



Environmental Justice Task Force Newsletter November 2018

UU Seventh Principle: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. Environmental Justice (EJ): Addressing disproportionate and adverse human health or environmental effects in communities of low-income residents or persons of color.

UU CONGREGATIONS' ENVIRONMENTAL EVENTS

UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF RIDGEWOOD Environmental Justice Committee:

- Signed on in support of the Food and Water Watch opposition to federal bill S.3303, which attempts to gut the Clean Water act;
- Held a Vegetarian Pot Luck dinner to encourage the health and environmental benefits of vegetarianism, and moving away from industrial raising of beef/pork/chicken; and
- On December 7, will host the showing of "Revenge of the Electric Car" and a discussion lead by Paul Rosengren, one of their congregants who is an expert in the field. It is part of their drive to encourage lifestyle changes that help shifting away from fossil fuel usage.



Friday, December 7, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

MORRISTOWN UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP Green Earth Ministry (GEM):

- Tire Check Day - The tires on 31 cars leaving the Morristown Unitarian Fellowship parking lot on Tire Check Day, Sunday, November 4, were a lot greener than when they arrived. They had just been inflated to the right pressure for winter driving by 19 members of the Green Earth Ministry (GEM), the Youth Group,





and their advisors. The environment was greener by the avoidance of up to 3200 lbs. of carbon dioxide emissions and car owner's wallets will stay greener by saving up to \$570 for gas over the next year. Other benefits are longer tire life, safer handling, and, at least for now, not having to deal with those quarter-guzzling air pressure machines at gas stations. TEAM TIRE brought the tires to slightly above the recommended pressure to account for future colder weather. The tire pressures before and after adjusting were also provided. With the onset of winter, the colder weather reduces tire pressure 1 psi for each 120 F drop in temperature. Underinflation by 5 psi reduces gas mileage by 2%. Under- and overinflated tires wear faster and are hazardous.

- Green Earth Ministry (GEM) donated \$600 to Facilities Committee to upgrade and modernize lighting at the Fellowship. GEM was pleased to contribute to the fine work of the Facilities Committee, headed by Tim Davis, for upgrading the lighting on the first and second floors of the Fellowship. The money was donated by the Fellowship's GEM fund, and The Garden State Earth Institute, Inc., headed by Claire Mayer. LED bulbs will be bought for all lighting fixtures that can accept them. This will be less expensive in the long run in terms of electricity use, and will lessen the building's carbon dioxide impact.

EJTF ACTIVITIES

UPDATE ON OUR KEY ISSUES FOR 2018:

1) Select and support a Renewable Energy Portfolio standard [Done!]

- **EJTF position paper:** <https://uufaihtaction.org/wpcontent/uploads/2018/03/PositionOn100by2035.pdf>.
- **Discussion of the bill Gov. Murphy signed into law (Bill 3723):** <http://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/05/23/murphy-signing-radically-alters-nj-s-energy-policies-protects-nuclear/>. [Not totally what we'd supported, but it is definitely a step in the right direction.]

[**Note:** EJTF had made comments on the PSEG nuclear plant subsidies in a proposed bill (that passed 5/23/2018), and also signed on to a letter to Gov. Murphy, both of which requested a guarantee of the full inclusion of the Ratepayer Advocate in the process to review confidential documentation of financial need. The process that was just determined by the Board of Public Utilities does include the **New Jersey Division of the Rate Counsel** (previously called the **New Jersey Division of the Ratepayer Advocate**) in the decision process, and states that it will be given access to confidential financial data about the economic viability of the plants:

<https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/11/19/bpu-comes-up-with-game-plan-for-deciding-if-nuclear-plants-qualify-for-subsidies/>]

2) Address the problem of lead in NJ water

- **EJTF position paper:** <https://uufaihtaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Position-Paper-Lead-in-Drinking-Water.pages.pdf>

EJTF ACTIVITIES (continued)

3) Promote low-income Community Solar in NJ [Ongoing]

- **EJTF participated in Stakeholder meetings to create NJ's new program, reviewed and commented on the proposed rule that was issued, and testified at the hearing for the draft rule (see below).**

Meetings

- EJTF's Nancy Griffeth testified at the hearing on the draft rule for the Community Solar Pilot, in collaboration with Rev. Ronald Tuff of GreenFaith, and **both EJTF Chairperson Nancy Griffeth and GreenFaith's Rev. Ronald Tuff were quoted in NJ Spotlight**, as follows:

“If you are already struggling to pay your bills, you are not going to pay more just to save the world,” said Nancy Griffeth of UU Faith Action NJ at a hearing on a new rule proposal to develop community solar programs in New Brunswick.

