



Western  
Environment  
Centre  
wecnl.ca

Newsletter

**Inside this issue...**

- **Solar energy for your home**
- **Tips on reducing food waste**
- **Recycling info**
- **The community garden**
- **And much more...**

Spring  
2019

## From the Editor's Desk

Attending a WEC workshop a few weeks ago, some thoughts came to my mind about that old adage, "think globally, act locally," particularly the latter part. Engaging in environmental stewardship and sustainability at the local level carries with it so many benefits to the self and to the community. Whether it be helping out at a community garden or city cleanup, or writing a letter to a government official about a pressing environmental issue, or taking steps to make changes in your life, or attending a workshop—the benefits of being a good environmental citizen in your community are manifold and go even beyond the feeling of doing your part for a sustainable future.

The community in which you live, work, play, and breathe will benefit from the actions that you take. What is a community but the sum of the input of its inhabitants, and partaking in local environmental activism and activity will not only help to beautify your community but make it a fit place to live for everyone. Moreover, people at these events create synergies that stimulate other endeavours and ideas.

By acting locally, you will also accrue benefits to yourself. You will meet interesting people, exchange ideas, and set a good example for your family and those who are close to you. Regardless of what the future brings, you will be able to say that you did your part and that you did your best to bring to life a sustainable future.

It is primarily through the work of individual action that a critical sea change in thinking will be triggered, a sea change in thinking regarding the environment and the relationship between humans and the rest of the natural world. To do this effectively, each of us must be informed, by reading, by interacting with others.

This newsletter can help in this regard. In it, you will find updates on the community garden and the upcoming workshops. There are also tips on how to reduce food waste in the home and how to avoid common recycling mistakes. Read as well the interview of the owner and president of RENL, a renewable energy company that is making solar power affordable and feasible for many residents in this province. Likewise, if you are interested in a broad range of environmental issues, have a look at the review of the Energy Gang podcast.

WEC has been very active over the past few months. One of our partners is Climate Watch NL, a group that is in the process of evaluating the provincial government's plan to fight climate change. In this issue, the group provides some preliminary considerations on that provincial report. The Green Drinks speaker series, a new initiative for WEC, operates in a similar way to WEC's workshops, in that both events provides venues for the exchange of sustainability ideas.

Activism, synergies, dialogue, action—these are the building blocks that form the foundation of an informed environmental citizen.

Edwin Bezzina

### Contact info

(w) [www.wecnl.ca](http://www.wecnl.ca)  
(e) [info@wecnl.ca](mailto:info@wecnl.ca)  
(p) (709) 640 1734

50 Main Street, 2nd Floor  
Corner Brook, NL  
A2H 1C4

### We're on Facebook!



You can find us by searching  
'WEC NL'

### We're also on Twitter



([www.twitter.com/wecnl](http://www.twitter.com/wecnl))

### WEC welcomes comments and questions!

Feel free to write to the editor ([info@wecnl.ca](mailto:info@wecnl.ca)). We'd love to hear from you.



Cover Photo: Bowater Park,  
Corner Brook in the spring  
(photo E. Bezzina)

## WEC's Mandate

*(this mandate includes some changes that were made recently)*

The Western Environment Centre (WEC) is a charitable, non-profit, non-governmental organization. WEC is based in Corner Brook but we aim to serve the whole western Newfoundland region. In partnership with other community groups, businesses, and government agencies, our organization strives to:

- 1) Engage communities in environmental issues in a balanced, objective, and informed manner
- 2) Build capacity and involvement in projects related to environmental sustainability
- 3) Create a community of environmentally active citizens.

