energy audits, water audits, waste audits and procurement analyses to participating congregations.

Nathalie and Fletcher will also provide education for members of these congregations

and their communities on ways to make their own lifestyles more environmentally sustainable. The model congregations will each reduce their energy use and greenhouse gas emissions by a minimum of 10%, far surpassing the goals set in the New Jersey Greenhouse Gas Action Plan and Covenant of Sustainability.

Additionally, PEQ will offer ten training sessions and workshops around the state for religious audiences, facilities managers and regional groups addressing themes of energy conservation and choice, the moral and religious rationale for earth stewardship and environmental justice, and the means of making houses of worship models of environmental sustainability. Information on these workshops will be published in future issues of the newsletter.

PEQ's board and staff are excited at the opportunities these grants provide for PEQ and for New Jersey's faith community. Particular thanks are due to Pam Frank, PEQ's former executive director, and Nathalie Shapiro, for their work on the proposal that led to the contract's granting.

What can the Covenant do for your congregation?

Did you know that New Jersey has a Greenhouse Gas Action Plan? And that the state is well on its way to achieving emissions savings comparable to the Kyoto Accord? What can your congregation do to help our state meet this goal? Sign the Covenant of Sustainability!

The Covenant is a non-binding and voluntary agree-

ment to help the State of New Jersey reach its greenhouse gas reduction goal—to reduce emissions by 3.5% below 1990 levels by 2005.

Once your congregation signs the Covenant, it also becomes a partner in the EPA's Energy Star for Congregations program and is able to receive free unbiased technical advice and support through Energy Star. And your congregation is eligible for many free and low cost sustainability services through PEQ.

Listed below are some next steps and opportunities for Covenant congregations. Schedule a time for The Rev. Fletcher Harper, PEQ's President, to guest speak/preach to your congregation about the moral and spiritual basis for caring for the environment.

Set up a Green Team/environmental committee within your congregation to identify environmental actions for your congregation.

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From PEQ President, Rev. Fletcher Harper

Dear Friends of PEQ,

It is a tremendous pleasure to write you as the new full-time president of PEQ. I started work at PEQ in August, having volunteered for PEQ for two years as a parish priest and co-chair of the Episcopal Diocese of Newark's Environmental Commission.

I look forward to working with you, our partners and supporters, to lead the faith community and our society into a commitment to earth stewardship and environmental justice and to building a sustainable society.

PEQ is a unique organization with a clear mission at a critical time. There is widespread scientific consensus that human patterns of impacting the environment are not sustainable. The means exist for addressing these challenges. Awakened by a renewed sense of spirituality in nature, people of faith can play a decisive role in encouraging individuals, institutions and our leaders to integrate these habits of sustainability into our daily lives, our economic practices and our government's policies.

This is the vision behind PEQ. We make that vision real by engaging people of faith, spiritually, educationally and concretely, in the basis for earth stewardship and environmental justice. Specifically,

*PEQ helps houses of
worship become
models of
sustainable living.*

- PEQ offers preaching and teaching in a wide range of sacred and secular settings. Working with children, teens and adults, we evoke a sense of awe at God's presence in creation and help people change their patterns of consumption for the sake of the earth, the most vulnerable, and future generations.

- PEQ helps houses of worship become models of sustainable living. We help houses of worship practice wise energy choice and conservation, water conservation, waste reduction, responsible procurement, and organize them to stand against the disproportionate impact of environmental degradation on the poor.

Inside this newsletter, you will find further descriptions of PEQ's work. I hope you will renew your commitment and become actively involved with PEQ in building a sustainable future. Join us and support us as we build a culture that loves the earth and recognizes the natural world as a sacred place that invites people of all faith traditions and spiritual backgrounds into the transformative power of God.