Those communities also ought to benefit from jobs created by those investments, others said. “We want our communities to benefit not only price-wise, but job wise,” said Rev. Ronald Tuff, representing GreenFaith.

Here's the article: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/11/08/the-devil-is-in-the-details-of-community-solar-plan/>.



- Three members of EJTF attended a strategy meeting for getting Governor Murphy to put a moratorium on building more fossil fuel infrastructure in NJ, under the premise that Murphy has the legal authority under the Global Warming Response Act of 2007, and also under the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts.
- UU FaithAction NJ also signed off on a joint letter to Governor Murphy, stating “it is high time to stop the dirty and dangerous expansion of oil and gas pipelines and other unnecessary fossil fuel developments in New Jersey. New Jersey needs a moratorium on new fossil fuel development.”

YOU CAN ALSO SIGN A PETITION at <http://bit.ly/2JPbXoK> and/or **CALL Governor Murphy** at 877-814-5667 and ask him to enact a moratorium on all new fossil fuel expansions in New Jersey or **ATTEND THE CAMPAIGN LAUNCH DECEMBER 5, 2018, 12:30 p.m. in Trenton:** <https://www.facebook.com/events/278062159579793/>

LINKS RELATED TO EJTF ISSUES

CLEAN VEHICLES

- EPA Pledges to Clamp Down on Pollution from Heavy Trucks:
<https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/11/14/epa-pledges-to-clamp-down-on-pollution-from-heavy-trucks/>
- Port Authority of NY/NJ first US transit agency to uphold goals of Paris climate accord:
<https://www.smartcitiesdive.com/news/port-authority-new-york-new-jersey-transit-agency-paris-agreement/541154/>

FOSSIL FUEL INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES

- List of proposed new fossil fuel infrastructure in NJ: <https://www.climatefastnj.com/the-problem>
- NJ protestors fasting over climate change:
<https://www.nj.com/news/index.ssf/2018/11/fasting-to-stop-fossil-fuels.html>
- Franklin Township clashes over preventing pollution or creating jobs from compressor station:
<https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/11/12/proposed-natural-gas-compressor-station-puts-enviros-union-at-odds/>
- Judge weighs other courts' pro-pipeline rulings before PennEast decision, which pipeline foes say may signal that court will allow surveying on private land:
<https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/11/05/judge-weighs-pro-pipeline-rulings-by-other-courts-before-long-awaited-penneast-decision/>



COMMUNITY SOLAR

- On October 1, 2018, the New Jersey Register published the rule proposal for the Community Solar Energy Pilot Program, available at the following link: [https://nj.gov/bpu/pdf/rules/PRN%202018-090%20Comunity%20Solar%20Pilot%20Rule%20Proposal%20\(50%20N.J.R.%202048\(b\)\).pdf](https://nj.gov/bpu/pdf/rules/PRN%202018-090%20Comunity%20Solar%20Pilot%20Rule%20Proposal%20(50%20N.J.R.%202048(b)).pdf)

- Both EJTF Chairperson Nancy Griffeth and GreenFaith's Rev. Ronald Tuff were quoted in NJ Spotlight article about the hearing on the draft rule for the Community Solar Program: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/11/08/the-devil-is-in-the-details-of-community-solar-plan/>
- Description of proposed rule for Community Solar: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/10/01/new-push-to-target-low-income-communities-for-solar-projects/>

LEAD IN DRINKING WATER (and other drinking water issues)