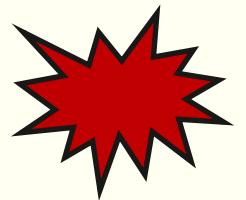
### Project Focus Areas

WEC activities are focused in three main areas:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Food Sustainability<br/><i>Community gardens and greenhouse<br/>Food skills workshops<br/>Humber Valley Fruit Rescue<br/>Humber Heights Community Compost<br/>School Garden/Greenhouse Partnership<br/>Participation in the Wonderful Fine Market</i></li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Climate Change and Energy<br/><i>Electric BikeShare Rental Program<br/>Collaboration with Climate Watch NL</i></li> <li>3. Public Policy Engagement<br/><i>Participation in government-led consultations<br/>Engagement in public dialogue on current events/issues</i></li> </ol> |
|--|--|

## Check out WEC's new blog!

It's coming your way on April 22, 2019 (Earth Day). The blog will offer posts, articles, commentaries, WEC policy statements and positions, photos, news clippings, and much more! The blog's URL is [wecnl.ca/blog](http://wecnl.ca/blog).



## How to become a WEC member (and how to encourage friends to become members)

Please fill out the membership form on the back page of this newsletter and then send it by post to our surface address or by scanned copy to our e-mail address ([info@wecnl.ca](mailto:info@wecnl.ca)). Becoming a member is a fabulous first step to becoming environmentally involved in your local community!

### Board of Directors

Mikaela Wilson.....Chair	
Simon Jansen.....Vice-Chair	
Rebecca Shea.....Treasurer	
Edwin Bezzina.....Newsletter Coordinator;	
	Acting Secretary
Carl Durand	Glen Keeling
Roza Tchoukaleyska	Kris Watton
<b>Executive Director.....</b>	<b>Katie Temple</b>

### Five great ways to get involved in WEC

1. Join one of the working committees
2. Join the Facebook group and invite others to do the same
3. Attend WEC events
4. Become a WEC volunteer
5. Participate in the WEC community garden

## The Food Skills Workshops Are Underway!

Our food skills workshop series is already in full swing for 2019. With support this year from the Community Healthy Living Fund, the Community Foundation of NL, and the Western Regional Wellness Coalition, we are excited to bring you a great range of food-skills topics this year.



Sheri Dicks leads a kombucha workshop in January

Our year has already started off well with four well-attended workshops that happened between January and March. Our first kombucha workshop was held in late January, led by fermenting enthusiast Sheri Dicks, owner and operator of Marble Inn & Suites in Steady Brook. That first workshop was completely full and so we decided to hold a second one the week after. Sheri gave a great overview of the basics of making kombucha in your own kitchen, and all participants went home with a jar full of sweetened tea and a kombucha SCOBY (symbiotic culture of bacteria and yeast) to start their own batch. Since then, we've had countless reports back from people with kombucha success stories.

In late February, we hosted a sprouting and microgreens workshop with master sprouter, Kris Watton. Twenty-five attendees filled the Sobey's Community Room to listen to Kris demonstrate how easy and affordable it is to grow nutrient-dense, delicious sprouts and greens at home year-round. Again, we sent participants home with all the materials to grow their own microgreens, and within a week, many were already eating the fruit of their labour. Due to popular demand, a second equally successful workshop of this type was held in early March.

It is wonderful to see so much interest in food skills in western Newfoundland! We're also continuing the learning and sharing beyond the workshops with a new Facebook group called Western NL Food Skills. The group now has about one hundred members and it is open to anyone who is interested in sharing knowledge, asking questions, posting photos of their own projects, and connecting with others.

We have many more workshops in the works for the rest of 2019, including a beeswax wrap-making workshop, organic gardening techniques, composting, sauerkraut, wild edibles and many more. Details will be posted on the WEC website and through the monthly updates. We are always open to suggestions for new topics so let us know if any ideas come to mind!

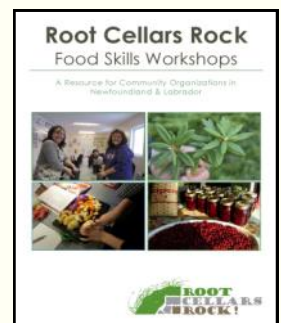
Katie Temple

Photo courtesy K. Temple

## The Food Skills Workshop Kit!

The workshop kit is a free resource created by [Food First NL](http://www.foodfirstnl.ca) designed to support community groups across the province with hosting hands-on workshops building local food skills and preserving traditional food knowledge. Topics include: container gardening; composting; edible wild plants; seed saving; preparing local vegetables; using culinary herbs; canning; and root cellars. Download the workshops for free and start using them in your community today:

<http://www.foodfirstnl.ca/our-resources/food-skills-workshops>



## Garden Plots Available!

The Blow Me Down Community Garden in Corner Brook is now accepting new gardeners! If you would like to try your hand at gardening this year, then our community garden might be the spot for you. Growing food in a community garden plot offers an excellent opportunity to learn about growing your own food, to get family and friends involved, and to meet other gardeners!

