



Fall Report

A major victory for solar in Massachusetts

Bay State's top solar program expanded

Solar power in Massachusetts got a huge boost this summer when Environment Massachusetts won our campaign to expand the state's most successful solar program.

This victory ensures that solar will continue its remarkable trajectory of growth here in the commonwealth, reducing our dependence on coal and oil, shrinking our carbon footprint, and putting people to work building our clean energy economy.

Exponential growth in MA solar

This summer, Gov. Deval Patrick signed into law a bill to expand the net-metering program, the state's most successful solar program. Under this program, homeowners, businesses and others can sell a portion of the solar power they generate back to the grid, making solar much more affordable and accessible.

The program has been wildly successful since its introduction in 2008, leading to a 24-fold increase in the state's solar generating capacity in just five years. But previously, the program only allowed Bay Staters to sell back a small fraction of the solar power they generated. Now, the amount of solar that homeowners, businesses and others can sell back to the grid has been significantly increased, paving the way for another period of rapid solar growth in Massachusetts.

A win for clean energy

This victory capped months of campaigning and grassroots organizing. This past summer, Environment Massachusetts talked to one in 10 Massachusetts house-



Office of Governor Patrick

▲ Environment Massachusetts staff with Gov. Deval Patrick. In August, Gov. Patrick signed an Environment Massachusetts-backed bill to expand the state's top solar program.

holds about the benefits of affordable, accessible solar power, and mobilized thousands of Bay Staters to contact their legislators in support of expanding the net-metering program.

The expansion of the net-metering program is a huge step toward our goal of getting 10 percent of our energy from the sun by 2030. Next, we'll be working

with the governor to set a goal of reaching one gigawatt of solar, as well as working to establish programs to encourage solar hot water. But for now, thanks to thousands of our members and supporters, we can celebrate the fact that solar will continue to flourish here in Massachusetts—good news for our health, our environment, and our economy.



Elena Elisseeva, Shutterstock.com

Solar on the rise

◀ Installing solar panels. Massachusetts has seen a remarkable 24-fold increase in solar generating capacity over the past five years. And with the recent expansion of the state's most successful solar program, solar will continue its rapid growth in the commonwealth.



To our members

This is an exciting time for clean energy in Massachusetts.

This past summer, with your help, we won a major victory for solar power in the commonwealth. After a long, hard-fought campaign—during which we talked to one in 10 Bay Staters, mobilized nearly 14,000 people to contact their legislators, signed up 70 solar businesses in support of our legislation, and convinced 18 cities and towns to pass resolutions supporting the bill—the Legislature voted to expand the state's most successful solar program. And on August 3, Gov. Patrick signed the bill into law, ensuring the continued success of solar power in Massachusetts.

There's still much more to do, but for the moment, it feels good to celebrate this victory for clean, renewable, non-polluting energy. And we couldn't have done it without you. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Wright".

Ben Wright,
Advocate

Recent action

EPA proposes first-ever carbon standards

This spring, the EPA proposed historic new limits on carbon pollution from new power plants. Carbon pollution fuels global warming, which leads to poor air quality that triggers asthma attacks and other respiratory problems. Scientists also predict that global warming will lead to more devastating floods, more deadly heat waves and the spread of infectious diseases. Coal-fired power plants are the largest single source of carbon pollution in the U.S., yet there are currently no federal limits on this pollution from power plants. The EPA's proposed standards will correct that for new power plants by limiting their emissions of carbon pollution.

Environment Massachusetts Advocate Ben Wright issued the following statement in response to the announcement: "By setting the first-ever standards for the largest source of the carbon pollution that fuels global warming, President Barack Obama and EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson are standing up for Bay Staters—and putting our health above the demands of the polluter lobby."

Efficiency would cut global warming, save money

Massachusetts families could save \$1,020.20 every year on their electricity bills by 2030 if the government invests in the energy efficiency of our buildings today, according to a recent report by Environment Massachusetts. Saving energy in our buildings would also assist in the fight against global warming, reducing global warming pollution from buildings by 28 percent—the equivalent of taking 4,939,216 cars off the road.

Right now, 40 percent of the energy used in the U.S. goes to heat, cool, and power our buildings. Unfortunately, much of this energy is wasted, flying out of leaky doors and windows. This high level of energy consumption pumps billions of tons of global warming pollution into the atmosphere and costs Americans nearly \$400 billion every year. "It's time to build better," said Environment Massachusetts Field Associate MacKenzie Clark. "Bold efficiency measures for buildings can cut energy use in our homes and businesses by 21 percent by 2030, reducing pollution and saving consumers money."



▲ Installing energy efficient windows.

