

Summary of Climate-Related Activities of COG Committees Supporting CEEPC- November 2009

Energy Advisory Committee (George Nichols | gnichols@mwkog.org)

On October 15th, the EAC and IGBG held a joint meeting. Topics covered included: Principles for Developing Green Building Policies and Programs in the Metro Washington Area; and Energy and Green Building Initiatives as Recommended Climate Change Strategies.

- EPA is working on a national effort to improve buildings and reduce environmental impacts. Local governments across the county need help to get programs going. The DC area has shown leadership in green building policy development. EPA and the USGBC would like some assistance developing a format for green building policies that could be used by jurisdictions.
- EPA suggested that the core elements of effective municipal green building policy include: Policy Development, Implementation Design, and Implementation.
- IGBG suggested that EPA synthesize data and provide up-to-date information on cost, benefits, programs, etc. that governments could use to promote policy development and green building adoptions.
- IGBG and EAC review the Climate, Energy and Environment Policy Committee draft matrix to develop the Climate Action Work plan. Staff solicited ideas and suggestions, with particular focus on performance measures, completion dates and the schedule.
- The IGBG and EAC recommended that certification of green power products for regional standardization be added to the matrix. This should be added as a strategy.
- Overall, there was general consensus that the work plan should reflect realistic assumptions regarding existing staff resources.
- Future agenda topics may include an assessment of the potential for geoexchange technologies to reduce energy demand for space cooling/heating in buildings. A solar 101 is also being scheduled.
- The next joint meeting of the IGBG and EAC meeting is scheduled on December 17th.

Intergovernmental Green Building Group (IGBG) (George Nichols | gnichols@mwkog.org)

The IGBG met on November 13, 2009. The Group continued its discussion on the green building recommendations as part of the Climate Change work program. The Workplan is designed to get the region back to 2005 greenhouse gas emission levels. Among the discussion points and concerns noted were (also see EAC above):

- The issue of a protocol for land use and greenhouse gas emissions was discussed. This could become part of the comprehensive planning process.
- Pepco and BG&E got grants to do smart grid technology. The Work plan says 30% of jurisdictions will partner with utilities to track smart grid implementation by 4th Quarter 2010.
- Members remain concerned about tracking retrofits in homes.
- Geothermal isn't specifically mentioned in the Work plan, but could be included in energy efficiency retrofits.
- Green roofs are not included in the work plan. Green roofs should be a component of the program.
- IGBG is committed to recommending a residential green building standard per the 2006 Green Building Report. COG staff will work with the existing draft report and recommend a timeline for completion at the next IGBG meeting.

Workshop on Local Government Operations Protocols for Greenhouse Gases (Jeff King | jking@mwkog.org)

- A workshop was held on November 9 on local government operations protocols for greenhouse gases.
- Purpose of workshop: Local governments in the metropolitan Washington region are interested in understanding how to account for greenhouse gas emissions associated with government operations and community-wide activities. They are currently developing greenhouse gas inventories and are interested in understanding the applicability and relevance of available reporting protocols.
- Overview of workshop: The workshop featured presentations from four organizations that have developed greenhouse gas reporting protocols: World Resources Institute (WRI), The Climate Registry, International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), and EPA State and Local Government Division. Forty people attended the workshop. Topics discussed were standards for reporting greenhouse gases, the need for completeness, transparency and consistency in reporting, reporting indicators, and reporting tools. Also the panel discussed EPA's GHG Reporting Rule and anticipated future enhancements to reporting programs.

MWAQC Technical Advisory Committee (Jeff King | jking@mwkog.org)

- The MWAQC TAC met on October 13. Members were provided a report on EPA's recent regulation mandating reporting of greenhouse gases for covered sources. The committee also heard a report on the CEEPC 2009-2012 climate action workplan.
- The next meeting is scheduled for December 1.

Recycling Committee (John Snarr | jsnarr@mwkog.org)

- Presented Plastic Bag Report to the COG Board on October 14; Board adopted resolution supporting promotion of plastic bag reduction and reuse and the exploration of state legislation on bags.
- Staff presented at the Alice Ferguson Foundation Trash Summit on October 28 on both the Plastic Bag Report and the recommendations of a COG-hosted group on regional composting issues.
- Several jurisdictions distributed prizes provided by COG for America Recycles Day (November 15) and hosted their own local events to promote the day.