Plots are 4' x 16' and we provide the tools and the advice. Plot rental for the season costs \$30, which includes membership in the Western Environment Centre. We also organize multiple gardening workshops throughout the year, which can provide plenty of useful information for beginner and advanced gardeners alike.

As well as caring for their own plots, all community gardeners contribute to the running of the garden as a whole. We organize garden work parties where everyone chips in to help out with weeding, tidying, tool cleaning and so on. If you would like more information about our community garden, please email us at [info@wecnl.ca](mailto:info@wecnl.ca)

Katie Temple



Photos courtesy K. Temple, George Hutchings

## The St. Lawrence Coalition

*From their mission statement:* The St. Lawrence Coalition was created to persuade government bodies to issue a moratorium on oil and gas exploration and exploitation in the Gulf of St. Lawrence as soon as possible. The St. Lawrence Coalition aims at bringing the gulf communities together, which share the same concerns and appreciate the natural resources of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Our coalition is inter-provincial as five provinces are involved: Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Québec, and Newfoundland and Labrador.

website: <http://www.coalitionsaintlaurent.ca/en/coalition>

Contact Sylvain Archambault e-mail: [s.arch@me.com](mailto:s.arch@me.com) ; phone: (514) 903-3524 cell (581) 995-4350



## Tips for Reducing Food Waste

It may seem surprising, but food waste has something in common with cigarette-smoking. I work in health care and I often stress to my patients the importance of quitting smoking. We often discuss the health benefits of quitting, but also focus on the economic benefits, too. For example, a pack-a-day smoker can easily spend over \$4,000 per year on cigarettes.

I like to frame food waste in a similar way. Throwing out food represents a major stress on the health of the planet. Carbon emissions from annual food waste in North America generate an estimated 193 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per year, or the equivalent of 41 million cars driving continuously for a full year. Moreover, food waste in landfill contributes to climate change because it releases methane gas, a greenhouse gas that is twenty-one times more potent than carbon dioxide! Also, it is estimated that the average Canadian household could save \$1,100 per year by eliminating unnecessary food waste. Turns out that what's good for the planet is also good for your wallet!

So, what can you do?

1. **Plan your meals.** A little planning goes a long way. By planning your meals and preparing a grocery list before you go to the grocery store, you can ensure that you are not buying excess food that you will not be able to consume before it goes bad.
2. **Serve smaller portions.** By simply putting smaller portions on our plates, we can reduce the amount of food that is wasted at the end of the meal. Using smaller plates can help us keep portion sizes in check.
3. **Don't shun frozen fruits and vegetables.** In comparison to their fresh equivalents, frozen produce can be stored for much longer periods of time in your home. Also, frozen items are less likely to spoil along the transport chain, where a lot of food waste occurs. Since most frozen produce is flash frozen shortly after it is picked, the nutritional value is often equivalent or better to fresh.



4. **Avoid the bottom drawers of death.** You know the ones, those lower drawers in your fridge that fresh food enters, is forgotten, and then rediscovered weeks or months later. With our busy lives, once food is out of sight, it can become out of mind. Try to keep fresh produce, meat, and dairy in visible areas in the fridge. Try keeping less vulnerable food items in these lower drawers.
5. **Take an inventory of your fridge regularly.** Ensure that foods that could spoil soon are moved to the front of the fridge and eaten. Follow the general rule, first in, first out.
6. **Leftovers.** Try bringing your leftover supper for lunch the next day. If you don't feel like eating the same thing, put the leftovers in a reusable container in the freezer so that you have a quick meal in the future.