- **UPCOMING EVENT: NJ Spotlight Roundtable - NJ's Drinking Water: PFAS Chemical Threats and Clean-up Efforts - Wednesday, December 5, 2018 from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.** Information at: <https://mailchi.mp/njspotlight/join-us-for-a-drinking-water-roundtable-nj-spotlight?e=3f80405e0e>
- Newark's fix of one water problem likely created another, and this one's got a \$75M price tag: https://www.nj.com/essex/index.ssf/2018/11/draft_corrosion_control_study.html
- Newark's water breaches levels for dangerous contaminant, and nearby towns are drinking it, too: https://www.nj.com/essex/index.ssf/2018/11/newark_cancer-causing_chemical_water.html
- \$100 million of NJ bond approved in midterm election will upgrade water infrastructure to remove lead: https://www.nj.com/politics/index.ssf/2018/11/nj_voters_500_million_for_school_security_water_im.html
- Lead in school drinking water report from NJ Future: <https://www.njfuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/New-Jersey-Future-Analysis-of-esting-for-Lead-in-School-Drinking-Water-August-2017.pdf>

RENEWABLE RESOURCES

- NJ Spotlight Roundtable on Offshore Wind: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/11/12/new-jersey-in-the-right-place-to-reap-benefits-of-emerging-offshore-wind-sector/>
- Presentations from Roundtable: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/11/13/new-jerseys-energy-future-right-place-right-time/>
- In support of Nautilus Offshore Project: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/11/27/with-bpu-approval-nautilus-will-lay-foundation-for-new-jersey-offshore-wind-industry/>

CLIMATE CHANGE

- Grim warnings for NJ in Federal climate change report: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/11/25/federal-report-on-climate-change-has-grim-warnings-for-new-jersey/>
- Despite Sandy, building in risky flood zones continues unabated: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/11/13/despite-sandy-building-in-risky-flood-zones-continues-unabated/>

“GREEN AMENDMENT” – Sponsored in the Assembly by UU Nancy Pinkin

The “Green Amendment” bill (Senate Concurrent Resolution 134), for a proposed amendment to the NJ Constitution to grant every person the right to a clean and healthy environment, passed the NJ Senate Environment and Energy Committee by a bipartisan supermajority. It was sent to the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee 10/15/2018. EJTF supported a letter-writing campaign on its behalf over a year ago.



- Document supporting the bill and summarizing testimony at the hearing, prior to the Senate Environment Committee passing it by a bipartisan supermajority:

<http://www.delawariverkeeper.org/sites/default/files/PR%20NJ%20SCR134%2010.15.18.pdf>

OTHER

- Science candidates prevail in US midterm elections: <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-018-07322-z>
- Summit residents and merchants commit to reducing plastic straws: <http://nj1015.com/summit-residents-and-merchants-commit-to-reducing-plastic-straws/>
- On Nov. 2, the New Jersey State Senate approved a concurrent resolution that urges the federal government to "require manufacturers of single-use plastic products to assume responsibility for pollution caused by those products": <https://patch.com/new-jersey/livingston/stop-plastic-pollution-regulate-manufacturers-nj-lawmakers>
- Since 1990, recycling has dropped dramatically in New Jersey: <http://www.insidernj.com/press-release/nj-celebrates-recycling-nj-heads-wrong-direction/>

SOME VERY USEFUL NJ ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS LINKS

NJ SPOTLIGHT: Daily updates on NJ environmental, immigration, budget, and other issues - <http://www.njspotlight.com/>. You can also sign up for updates here: <http://www.njspotlight.com/newsletters/>

ENVIROPOLITICS: Daily environmental and political news, legislation & regulation for New Jersey, Pennsylvania & New York: <http://enviropolitics.com/>. You can also subscribe here: <http://forms.aweber.com/form/59/1934507159.htm>.

ANJEC (Association of New Jersey Environmental Coalitions): News alerts and biweekly news highlights: <https://www.anjecnews.com/news-highlights.html>. You can also subscribe by emailing: info@anjec.org.

Also - a link to a useful general website on sustainability: <https://www.treehugger.com/> You can subscribe here: <https://www.treehugger.com/newsletters/>

UUFaithAction NJ - Environmental Justice Task Force - <https://uufaithaction.org/environment/>
Chair - Nancy Griffeth; Vice Chair - Ray Nichols

Visit our website for Environmental links and resources / sign up for email alerts / join the EJTF