Northeast leads the way in cutting global warming pollution

Cutting carbon emissions, growing the economy

Over the last decade, northeastern states have built a track record of successful action to reduce global warming pollution. By working together across state lines and partisan divides—and developing innovative new policies to hasten the transition to a clean energy economy—the Northeast has succeeded in cutting emissions while safeguarding the region's economic health.

In fact, between 2000 and 2009, the 10 northeastern states participating in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI)—including New England, New York, New Jersey, Maryland and Delaware—cut per capita carbon dioxide emissions 20 percent faster than the rest of the nation, even as the region's gross product per capita grew 87 percent faster than the rest of the United States.

Pioneers in cutting pollution

Northeastern states have been pioneers in the effort to reduce fossil fuel pollution, leading the way in demonstrating effective policies to promote a clean energy economy and reduce emissions. These innovative measures and policies include:

- **Setting emission reduction goals:** In 2001, New England set the first regional emission reduction target in the United States. This was the first multi-jurisdictional agreement reached anywhere in the world.
- **Cleaning up power plants:** In 2001, Massachusetts became the first state in the nation to set mandatory limits on global warming pollution from power plants, eventually leading to the creation of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), the nation's first global warming cap-and-trade program. RGGI's innovative auction of carbon dioxide emission allowances has funded numerous local clean energy programs.

- **Expanding renewable energy:** Every northeastern state other than Vermont has adopted a renewable electricity standard designed to increase production of wind, solar and other forms of clean, renewable energy.

The region's efforts have paid off in a significant reduction in carbon dioxide emissions from energy use, even as the region's per capita GDP has grown faster than the nation as a whole. The 10 northeastern states participating in RGGI emitted 161 million metric tons of carbon dioxide from electricity use in 2009—15 percent less than in 2000 and 9 percent less than in 1990. At the same time, a 2011 study found that the RGGI program raised economic output by \$1.6 billion in the participating states.

The experience of the last decade shows that large reductions in global warming pollution are possible, that innovative regional collaborations can help make them happen, and that emission reductions can be achieved side-by-side with economic growth.



Mass: Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

research

A Record of Leadership

How Northeastern States are Cutting Global Warming Pollution and Building a Clean Economy.

Read the full report online at: www.EnvironmentMassachusettsCenter.org

Green Future Fund

A new way to honor supporters

Environment Massachusetts is proud to announce the establishment of our Green Future Fund.

The Green Future Fund will honor a special group of our donors: those who are ensuring a greener future by remembering Environment Massachusetts or our sister group, Environment Massachusetts Research & Policy Center, in their wills, life insurance policies or retirement accounts.

These legacy donors are helping to ensure that Environment Massachusetts will continue to flourish—protecting the places we love and the values we share—for years to come. “We appreciate all of our supporters,” said Environment Massachusetts’ Ben Wright. “I feel a special gratitude toward those members who have the vision and generosity to plan a gift that will protect our state’s environment beyond their own lifetimes.”

Establishing a legacy gift also offers donors a few advantages. Some supporters wish they could give more, but can't right now. Including Environment Massachusetts in your estate plan costs nothing today, while ensuring support for our mission in the future. Legacy gifts may also offer tax benefits. (Your professional advisor can help you determine any tax advantage.)

As a Green Future Fund donor, with your permission, we'll recognize your gift in our annual report and other publications, helping to inspire other members to make their own legacy gifts. Of course, you may also choose to give anonymously. Either way, any specific details you choose to provide about your gift will remain confidential.

If you'd like to become a member of the Green Future Fund, or if you just have questions, call our planned giving coordinator, Marilyn Tesaro, at 1-800-841-7299 or send her an email her at PlannedGiving@EnvironmentMassachusetts.org.