7. **Composting.** Inevitably, even the most diligent consumer will create some unavoidable food waste, such as vegetable peels, coffee grinds, etc. Having a compost pile or bin in the backyard or participating in a community compost program are great ways to keep your organic waste out of the landfill.

8. **Grow a garden.** Having a backyard garden or joining a community garden are fantastic methods to cut down on waste (food that you grow yourself will be fresher and thus last longer compared to what is generally available at the grocery store). Alternatively, supporting local farmers is another way to cut down on the kind of food waste that occurs from shipping fresh goods over large distances.

Carl Durand

## The Nitty-Gritty about Recycling Effectively

Curbside recycling has seen some significant improvements in the Corner Brook region over the last few years going from paper only, to now encompassing a wide variety of items including paper, plastic, and metal. One often-overlooked fact about our single-stream recycling is that according to Western Regional Waste Management (WRWM), about 20-25% of items picked up in blue bags are either non-recyclable or contaminated recyclable items that end up in the land fill. That's quite a lot! So we spoke with WRWM to find out what the average person can do to improve the recycling process.



***What are the most common recycling mistakes that people make that result in recyclables being thrown out?***

The most common mistakes would be contamination, that is food not rinsed out of containers, glass items that currently are not part of our program and used to store kitty litter.

***How clean do food containers need to be in order to be properly recycled? (I'm thinking specifically about the food residue left over in the jar of peanut butter or tin can, a greasy pizza box or aluminum foil, etc.)***

All food waste should be completely rinsed out of the jars and tins. No solid particles whatsoever. With regards to pizza boxes or aluminium foil, if there is ANY food or grease spots remaining on the material it should go in a clear garbage bag.

***What is the best way to recycle items with several different types of recyclable materials? (For example, something like a frozen concentrated juice container that contains both metal and cardboard components).***

Separate the materials before disposing of them (i.e. recyclable parts in blue bag, non-recyclable parts in clear bag).

***With more people ordering things online, what about the tape and plastic covering on cardboard boxes, does that affect recyclability?***

No, they can be recycled as normal.

***What about the labels on the tin cans?***

They can be removed for recycling or left on the tin, either way is acceptable.

***What size of paper is getting too small to be properly recycled?***

The larger the paper, the better. Very small pieces or shredded paper makes it difficult for the sorters to pick it off the line.

***What about lids from plastic jars and bottles? Should they be left on, taken off, and can they even be recycled?***

Water bottle lids cannot be recycled because of their small size; but lids from containers should be separated from the containers and placed in the recycling bag.

***Is there any general rule to follow for the plastic types/"number" that can be recycled?***

With our current program any items with a 1, 2 and 5 in the recycling symbol can be recycled.

*(continued on the next page)*



## The Nitty-Gritty about Recycling Effectively *(continued from the previous page)*

### *What about take-out coffee cups and lids?*

They are NOT recyclable.

### *Glass is currently not accepted, but what about the metal lids?*

They can be recycled if they are rinsed off.

### *Is any Styrofoam accepted?*

Not at this time.

### *If you could give one piece of recycling advice, what would it be?*

Work towards no-contaminates in the blue bag, and think twice about putting donation items in a blue bag thinking they will be reused, for example used clothing, household items, shoes, etc. These items cannot be reused in this system. They will be disposed of if put in the blue bag.

Thanks very much to the staff at WRWM for taking the time to answer our questions! For more information about recycling, please visit their website at <http://www.wrwm.ca> or call them at (709) 632-2922 or toll-free at 1-844-437-2922.

Carl Durand

## Helping WEC as You Recycle

Here is a creative way to donate to WEC financially. WEC has an account at Scotia Recycling on 55 Maple Valley Rd (709-634-2025). When dropping off your recyclables, donate by telling the people at the desk that you wish to give the proceeds to the Western Environment Centre. Visit the Scotia Recycling website:



<http://scotiarecyclinggroup.com/services-by-location>. For information on recycling on Corner Brook, visit <http://www.cornerbrook.com/default.asp?mn=1.24.100> or phone their recycling line at (709) 637-1630.