In faith,

Rev. Fletcher Harper

Jots and Tittles

PEQ will feature the "Jots and Tittles" column in each newsletter to provide a sampling of particularly striking statistics or quotations regarding environmental concerns, lifestyle and consumption patterns, faith and ethics. "Jots and tittles" are Hebrew words referring to the various vowel pointings used in written Hebrew, both Biblical and modern. The phrase "jots and tittles" has entered the vernacular as a phrase referring to details and small factoids.

Organic Crops Show Enhanced Nutritional Content

Recently, the US government issued regulations governing the labeling of organic produce. For years, many have believed that organic crops are healthier than those grown with conventional agricultural methods. A recent study, published in the Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine, offered confirmation for this, showing the following:

Average amount of Vitamin C found in organic crops compared to conventional crops: +27%
Of iron: +21%
Of calcium: +26%

(www.organicfacts.com/organic_info/articles/downloads/org.pdf)

The Environmental Cost of the Average Lawn

Many environmental groups are calling for homeowners to rethink the way they plant and maintain their lawns, citing the negative environmental impact of current lawn care methods. The magazine *Audubon* published these annual care and feeding requirements for an one-third acre US lawn (v. 104, no2, March, 2002, p.65):

Pesticides: 10 pounds
Fertilizer: 20 pounds
Water: 170,000 gallons
Mowing labor: 40 hours

Pollution: Equivalent to driving a car 14,000 miles.

How many _____s (*fill in the blank*) does it take to Screw in a (Compact Fluorescent) Light Bulb?

By *Barbara Lerman-Golomb*

That's what Congregation Beth Chaim, Princeton Junction is discovering through a compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL) fund raiser. During Hanukkah, when our thoughts turn to light, instead of only thinking of latkes, we'll be thinking about light bulbs, although they don't taste as good with applesauce!

What makes this fund raiser even more exciting is that I connected our environmental group, Teva Torah, with the temple Sisterhood. They have been trying to raise funds to purchase a new stained glass window as part of our synagogue expansion project. I got to thinking....light, windows, Hanukkah--the light bulb over my head went off. A bulb in every home means less carbon and sulfur dioxide emissions in the air, less bulbs in landfills and lower energy bills. It's a win/win solution all the way around and a great Hanukkah gift to the earth by helping to provide cleaner air--a step towards tikkun olam (healing our world) through environmental stewardship.

PEQ and Partners

PEQ supports a range of religious-environmental activities around New Jersey. Below is a summary of recent initiatives PEQ has helped organize, often behind the scenes.

PEQ Helps Five Catholic Dioceses Organize First Environmental Conference

When the five Roman Catholic dioceses in New Jersey decided to hold their first conference on environmental stewardship and justice, they turned to PEQ for help. PEQ's Nathalie Shapiro and Fletcher Harper and former Executive Director Pam Frank, have played leading roles in the development of the conference, identifying themes for workshops, arranging speakers for the conference, and organizing substantial amounts of the program. "PEQ has been tremendously helpful to us in planning the conference," says Kaye Furlani, Social Concerns staff person for the Catholic Archdiocese of Newark and convener of the New Jersey Catholic Coalition for Environmental Justice. The conference will take place April 25-27 at Princeton University. Nathalie, Fletcher, PEQ Board members Prof. Laurel Kearns, Rabbi Lawrence Troster, and Kathy Abbott (Kathy is a leading member of NJCCEJ) will make presentations at the conference

Worldwatch Institute President and Researcher Speak at PEQ-sponsored Event in Montclair

On Wednesday, October 16 PEQ co-sponsored an evening

with Worldwatch Institute President Christopher Flavin and Researcher Brian Halweil at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Montclair. Flavin and Halweil lectured on sustainable agriculture and the future of energy policy, contrasting the negative impact of current farming practices and energy production with a positive vision for the future of farming and renewable energy. PEQ co-sponsored the event with Voices of Sustainability, a Montclair-based coalition.

PEQ Works with Hackensack Riverkeeper on Service of Healing and Renewal for River

PEQ is partnering with the Hackensack Riverkeeper to plan an interfaith worship service to pray for the healing and renewal of the Hackensack River and to offer thanks for those whose work has led to the River's restoration. Information on the service will be posted on PEQ's listserv. Contact PEQ to subscribe to this service.

