



## **Breakout: Community Climate and Resilience Solutions - December 7, 2021**

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What are you most excited about in this arena today? Where are there successes and bright spots/opportunities?

- WindowDressers Program - process of coming together.
- Vermont Climate Council adopted the initial Vermont Climate Action Plan!
- Hardwick recently formed an energy committee.
- Availability of resources coming into the State (and planning) to assist with energy use.
- Heat Squad Program - expansion into the Northeast Kingdom and increases in number of participating homes (2020 and 2021).
- Lake Champlain Sea Grant - "short course" (summer 2022) for municipal officials & volunteers (within the basin, VT & NY) on environmental hazards resilience:  
<https://www.uvm.edu/seagrant/education>
- Sustainable Rockingham - citizen lead work on local hazard mitigation plan.
- Bridging the gap between community members that are motivated to address climate change and other community members that are not as involved or feel excluded by climate change work through weatherization programs.
- Using storytelling to bridge gaps:  
<https://wholecommunities.org/resources-archive/vermont-dairy-farmer-voices/>

What are your concerns/questions about how to move forward?

- Divide between community members drawn in by climate change work and those not as involved.
- Selling "resilience" and taking small incremental steps toward change while building consensus.
- Making sure resources are available to match policy goals and decoupling energy efficiency from operational savings.
- Urgency and complexity and local volunteer capacity.
- Effects of local policy and zoning on parcels in our communities.
- Low-income and renter respondents were over three times more likely, and non-white respondents were seven times more likely, to report going without heat. While Vermont

is regarded as a renewable energy leader, its current policies do not equitably distribute household transition benefits (HTBs) to address vulnerability. Our results show that non-white respondents were seven times less likely than white respondents to report having solar panels and renters were three times less likely than homeowners to report having solar panels.

What do you and/or communities need to be successful in this arena in the future?

- Need more focus and engagement regarding the nexus of weatherization/energy efficiency and health- so powerfully linked.
- Community buy in!
- Better program design to reach low income and non-white Vermonters with energy efficiency efforts more equitably.
- Better civic education and outreach to enable younger people to get involved with the planning process! More coordination of multi-town approaches and increasing accessibility and approachability of local government.
- Better regional coordination to increase capacity and shared collective power.
- Not financially burdening lower-income Vermonters who are least contributing to the problem and have the least ability to contribute.
- Distilling the Climate Action Plan down so local action committees can identify tangible pieces to move forward...developing successful models of replication like WindowDressers.
- Neighborhood networks, neighbors knowing neighbors, so they can talk and make connections and build a sense of community, more organic community events. Neutral spaces that are not politically charged, e.g. Northeast Slopes in Corinth, that bring people to the table in a non-threatening way.