## Green Drinks at the Bootleg Brew Co.!

Green Drinks is a partnership between WEC, Grenfell Campus (MUN), and the Bootleg Brew Co. in Corner Brook, a partnership that involves hosting a lively and informal discussion on an environmental topic. The environmental subject matter is conceived in a broad sense and can include not only discussions and input by environmental scientists but also academics who work in environmental literature, environmental history, and so on. The talks are held on a Wednesday night about once a month at the Bootleg Brew Co.

The event involves two brief presentations by a Grenfell faculty member and a community presenter (e.g., government scientists, or people from various local and provincial organizations). Both are then followed by a question period and lively discussion. The Series started in November and was really successful! It will recommence again in the fall. Thanks are extended to the Scholarship in the Arts Fund (MUN) for providing generous funding for the Series.



*"How Can NL Achieve a Sustainable Food System?"*  
(Dr. Ivan Emke, retired Grenfell professor of sociology and rural development; Kim Thistle co-owner of The Greenhouse & Garden Store)

Photo courtesy V. Hutchings



## The Value of Solar Energy for Your Home

*Renewable Energy NL (RENL) is a solar energy installation company that is devoted to providing their customers with the resources and tools needed to make the best decision regarding a solar energy system for a home, cottage, or business. The company has an impressive array of certifications, training, and experience. The following dialogue is an interview with Mr. Howard Pack, owner and president of the company. The focus of the interview is primarily on the benefits of installing solar power for homeowners.*

**What kind of measurable impact could solar energy have on averting climate change?**

First of all, one can think of the electricity grid as a pond that people draw on for water, a pond that is used by everyone. If a homeowner produces power through solar energy, the excess amount can be fed back into the grid and thus contribute to the collective "pond."

Second, solar energy has far less of an impact and footprint than other forms of clean energy, particularly compared to large hydroelectric projects that require the diversion of rivers and the flooding of plains. We all have seen photos of the devastation of hydroelectric developments around the world and their impact on nearby communities. The impact of solar power is far lighter.



RENL owner and president Howard Pack with a new shipment of solar panels



Third, solar energy can play a major part in helping Canada meet its commitment to the 2016 Paris Agreement on fighting climate change. In fact, according to the World Economic Forum, clean energy production worldwide has expanded significantly since 2010, while fossil fuel production is dropping. In terms of clean energy, solar power is leading the charge, showing the greatest growth in electricity-producing capacity compared to all other forms of renewable energy. This development is being stimulated by advances in solar technology as well as reductions arising from competition and economies of scale. The ability of solar power and other forms of renewable energy to provide our future energy needs will only increase.

Apart from the advantages of saving money, homeowners who invest in a solar energy system can obtain a profound measure of satisfaction knowing that

they are doing their part to switch our economy to a clean-energy future, thus helping to avert the effects of climate change. These homeowners are setting an example of others to follow.

**Do you think that it's possible that one day a house that had been heated conventionally with electricity could be heated entirely with the electricity generated by solar power?**

Yes, absolutely, and this is particularly true for new home construction that is built with a net-zero goal in mind (meaning a house that is constructed with such good insulation that there is very little heat loss). Still, as the technology develops, it would take even less time for the initial installation costs of solar energy to be offset by the savings gained from such a system. For example, a large solar energy system that costs \$30,000 could bring a large home near net zero, and the savings gained would cover the costs of the system in 6-10 years. You could opt for smaller systems to start with, of course.

*(continued on the next page)*

## The Value of Solar Energy for Your Home *(continued from the previous page)*

You also have to remember that the electricity rates are going up in the next few years in the province (although it is not quite clear by how much given that there is now discussion of potential plans to offset at least some of the increase). In any case, the increase in the cost per watt for consumers will be noticeable and even may be substantial. That will make a solar energy system even more attractive to homeowners.

One final point that can be made is that installing a solar energy system increases the value of your property and the increase in that gain in value generally is double the cost of the system and its installation.

