

Keeping it Green

Notes from the SUNY Cortland Sustainability Office

April 2020

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations are Coming!



SUNY Cortland will be adding an additional amenity to the parking infrastructure this summer. Four campus locations will have new Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations installed to meet the need of drivers as EVs become more widely adopted. This effort is supported by National Grid and NYSERDA with a total grant of \$92,000 to offset the cost of charging equipment and installation.

Overall, commuting is becoming a larger and larger portion of our greenhouse gas emissions and converting to more fuel-efficient vehicles is a way to reverse this trend. EVs are also more cost-effective. Even with lower fuel prices, EVs will save the average driver about 5.7 cents per mile. And the public health benefits are also important. Electric vehicles produce fewer or no tailpipe emissions, and save billions in costs associated with climate change and environmental health risks.

More information about EV charging stations at SUNY Cortland will be announced in late summer, as the equipment comes online. Find out more about EVs at <https://drivegreen.nationalgridus.com/learn/>

50 YEARS EARTH DAY 2020

April 22, 1970 marks the birth of the modern environmental movement. While early conservation efforts focused on public lands and resources, a series of events in the 1960s set the stage for many groups to come together in response to environmental degradation. The publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* in 1962 first revealed the health threats of pesticides to many Americans. The growth of the interstate highway system led many people who did not consider themselves conservationists, to fight to protect their communities from air pollution.



Nightly news coverage of an oil spill off the coast of California offered viewers around the country a horrifying depiction of animals and people suffering as an ecosystem was destroyed. The Cuyahoga River catching fire became a symbol of environmental calamity. And the first color images of Earth from the moon energized the movement.

Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin sought to harness the energy of young people and the strategies of the anti-war movement to bring together

Continued

50 Years of Earth Day continued

many groups around a common goal to oppose environmental degradation. Senator Nelson chose the date for his event, a Wednesday in April that would be late enough to avoid a snowstorm and early enough that students wouldn't be cramming for exams. He hired a staff led by Denis Hayes, a recent college graduate and the oldest member of the team at 25. Originally envisioned as a teach-in on college campuses, the event was dubbed Earth Day and it became both a party and a protest. Over 20 million Americans, 10% of the total population at that time, came out to celebrate, take action, and demand legislation for the environment.



Earth Day 1970 forced the issue onto the national agenda. Within five years, the biggest advances in environmental legislation appeared. Congress authorized the creation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and a stronger Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act were passed.

On the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day, a new generation is preparing to channel the energy of the first Earth Day through the tools of social media and digital activism. Despite the importance of staying home in the face of a global pandemic, students around the globe are planning online rallies, teach-ins, and celebrations to bring together all who are concerned about climate change and its devastating impacts. This Earth Day, join one of the many digital events – local or worldwide - to get the information and resources to make an impact.

RED is GREEN

EVENTS

Earth Day Virtual Rally

Tuesday April 21st

6:30 pm

New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) will be hosting a virtual rally to honor 50 years of Earth Day. Celebrate with speakers, songs and calls for action. NYPIRG will discuss its Earth Day 50 platform, which includes making polluters pay for climate action, electrification and more.

[RSVP here](#) or email NYPIRG Project Coordinator Ethan Gormley at egormley@nypirg.org.

Earth Day Digital Fair

Wednesday April 22nd

12 Noon.

Take action on Earth Day's 50th anniversary with SUNY Cortland members of NYPIRG, Leaders for Environmental Awareness and Protection (LEAP) and the Institute for Civic Engagement. Learn how New York is fighting the climate crisis in 2020, how you can participate, and see fun tutorials for environmentally conscious DIY projects you can do from home. [RSVP here](#) or by emailing NYPIRG Project Coordinator Ethan Gormley at egormley@nypirg.org.

EarthRise Day of Action

Wednesday April 22nd

Midnight to Midnight

Earth Day Network is coordinating a global digital mobilization. Over the 24 hours of Earth Day, EARTHRISE will include global conversations, calls to action, performances, video teach-ins and more. Learn more <https://www.earthday.org/campaign/earth-day-earthrise/>

Happiness & Sustainability

April 22nd

Midnight to Midnight

The Sustainable Development Solutions Network is hosting a 24-hour webinar event on Earth Day to explore the Sustainable Development Goals through the lens of well-being and happiness.

