

Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI)

In an agreement with huge implications for the nation as a whole, seven Northeast States have agreed to develop a market-based system to reduce carbon pollution. Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, New Jersey, New York, New Hampshire and Vermont initially aim to reduce CO₂ emissions from power plants by 10 percent from current levels by 2019. The MOU leaves room for Massachusetts and Rhode Island to sign on until January 2008. The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) is the first such agreement in the US and will serve as a regional model for the nation. CA-CP, in partnership with Environmental Advocates of New York, was the chief coordinator of a letter of support for RGGI signed by mayors and chief elected officials representing more than 55 Northeast cities.

Looking ahead

The Clean Air-Cool Planet Communities Program is continuing our cross-border exchange program with a visit to Canada, which will include municipalities from New Hampshire, New York and Rhode Island. We are looking to make the annual CA-CP smog summit a cross-border event in the future.



Officials from NYC, Boston, and Stamford CT visit with Toronto climate leaders in May 2005.



Clean Air-Cool Planet
is a science-based, non-partisan, 501(c)3 non-profit.

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CLEAN AIR-COOL PLANET'S COMMUNITY PROGRAM

At Clean Air-Cool Planet, **our mission** is to create partnerships in the Northeast to implement solutions to climate change and build constituencies for effective climate policies and actions. Our Communities Program is based upon the philosophy that getting leaders to **share** their **experiences** is one of the best ways to spread knowledge and promote action on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Clean Air-Cool Planet partners from across the Northeast are finding innovative ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; they are improving the quality of life in their communities, reaching out to local leaders, stakeholders and fellow citizens, and forging a path for other climate-conscious communities to follow.

Much of our Northeast community work is done in collaboration with the Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) program of ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability (formerly the International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives). Under a formal agreement, CA-CP and ICLEI **often work jointly** on projects relating to sustainability at the local government level. CCP offers a **step-by-step programmatic approach** to reducing greenhouse gases through municipal government action, and features the use of calculator to do a **municipal GHG-emissions inventory**.

CA-CP works with in ICLEI in a complimentary fashion; our shared goal is to lower carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions in order to reduce global warming. CA-CP works across the community by **forming partnerships with community organizations, schools and businesses to effect changes at the local level**. We educate community leaders on the financial, health and environmental



benefits of reducing carbon pollution.

Our Communities Program brings to community leaders the most recent climate science and local examples of the impacts of global warming on their community. **Through forums, workshops and trainings** we introduce community leaders to scientists, regulators and corporate leaders in order to exchange ideas and develop new programs. **The results:** solutions for energy savings that suit community needs and make financial sense.

Cross-border exchange program

The cross border exchange program is a good example of the collaborative nature of our work. CA-CP brings key cities in the Northeastern U.S. together with Canadian cities that are operating - and can **demonstrate** - emissions reduction programs and operations.



In May, 2005, CA-CP and ICLEI organized **two exchange visits to Canada** in order to **expose** U.S. representatives to climate projects, programs and policies which are successfully reducing greenhouse gas emissions, saving energy costs and improving quality of life in sister cities across the border. The **first exchange** brought representatives from New York, Boston and Stamford (CT), to visit Toronto. The **second convened** representatives of Portland (ME), Guildford (CT) and Maplewood (NJ) with their peers in Fredericton, New Brunswick. Both exchange programs created valuable connections and built new relationships among people between who share the conviction that reducing greenhouse gas emissions is good for cities; **collaboration has paved the way** for positive changes in the US and the exchange of information continues to benefit both sides, as the following comments illustrate:

“We view this as the start of a long and productive interchange of information that will contribute to all our goals”. — Richard Morris, Energy Efficiency Office Manager for the City of Toronto.

*“While there are many differences between Toronto and New York’s government and rules, both cities face similar challenges. Toronto has been able to surmount many of these obstacles with sophisticated financing programs and inter-governmental as well as public/private partnerships. In particular, the specifics of Toronto’s better Building Partnership could be replicated in some form here in NYC.... The **experience has given me more ideas and perspectives** to add to our current initiatives. In addition, it has given these initiatives a boost of energy to continue to move forward..”* — Ariella Rosenberg, Special Projects Manager NYC Economic Development Corporation, Energy Division.



As evidenced by the quotes above, city learning exchanges have helped create an effective network where lessons can be shared, best practices adopted and barriers surmounted:

In New York City, Mayor Bloomberg signed Local Law #86 of 2005, which sets green building standards for certain capital projects. The law, which is in effect as of January 1, 2007, affects approximately \$12 billion in construction, including \$5 billion in new schools, over the City’s 10-year capital plan. The law requires most new and substantially renovated City buildings costing more than \$2 million to be built according to the U.S. Green Building Council’s Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) green building standard or other equally stringent standard. In addition to City buildings, the bill applies to any capital projects of non-City agencies that are funded by the City, provided the City is contributing at least \$10 million or 50 percent of cost of the project.

During 2005 CA-CP, organized a “Better Building Forum” **together with the City of Stamford** and the **Business Council of Fairfield County**. Sponsored by UBS the forum was attended by architects, town planners, the mayor of Stamford, reporters and financiers. Bob Fox of Cook+Fox Architects (architects for the Bank of America tower, billed as the “greenest skyscraper in America” now under construction in Manhattan) showcased the latest developments in environmentally sound building design, regulatory considerations and LEED standards. Stamford Mayor Dannel Malloy used the forum to announce plans to develop a new energy improvement district to benefit city residents and businesses.

Clean Air Cool Planet **spotlights municipal achievements** with our Climate Champion Award. In 2003 the award went to the Town of **Hull**, Massachusetts, home to the first commercial-scale electric generating wind turbine to go online anywhere on the U.S. coastline between Maine and Florida. In 2005 the city of **Stamford** earned a Climate Champion Award at our NYC Conference, following the release of their emissions inventory. The award was presented by CA-CP Chair Susan Tierney, former Massachusetts Environmental Affairs Secretary and US Energy Assistant Secretary, to celebrate actions that reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent — curbing global warming and **saving the city more than \$1.1 million** in annual energy costs.

In June 2005, the city of Portland (Maine), following participation in CA-CP’s cross-border exchange, joined a state-wide initiative called the Governor’s Carbon Challenge. This state program seeks voluntary commitments to lowering carbon pollution. Clean Air-Cool Planet is helping Portland develop several projects, including energy efficient product procurement and anti-idling policy for public vehicles. We helped the city launch its new **Global Warming Round Table**, a city-wide group of stakeholders, set up to develop an action plan for lowering carbon emissions. We intend to expand the Portland Roundtable into a **model program** for other communities.



Guilford, CT is becoming a CCP community and is working with ICLEI to go through the official resolution process. We are assisting the community in planning and running a workshop on sea-level rise and municipal planning.

Keeping communities informed

In response to a 2004 community leadership survey CA-CP launched a website and *The Local Climate*, a quarterly newsletter designed to connect community leaders to **case studies** on specific topics and *regular news* about regional and **local** developments. The website is used to track local action in the Northeast, share information with Canadian municipalities and serve as a ‘clearing house’ for CA-CP and other organizations’ case studies. (<http://www.cleaneair-coolplanet.org/forcommunities/index.php>)