### *How durable are solar panels? How long do they last?*

You can rest assured that it would be very difficult to shatter our solar panels; perhaps they will crack if you drive a car over them. The panels have been known to withstand hurricane winds in Florida and you do not have to worry if your house is located near a ballfield. The panels generally have a twenty-five-year lifespan, although that could depend on a number of different factors.

### *What would be better, a roof-mounted system or a ground-mounted system?*

The advantage of a ground-mounted system is that you can adjust the angle to maximize the panels' efficiency, because the angle at which solar rays hit the earth will change from season to season. Also, you will be able to remove snow more easily from the panels in winter, although the snow tends to slide off the panels in any case, because of their smooth surface. Whatever system you choose, make sure that it faces south for maximum efficiency.

### *Has there been a great deal of interest in solar energy among NL residents?*

Renewable NL has done a lot of work with cabin owners who wish to take their cabins off the grid by using solar energy. This is very advantageous for them because they use their cabins mostly in the summer, when solar power is very strong.



A roof-mounted solar panel system

*Often the common perception is that solar power would not work in Newfoundland and Labrador because we receive far less sunlight than, say, Saskatchewan? How would you respond to such a claim?*

Well, think of Berlin, a city in northern Europe that is at the forefront of developing and deploying clean energy, which includes solar energy. They receive less sunshine per annum than St. John's. If Berlin can benefit from solar energy, then so can we. Also, even though the perception is that the performance of the solar panels in winter is minimal, solar panels work well in cold winter temperatures.

*(continued on the next page)*

## The Value of Solar Energy for Your Home *(continued from the previous page)*

*Let's talk about net-metering, a system whereby clean energy-producing households can sell energy back to the grid and receive credits on their electricity bills. Net-metering was implemented in Newfoundland in 2017. Why would a homeowner want to sell energy back to the grid?*

The extent of solar power fluctuates seasonally. Unless a solar power system has an extensive battery system for storing energy acquired through solar energy, the excess electricity has to be sold back to the grid. The provincial government will give you credits for the clean energy that you sell to them, but not to the extent that it would generate a net profit beyond your energy needs.



A ground-mounted solar panel system

*What could the NL government do to help promote solar energy?*

The provincial government could adopt a rebate program such as the one used in Nova Scotia. My company and others like it are advocating for this development. Of course, it is not easy for our province to implement such programs given that we have a smaller relative population compared to other provinces. There are provincial incentive programs for solar energy available for companies and municipalities. The provincial government also could do more to promote solar energy and educate the population on the advantages of solar power, perhaps a program to complement the work being done by NL Power on home-retrofitting. Interest in solar panel is gaining momentum across Canada, even in industrial and agricultural applications.

*With the global interest in solar energy growing, the technology seems to be advancing quickly as well. Currently, lower-grade solar panels have an efficiency rate of 15%, meaning that 15% of all the solar energy hitting the panel can be turned into electricity. Can that percentage be increased?*

RENL sells high-efficiency panels that offer a 19% efficiency rate. There are new panels being developed that are bi-facial, meaning that solar energy can be produced on both sides of the panel. That could dramatically increase the efficiency rate for the panel.

*Do you have any advice for homeowners who are thinking of buying a solar power system?*

Yes, make sure that you go with a company that is certified to do such work. Installation requires electrical work, which necessitates hiring certified electricians. Second, do a good amount of research on the panels that you would like to buy; generally, this is not a purchase you want to make through Amazon.

**For more information on the company and to discuss solar energy possibilities, visit their website at [www.renl.ca](http://www.renl.ca)**

Edwin Bezzina

Photos courtesy H. Pack

## Climate Watch NL: Funding Available to Act on Climate Change

*Climate Watch NL is a network of concerned citizens that advocates for a minimal carbon economy for Newfoundland and Labrador by 2050. Here, the group offers commentary on the recent plan developed by the provincial government for fighting climate change and notes an exciting new funding opportunity for municipalities and businesses.*

The provincial government recently released its report, *The Way Forward on Climate Change*, a collaborative five-year plan for fighting climate change, mitigating its effects, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.