44 Winter St., Ste. 401
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 747-4400

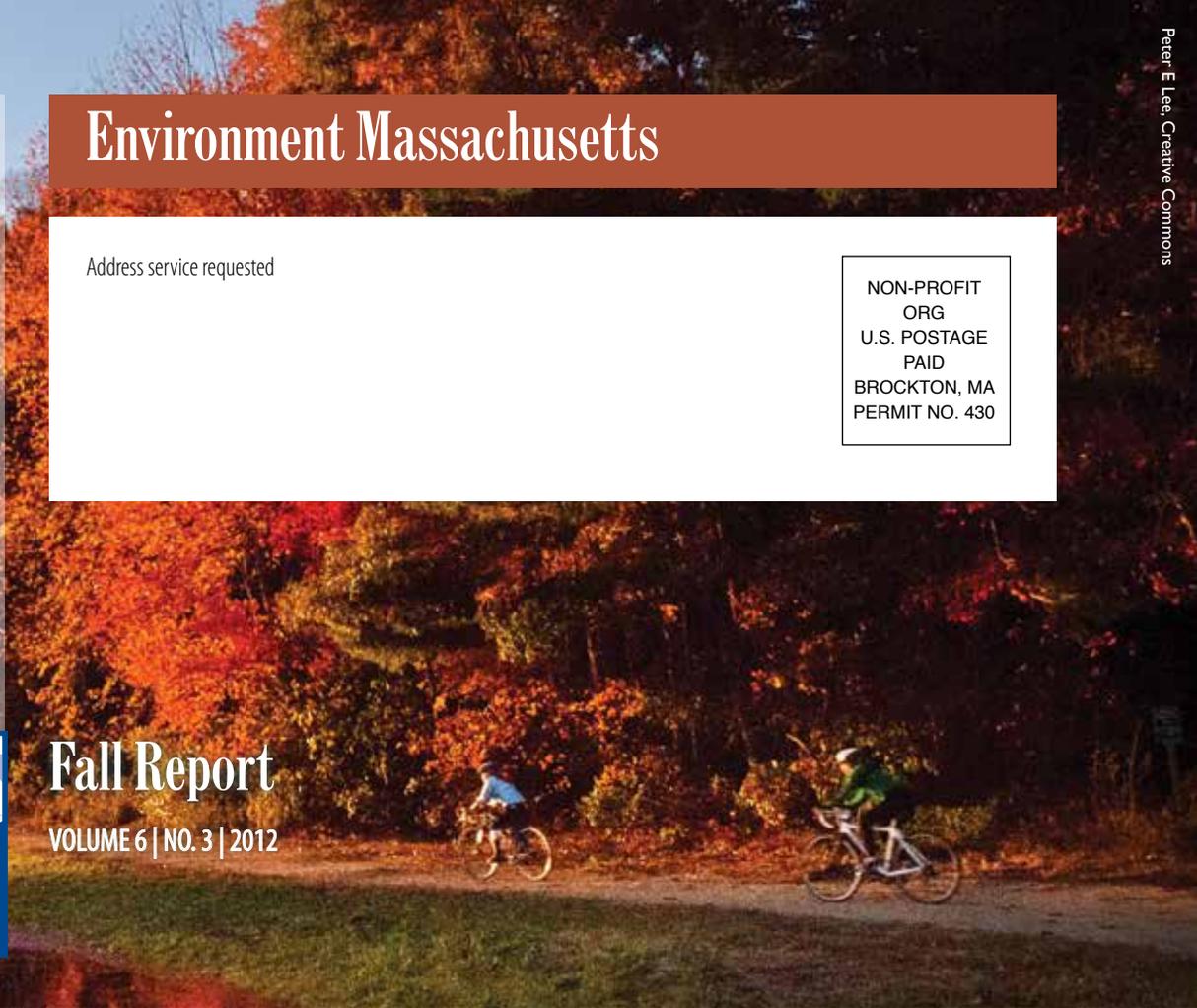
Environment Massachusetts

Address service requested

NON-PROFIT
ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BROCKTON, MA
PERMIT NO. 430

Fall Report

VOLUME 6 | NO. 3 | 2012



Environment Massachusetts

Our mission

We all want clean air, clean water and open space. But it takes independent research and tough-minded advocacy to win concrete results for our environment, especially when powerful interests stand in the way of environmental progress.

That's the idea behind Environment Massachusetts. We focus exclusively on protecting Massachusetts' air, water and open space. We speak out and take action at the local, state and national levels to improve the quality of our environment and our lives.

Standing up for solar on Beacon Hill

On June 14, Environment Massachusetts hosted a Renewable Energy Lobby Day at the State House in Boston. Energy activists, solar industry employees, students and citizens from across the Greater Boston area attended nearly 40 meetings to lobby their state representatives to expand the state's clean energy programs—including the net-metering program (see page 1). By end the of the day, a number of representatives committed to signing a letter urging the House Ways and Means Committee to expand the state's most successful solar initiative, the net-metering program.

And on June 26, the House did just that: By a vote of 132-16, our representatives passed "An Act Relative to Competitively Priced Electricity in the Commonwealth," which included a provision to increase the cap on net-metering to three percent of peak load. This means that homeowners, businesses and others can sell much more of the solar power they generate back to the grid, making solar power more affordable and accessible for all Bay Staters.



Staff

◀ *Environment Massachusetts' Elizabeth Grillo at Lobby Day on Beacon Hill with Constantino Nicolaou of solar company PanelClaw, Rep. David Torrisi, and Laurie Freeman of clean energy company Solventerra.*