<https://www.unsdsn.org/24hour-webinar>

ARE YOU STILL WATCHING?

If your Netflix account is starting to feel a little judgmental, or the 7th season of that reality show is feeling a little flat, check out some of these media resources to connect you with the environment and inspire your sustainability streak.

FILM

Chasing Coral

This documentary follows researchers on an exciting and sometimes dangerous journey to find and document the last remaining patches of coral



as it disappears at an unprecedented rate. Witness the effects of pollution, explore healthy, dying, and polluted coral reefs, and learn what you can do before it is too late.

Our Planet

Eight-part nature documentary series narrated by Sir David Attenborough is a unique look at the beauty of our planet and how it has been impacted by climate change.

A Plastic Ocean

Single-use plastic and similar products are overrunning our oceans and waterways, wreaking havoc on the natural ecosystems and marine life. This documentary uncovers the nasty truth about our disposable lifestyle and focuses on innovative solutions.

PODCASTS

Direct Current

From the U.S. Department of Energy's digital team in Washington, D.C., The Direct Current podcast brings you surprisingly fresh, insightful stories of how we generate and use electricity, what that means for the planet, and the cutting-edge science that's driving a global energy revolution.



Sustainababble

With the tagline “Trying to be cheery in the face of impending ecological disaster,” sustainababble blends comedy, real sustainability knowledge, and thought-provoking insights from experts. (warning: language is not PG).



Think: Sustainability

From waste to wealth, and grids to growth, this podcast digs into the impact of consumption across all areas of life — it tracks the movements, discoveries and technologies making way for a sustainable future.

APPS



NASA's Earth Now

Visualize recent global climate data from Earth Science satellites, including surface air temperature, carbon dioxide, ozone, and water vapor as well as gravity and sea level variations.

Project Noah

Networked Organisms and Habitats (NOAH) is a citizen scientist app that allows you to document wildlife and ecosystems and provide important data to researchers, labs, and environmental groups.

SDGs in Action

Learn about the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals to end poverty, reduce inequalities and tackle climate change. Interact with citizens around the globe and find actions you can take at home.



Solve Climate by 2030

On Tuesday April 7th about 20 members of the SUNY Cortland community attended a virtual power dialogue hosted by SUNY Albany as part of a nation-wide movement to Solve Climate by 2030.

This effort was spearheaded by Bard College, and many other campuses have initiated teach-in style events to discuss climate action. The focus of the live webinar was the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA), the Green New Deal for New York State.

Panelists discussed the general framework of the historic climate legislation and reviewed the most ambitious yet feasible solutions. A [primer on the legislation](#) is available as well as a [recording of the Power Dialogue Presentation](#)



HeatSmart CNY Provides Incentives for Sustainable Heating and Cooling

Over one-third of NY's greenhouse gas emissions from combustion come from heating and cooling buildings. The SUNY Cortland community is encouraged to learn about advances in renewable heating and cooling technologies that can be applied for homes, businesses, and even universities. In early 2020, the State Public Service Commission injected new life into the adoption of this technology by increasing the total amount of incentive funding available for heat pump technology. This increase in incentive funding along with current programs will total of \$454 million through 2025.

Many CNY homes, businesses, and nonprofits are cold and drafty, have aging inefficient furnaces, or are still on expensive oil, propane, or baseboard electric. HeatSmart CNY is a community campaign to address this head-on, spreading the knowledge to help people connect with assessments, incentives, and technologies to make our homes or businesses more comfortable, cost-effective, and better for the environment.

HeatSmart CNY workshops are moving to a virtual platform to spread the word while NOT spreading COVID-19. If you are interested in learning more about the program, please visit the HeatSmart CNY web-page, here you will find links and additional resources to the virtual presentations on the Heat Pump technology and how to leverage the increased incentive programs.

HeatSmart CNY provides:

- Vetted installers
- Home assessment
- Independent experts to answer your questions
- Knowledge of financial incentives and support accessing them
- Special incentives for low-to-moderate income households
- A community of people to explore new advances in energy efficient heating and cooling together!

Find out more at <https://heatsmartcny.org/>

If you have a question or comment about sustainability at SUNY Cortland, an idea for a story, or a sustainability-related event you want to share, connect with us at Sustainability@Cortland.Edu