**CLIMATE WATCH NL**

While ClimateWatch NL is working on a detailed response to the report in the near future, it is already immediately apparent that the plan needs to be more specific in what it sets out to do. The plan describes general goals for adaptation and health-related measures, green-economy growth, and climate change mitigation. But what is needed now are concrete actions. General goals with no specific means of evaluation or timelines for completion are unlikely to generate effective results. We therefore recommend each action item in the plan be used to develop at least one related goal that can be evaluated and/or measured over time, following the Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Based (S.M.A.R.T.) objective framework.



The new 2019 climate plan sets an ambitious target for GHG emissions reduction in the province by 2030, by 35-45% below the 1990 GHG emissions level. However, there is little breakdown provided in the report in terms of actual specific numbers indicating where and how GHG reductions will be achieved. In order to achieve ambitious GHG reductions, clearly defined targets for each sector need to be formulated in terms of numbers and percentages. Action items and timelines need to be in place to demonstrate how to achieve those reductions and adaptations. But to be fair, we cannot expect the civil servants alone to do all the work on climate change. We all must do our part.

In order to make some actions financially easier the province and the federal government have several funding opportunities available. ClimateWatch NL is optimistic that electric vehicles are a particularly good fit for the areas of the province that have higher population densities. Electric vehicle charging stations are now being subsidized by the federal government. Businesses, municipalities, and other organizations are all eligible to apply. You can find the details of this program and others on the province's Turn the Tide website. ClimateWatch NL is strongly encouraging municipalities and businesses that lie on the main travel routes in the province to apply in order to establish a core infrastructure of fast charging stations in the province. The deadline is May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

Read the full preliminary response to the *The Way Forward on Climate Change* here.

[https://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/exec/occ/publications/The\\_Way\\_Forward\\_Climate\\_Change.pdf](https://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/exec/occ/publications/The_Way_Forward_Climate_Change.pdf)

Funding opportunities (Turn back the Tide website): <https://www.turnbackthetide.ca/>

Simon Jansen

## Review: Energy Gang Podcast

The Energy Gang is one of many podcasts in the ever-expanding platform of podcasts devoted to environmental topics. This particular podcast features Katherine Hamilton, an expert in cleantech public policy and development; Jigar Shah, a solar pioneer and the president of a cleantech venture capital company; and Stephen Lacey, who moderates the podcast.

The Energy Gang releases a one-hour podcast every week. Their mantra is that they are “a weekly digest on energy, cleantech and the environment.” Most episodes cover two or three topics, with each of the three contributors providing facts, opinions and anecdotes, thus giving the podcast the feel of a roundtable discussion. Lacey does a good job of moderating and keeping his co-hosts on topic.

Recurring topics tend to focus on three main areas. The first involves new cleantech technology, including traditional topics such as electric vehicles, battery storage and wind, solar, and geothermal power, as well as less traditional topics affecting energy such as global shipping. The second topic area concerns public policies that affect energy. They cover a wide variety of subjects such as the continued decline of coal in the U.S. despite public policy changes that favor the industry and break down environmental proposals such as the “Green New Deal.” The third area the podcast covers are general environmental topics, most commonly focusing on climate change.

Having been listening to the podcasts for two years, I should point out that this podcast is not necessarily for everyone. If you are interested in cleantech and the environment, but want the Coles notes on the subject, you probably will find this podcast too detailed. The Energy Gang tackles each topic with such depth that admittedly it is sometimes easy to lose sight of the larger issue in play. However, this podcast will reward you for listening to more episodes, as you come to appreciate the terminology and thus gain a better understanding of the topics at hand.

