

Andover Energy Matters Conservation By The Numbers

By Larry Chase
Andover Energy Group

It's no secret that fuel prices are climbing and will continue to do so. They fluctuate, of course, but that might just be making things worse.

For example, when the cost of gasoline or heating oil hits, say, \$3.50 a gallon or more, we begin to think Prius and 55-degree thermostat settings. But then the prices drop, we relax, we fill up the pickup and jack up the heat, and we hope for a continual downward slide, all the way back to the good old days – which of course never happens. The price rises continue to overwhelm the price drops.

For a look at New Hampshire price trends for commonly used fuels from 2007 to the present, visit NH.gov/oepl/programs/energy/fuelpricecharts/. Over the past couple of years, here's the January heating-oil picture: 2010, \$2.83; 2011, \$3.33; 2012, \$3.68.

Town Energy Costs

For the Town, increasing energy prices can mean higher expenses and higher property taxes. A few items from the 2010 and 2011 Town Reports (shown in the chart above) tell the story:

The figures reflect a colder-than-usual 2010-2011 winter, of course. And not all Town agencies showed an increase. The Andover Fire Department, for instance, reduced its heating fuel costs by over \$300 year-over-year. But the overall trend is clearly upward.

The story is the same for individuals, as the costs of heating our homes and driving our vehicles spiral ever upward.

Eventually, as these numbers grow, folks tend to get serious about energy conservation. For example, four local groups – the Andover Energy Group, the Andover Library Trustees, the Andover Conservation Commission, and Proctor Academy – sponsored a Button Up New Hampshire home energy workshop for homeowners last month.

Town Hall Energy Audit

For another example, the Town received a grant to cover the costs of an energy audit of the Andover Town Hall. The grant funded a day-long, basement-to-attic professional probe of the building's energy efficiency, which has led to recommendations of specific "energy efficiency measures" (EEMs). Results were reported to the Board of Selectmen on February 14 and are contained

in an 87-page document available in the town libraries.

The major recommended EEMs are divided into two tiers: Tier One, for measures costing \$500 or less to implement; and Tier Two, for measures over

	2010 Report	2011 Report
Town Hall utilities	\$4,935	\$5,938
School District electricity	32,546	42,670
School District heating oil	18,684	33,452
Village District propane	2,496	5,079
Village District electricity	3,752	4,890

\$500. The audit estimates the cost of implementing eight Tier One measures at an estimated total of roughly \$1,595; it estimates the annual savings (at current energy costs) at about \$1,215, an annual return on investment of 76 percent. Tier One measures include:

- Turn off library ceiling fans
- Install a well-sealed, insulated air conditioner cover
- Install programmable thermostats
- Weather-strip all exterior doors
- Insulate all water pipes
- Manage phantom loads
- Reduce size of electric water heater
- Add circuits with switches to five rooms

The report estimates the cost of implementing six Tier Two measures at roughly \$12,785; it estimates the annual savings (at current energy costs) at about \$1,106, for a return on investment of more than 8 percent – much better than CDs are offering these days. Tier Two measures include:

- Add insulation to cavity voids in library walls
- Air-seal attic floor over library
- Add cellulose to existing levels in library attic
- Install SEER 15 or better mini-split ductless air conditioner with three units
- Line crawl space floors and foam rim joists and walls
- Install Thermopane interior storm windows in library

The recommendations in the Town Hall audit represent only the easy-to-accomplish, inexpensive first steps, of course. Locally generated energy – from solar panels, wind turbines, water, or biomass (wood and other organic materials) – would cost more at the beginning, but could take more of a bite out of fuel and electric bills in the long term.

As the *Beacon* was going to press, the Selectmen were working on an implementation plan for the audit recommendations.

Andover Service Club

By Anne Hewitt
Andover Service Club

Andover Service Club's (ASC) February 8 meeting was held at the regular location, the Masonic Hall in Potter Place. President Mary Ofenloch opened the meeting with a President's Day theme and read President Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address and a portion of President George Washington's inaugural address. It was sadly noted that five ASC members have passed away over the past year: Faith Downes, Jan Williams, Julia Philipson, Louise Fuller, and Marjorie Sheldon. They contributed generously to ASC in support of the community projects we endeavor.

Nancy Tripp reported that the Thrift Shop's computer system is up and running. Thrift Shop volunteer workers who have been trained on the system are impressed with how easy it is to use the program. Clothing prices for consignments were discussed, as there is competition in town. We would like to attract more consigners by bringing our prices in line with what other thrift shops are getting. New pricing guidelines are being developed for uniformity. During March, all color-tagged clothing is 50% off.

Scholarship applications are now

available at the Thrift Shop. The deadline for submitting completed applications is May 1.

At Town Meeting on Tuesday, March 13, ASC members will be serving homemade soup, chili, breads, and baked goods in the AE/MS gym, beginning at 11 AM.

The Andover Service Club is the featured town organization in the 2011 Andover Town Report. An array of historical information and photos is included throughout the booklet.

We continue to provide birthday cakes to Proctor students. The students really appreciate being recognized on their special day, as many are far from home.

Following the meeting, light refreshments were served, and the annual auction was held. Members brought in new or gently-used items from home, and the highest bid on each item provided the recipient with a new addition to their home.

The next meeting will be at the Masonic Hall in Potter Place at 10 AM on Wednesday, March 14. The speaker will be Kat Darling of Two Mountain Farm in Andover.

Our Wednesday, April 11, meeting is the annual Guest Night, which will be held at the Highland Lake Grange Hall in East Andover.

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