NationalCapitalFarms.org (Brian Lecouteur | blecouteur@mwkog.org)

- The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is launching NationalCapitalFarms.org, a new Web site aimed at promoting and protecting local agriculture in the metropolitan Washington region. It provides up-to-date information on locally grown food, farmers markets, wineries and much more. The site is hosted by COG on behalf of the Regional Agricultural Workgroup partners, which includes local governments, farmers, farmers markets, and other nongovernmental organizations. The new site is part of the partnership's mission to promote agriculture in the metropolitan Washington region. The site features an interactive regional map that helps browsers view, select and connect to agricultural producers and programs in their neighborhood. It serves as a central hub of information for marketing regional farm products. Additionally, the site links potential consumers with producers and vendors of farm products and informs consumers about the many benefits of buying locally grown products, including reduced transportation costs, energy consumption, and greenhouse gas emissions. Features of the site include: Local government agricultural information; a calendar of events at farmers markets; an agricultural forum and classifieds for fruits and vegetables in season; a seasonal food calendar; locations of pick-your-own farms; restaurants featuring local agricultural products; links to affiliate Web sites; regional agricultural statistics; and educational programs.

Clean Air Partners (Jen Desimone | jdesimone@mwkog.org)

- The *Clean Air Pledge* was launched in May 2009 and will continue through Earth Day 2010. Our goal is to reduce 13 million pounds of greenhouse gas emission through voluntary residential energy conservation efforts. To date, we have received pledges from 45 individuals who have committed to reductions of 754,885 pounds of greenhouse gases – this represents 6% of our goal. To take the pledge, go to the Clean Air Partners web site (www.cleanairpartners.net).
- In an effort to expand our public outreach and involvement, Clean Air Partners launched pages on two social media sites; [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/cleanairpartners) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/cleanairpartners).
- The next meeting is scheduled for January 21, 2010.

Air Quality Public Advisory Committee (AQPAC) (Joan Rohlfs | jrohlfs@mwkog.org)

- AQPAC met on November 16, 2009.
- Reviewed the Greater Washington 2050 Report and discussed. General consensus that LEED Standard should not be the only green building standard; builders should be encouraged to exceed LEED standard. Re education: there's a need for vocational and technical training, community colleges.
- Discussed CEEPC draft Work Plan for 2012. Encourage IGBG to review residential green standards. Developers for commercial buildings should be encouraged to build to at least a silver standard. Many of the recommendations will be soon be required either by federal legislation or federal regulation. Encouraged uniform reporting, standard metric for reporting GHG reductions
- Local Government Operations Protocol Workshop (11/9/09). Propose to have local members share GHG inventories and discuss reporting issues (College Park, Fairfax County, examples)

Street Lights Working Group (George Nichols | gnichols@mwkog.org)

- Several pilot programs are being implemented in the region to test new street light technologies.
- A street lights vendors forum was held on October 20. See: www.mwkog.org/environment/streetlights

Alternative Fuels/Clean Cities Partnerships (Leah Boggs | lboggs@mwkog.org)

- The most recent meeting was held on November 17. The Alternative Fuels Clean Cities Partnership is developing a Green Fleets Working Group to develop a regional policy recommendation. The working group will consist of local government fleet members of the Alternative Fuels Partnership.

Energy Outreach Coordination (Joan Rohlfs | jrohlfs@mwkog.org)

- COG, state and local energy offices, and area utilities have agreed to continue to collaborate and share information on development of energy efficiency public outreach campaigns.
- The next coordination meeting is being scheduled for January 2010.

TPB Technical Committee (Gerald Miller | gmiller@mwkog.org)

- The committee met on November 6 and approved comments on the CEEPC 2009-2012 work plan which were provided to the CEEPC ad-hoc workgroup.

Water Resources Technical Committee (WRTC) (Tanya Spano | tspano@mwkog.org)

- Event to be rescheduled to January. COG will be hosting a workshop on "Climate Change/Sustainability: Greenhouse Gas Emissions & Inventories - Issues, Impacts & Options for Wastewater Plants." This workshop is being done in collaboration with the Water Environment Federation, the Water Environment Research Foundation and COG's wastewater utilities to address the issue of Greenhouse Gas Emissions inventory and quantification methods. The workshop will address electrical use as well as process emissions and other potential sources at wastewater plants. Objectives for this workshop are to share information about local and national activities, understand and assess the various methodologies used to quantify this sector's contributions to Greenhouse Gases, and make sure that local efforts are adequately represented and credited in reaching the COG region's reduction goals. Additional workshops related to stormwater and water quality will be considered if additional funds/grants become available.
- The next meeting is scheduled for January 11, 2010.

Others:

- Chesapeake Bay and Water Resources Policy Committee (Karl Berger | kberger@mwkog.org)
Next meeting November 20
- Chief Purchasing Officers Committee (Carl Kalish | ckalish@mwkog.org)
Next meeting December 10
- Tree Canopy Workgroup (Jeff King | jking@mwkog.org and Brian Lecouteur | blecouteur@mwkog.org)
Regional coordination meeting to be scheduled for 1st quarter 2010.
- Commuter Connections Subcommittee (Nick Ramfos | nramfos@mwkog.org)
Next meeting, March 2010
- National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) (Ron Kirby | rkirby@mwkog.org)
Next meeting November 18.