*(continued on the next page)*



Hosts of Energy Gang: Jigar Shah, Katherine Hamilton, and Stephen Lacey

## Review: Energy Gang Podcast *(continued from the previous page)*

My main criticism of the podcast is that it is very focused on the United States. The majority of the podcast's discussions regarding policy and cleantech deployment is U.S.-centric. However, from time to time the podcasters do pull back the lens and look at other countries, including Canada. For example, the podcast has delved into Québec's cap-and-trade system as well as Canada's national carbon tax and Alberta and Ontario's opposition to it. Also, an entire episode was devoted to the history of hydropower in Québec in which the podcast contrasted the positive effects that hydro has had on reducing carbon emissions against the racism and other negative effects inflicted by these megaprojects on indigenous communities.



All and all, if you are looking to be deeply informed and to stay on top of what is happening in the world of clean energy and the environment, this podcast is well worth watching and adding to your podcast feed.

Carl Durand

## CLIMATE CHANGE. HABITAT PROTECTION.

Your kind of challenge.

Have you always been conscious of your carbon footprint or concerned about the way industry is impacting the environment around us? Explore and expand your career opportunities with a masters of environmental policy. Find yourself in a class of your own at Grenfell Campus. [findyourcorner.ca](http://findyourcorner.ca)

GRENFELL  
CAMPUS

MEMORIAL  
UNIVERSITY

## The E-Bike Share: It's been a great ride, but it's time to say goodbye

After much deliberation, the Western Environment Centre has decided to cease operations of the Corner Brook Electric BikeShare Program. It's been a great four seasons of running this sustainable transportation project; we have enormously enjoyed introducing the unique benefits of the electric bike to locals and visitors alike. However, it is now time for us to move on to other projects. We will be selling all assets of the e-bike program and putting the profits into new initiatives.

We'd like to thank our initial sponsors and partners—Environment Canada, City of Corner Brook, and Grenfell Campus (MUN)—for helping get the project started. A huge special thank you goes to Cycle Solutions (and particularly its owner, Pete Ollerhead) who has been our main partner from the very beginning. They have contributed greatly to the project and were instrumental in making this project happen over the past few years. We could not have done it without them! Another big thank you to The Galliot House (Carol & Steve Galliot) in Woody Point and OutEast Adventures (Colin Shears) in Rocky Harbour who helped us expand into Gros Morne National Park for the last two years. It was fun working with you!



We are currently selling our rental fleet to the public. E-Bikes are for sale for \$700 each, which includes helmet, lock, pannier, battery, and charger. Discounts are available if you're interested in more than one bike, and we're also interested in finding a local business who may want to purchase the program as whole, including the entire fleet of nine e-bikes, as well as all signage and storage, for a competitively discounted price. Please contact [info@wecni.ca](mailto:info@wecni.ca) with any purchasing queries or requests.

Mikaela Wilson



Photos courtesy M. Wilson, E. Bezzina



Western  
Environment  
Centre  
wecnl.ca

## Annual Membership Form

Type of Membership: New  Renewal  Lapsed

Annual membership fee: \$10.00

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone number (with area code): (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to be added to our e-mail list? Yes  No

What environmental issues interest you the most?

Wildlife  Energy  Urban Planning

Food  Climate Change  Transportation

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you be willing to help out with WEC events? \_\_\_\_\_

Would you be interested in sitting on any of the following WEC committees or working groups:

BikeShare  Community Compost  Market

Newsletter  Community Garden

Are you interested in becoming a Board Member? Yes  No

How did you hear about WEC? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any additional information for WEC?  
\_\_\_\_\_

To learn more about WEC, visit [www.wecnl.ca](http://www.wecnl.ca) or join us on Facebook or Twitter.

### Benefits of Membership

- Receive updates on WEC events and activities
- Receive our newsletter
- Free entry to workshops
- Become part of a growing organization that is committed to protecting the environment in Western Newfoundland and elsewhere

### Office Use Only

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin (e.g. walk-in): \_\_\_\_\_

### Payment method:

Cash  Cheque

Memberships are valid for 1 year (Jan – Dec).

### Please return form & payment to:

The Western Environment Centre,  
50 Main Street (2<sup>nd</sup> floor)

Corner Brook, NL, A2H 1C4

E: [info@wecnl.ca](mailto:info@wecnl.ca)

T: (709) 640-1734

WEC will protect your private information. We never share or sell our membership lists.