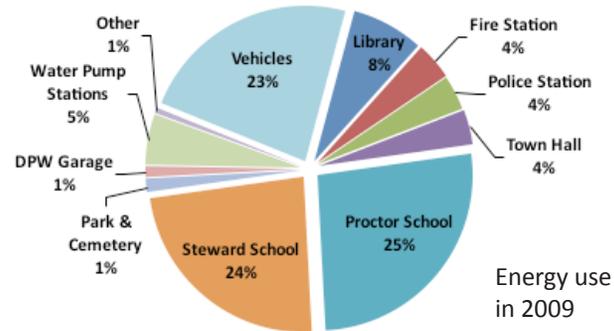


## What is the Green Communities Act?

Massachusetts has created a program that empowers communities to review their use of energy and take steps to reduce energy consumption by 20% over a 5 year period. This includes technical assistance, energy audits for town buildings and access to grants and utility incentive funding to help pay for energy efficiency measures. There are now 53 towns and cities in Massachusetts that have been designated as Green Communities. The benefits of becoming a Green Community include:

- ★ Access to grants and funding that can be applied to measures that will help Topsfield achieve its energy consumption reduction goals.
- ★ By reducing energy consumption, Topsfield will lower its operating costs related to energy consumption. This is one of the few budgetary impacts we can make without affecting the quality and level of service provided by our schools, police, fire, etc.
- ★ By lowering our energy use, Topsfield is making a positive impact on the environment.

**Did you know...** The Department of Energy Resources (DOER) Green Communities Grant Program is funded through auctions of carbon emissions permits under the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.



## Topsfield's 5-Year Plan

After assessing our current spending on energy consumption for electricity, gas, oil and fuel for vehicles, we have identified areas for savings through energy efficiency measures.

Examples include:

- Installing energy efficient lighting and occupancy controls in all town buildings.
- Designing an automated system to control heating, air conditioning and ventilation for our facilities.
- Replacing the oil heating system in Town Hall with a new high-efficiency natural gas boiler. Additional upgrades to Town Hall include reduced infiltration of outside air, weather stripping windows, and adding attic insulation.
- Upgrading old equipment and vehicles to new energy efficient equipment and vehicles.
- Evaluating renewable energy solutions that create a positive financial return on investment for our town.

## Energy efficiency funding through MassSave



Utility companies like National Grid, Nstar, Cape Light and Western MA Electric collect a small percentage of funding from all customers (residential, commercial and municipal) in MA. This fund is distributed back into our communities through the MassSave energy efficiency fund. Here's how it works:

- If you own or rent/lease a home or business property, and pay your own utility bill here in Topsfield, you are eligible to participate in the MassSave Energy Efficiency Program. There is no cost to participate, but you have to act to request assistance.
- The program includes a FREE home or business energy audit that will detail the measures you can implement to reduce your energy consumption. This includes a financial analysis of the measures so you can assess the return on your investment.
- MassSave also offers special financing for certain measures to help small businesses and homeowners use the savings achieved to pay for the improvements over time.
- Small businesses can have up to 70% of the energy efficiency measures paid for through the MassSave program.
- To schedule an energy audit for your home or business, please visit:

<http://www.masssave.com/>

## ***Easy Tips for Energy Savings Around Your Home***

1. Install programmable thermostats with a 7 day schedule. Set your heating or cooling back when your home is unoccupied or during evening hours when you are sleeping.
2. Take an inventory of your interior and exterior lights. Consider this:
  - a. The average incandescent light bulb consumes 60 watts to 75 watts, and only lasts for 2000 hours. They burn hot and with enough lights in your home, they will actually increase the temperature of your home!
  - b. A compact fluorescent light bulb uses about 75% less energy and lasts 10 times longer. They also produce 75% less heat.
  - c. LED lighting is on the verge of becoming main stream. They contain no mercury, run 90% more efficiently than incandescent bulbs and last 20-25 times longer!
3. Purchasing a new air conditioner, furnace, stove, refrigerator or other large appliance for your home? Check the EnergyStar web site. Energy Star rates products and tells you which products are the most energy efficient. A more energy efficiency product will save you money.
4. Cut back shower times, especially with children and teens. Older shower heads use over 4 gallons of water per minute – so a 5 minute shower uses *over 20 gallons of water!* You can purchase new energy

efficient shower heads that use only 2.5 gallons of water per minute.

5. Invest in a pellet stove for winter heat. Pellet stoves provide an extremely high level of heating efficiency. Just make sure to stock up on pellets before the winter season hits and prices go up.
6. Is your home properly insulated? You can do everything right when it comes to heating or looking your home, but inefficient windows, doors and insulation decrease your investment in other energy efficiency measures. Have a professional check for leaks and ensure that your attic is properly insulated.

### **The Future of Energy Efficiency**

The steps we take today to reduce our energy usage and develop new technologies for energy demand will make a major impact on future generations. Parents have access to a wealth of information on the web to help teach their children about energy efficiency and renewable energy, including:

US Dept of Energy:

<http://www1.eere.energy.gov/kids/>

Energy Star:

[http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=kids.kids\\_index](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=kids.kids_index)

Energy Kids:

<http://www.eia.gov/kids/>

EnergyHog.org:

<http://www.energyhog.org/childrens.htm>



# **Topsfield** **A Community** **Going Green**

Things you should know about becoming a Green Community and how it can benefit our town.

A project of the  
**TOPSFIELD**  
**RENEWABLE**  
**ENERGY**  
**COMMITTEE**