PEQ Represented at NJDEP Site Remediation Advisory Group Meeting

PEQ member Ben Alter, vice president of the environmental engineering firm GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc., is PEQ's first representative on the Department of Environmental Protection's Site Remediation Advisory Group (SRAG). SRAG provides private sector input to the DEP's investigation and cleanup of hazardous waste sites in New Jersey.

Trained as a geologist, Ben is a member of Congregation Agudath Israel, a conservative synagogue located in Caldwell and an adjunct professor at CUNY/Hunter in Manhattan. Ben helped lead Agudath Israel to collect the largest number of "converts" to clean energy in New Jersey over the last two years, with over forty Agudath Israel households signing up for Green Mountain Power through PEQ.

Ben and the GZA staff assist companies in complying with environmental regulations, and investigating and cleaning up their hazardous waste sites." He brings that expertise to his participation in SRAG, where he will represent PEQ's concerns for the moral and spiritual basis for protecting the environment, and for the negative health impact of hazardous waste sites on those negatively affected by these sites.

Ben reports that this meeting, conducted by the new SRP commissioner, Evan Van Hook, focused on the DEP's plans to clean up as many sites as possible quickly and moving difficult sites into their own division within the program. Van Hook also introduced a new web page which will facilitate the average citizen's ability to retrieve environmental information about his or her neighborhood.

Many thanks to Ben for representing PEQ and the faith community in this way.

Partners for Environmental Quality Inc.
204 West State Street
Trenton, NJ 08608

Phone: 609-394-1090
Fax: 609-394-2199
Web: www.peqnj.org
Info@peqnj.org

Take Action Take Action Take Action Take Action Take



**How dirty is your electricity?
Did you know that you have options?**

Do you want to support renewable electricity but don't know how to? In New Jersey there are two options for Green-e Certified electricity from renewable, cleaner sources. Green-e is an independent nonprofit group that certifies products, not companies. The green-e logo means that specific standards for the electricity product are being met by the company that is supplying it to you. For more information about Green-e visit their website at www.green-e.org.



Community Energy

Community Energy offers you the opportunity to support New Wind Energy™ from local wind power projects. Sold in windblocks of 100 kilowatt hours (kWh), they are available for \$2.50 monthly per block. You can purchase a windblock as a one time gift purchase, to offset the polluting electricity for an event or as a 'green' sustainable holiday present. You can also buy New Wind Energy for your home or business, to support the further development of emission-free wind energy in New Jersey. Contact PEQ for sign-up forms.



Green Mountain Energy Company (GMEC)

When you sign up for Green Mountain Energy, Green Mountain becomes your electricity supplier. Their product Enviroblend employs energy from many renewable sources. Also, for each member of your congregation that signs up for GMEC, they will donate \$20 back to your congregation. Contact PEQ for sign up forms.

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Contact PEQ to schedule an energy audit for your congregation. The cost of an audit is easily paid off in one to two years, and the savings continue for the lifetime of your building.

Calculate your congregation's baseline greenhouse gas emissions so that you can track the reduction in emissions as you become more energy efficient. Contact PEQ for assistance and a worksheet.

Implement suggestions from the Energy Star for Congregations Stewardship Action List for NJ. These suggestions can help your congregation reduce its electric bill while at the same time reduce its greenhouse gas emissions. Contact PEQ for your copy.

Set up a socially responsible purchasing program for your congregation's supply and administrative needs. Contact PEQ for education and support

Contact PEQ to schedule a waste audit. PEQ will coordinate the State's only LEED accredited waste management company to evaluate your waste stream and help maximize recycling efforts while reducing hauling fees.

Switch to Green-e certified electricity and by doing so reduce your congregation's greenhouse gas emissions. This can be a **fundraiser** for your congregation.

**We are here to support you and your congregation
as you continue to care for God's creation.**