



Arlington Marketing and Outreach Plan

Vision Statement

Arlington town government has established a reputation as forward thinking and reliable in its approach to environmental and energy efficiency issues. Successful implementation of programs such as Solarize Mass and Green Municipal Aggregation has shown the Town's ability to select and promote technologies that both protect the environment and benefit residents. There is also a long history of the Town partnering with volunteer groups to accomplish projects that strengthen the community. Some of these volunteer groups, such as Envision Arlington, Sustainable Arlington, and Mothers Out Front will collaborate with the Town on HeatSmart. The repeated collaboration between Arlington government and volunteer groups, being well-established and familiar to many residents, lends credibility to this new collaboration and provides a strong basis for success. Public information sessions will introduce the installers as part of the HeatSmart Team, with the installers explaining the selected heating and cooling technologies and also initiating their working relationship with the community.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

The Town, a number of environmentally-oriented Arlington-based volunteer groups, and many residents have demonstrated on-going commitment to protecting our local natural resources, reducing waste, increasing recycling and energy efficiency, and supporting renewable energy. Arlington became a Green Community in 2010 and has received seven related grants for improving the energy efficiency of Town buildings and operations. We adopted the Stretch Energy Code before it was required. Solarize Arlington resulted in 157 signed contracts and online review of years of building permit records, shows that over 600 permits have been issued for rooftop solar installations. Over 500 households opted up under the new Community Choice Aggregation program in its first ten months. The annual EcoFest at Town Hall covers a different topic each year and is well-attended (highest year was over 650). EcoFest has focused on solid waste, composting and recycling, energy efficiency and renewable energy, water resource protection and conservation, sustainable and organic gardening, and preparation for climate change. In 2018, Arlington's schools received Green Ribbon Schools recognition at the state and national levels. Air source heat pump units can already be seen outside a number of houses and electric cars are becoming more common around town. A HeatSmart survey from late August to September 10, received almost 450 responses. These indicators suggest a strong positive response to HeatSmart offerings.

Arlington is a financially diverse community. About 25% of households are low- to moderate-income. Even with 0% interest loans and reduced costs due to bulk purchasing, upfront costs of the heating and cooling technologies on offer will be too high for some households. In addition, the time investment required to learn about and make informed decisions regarding these technologies and available financing will be a burden for some. Reducing operational costs for heating and cooling would obviously help households on a limited budget, but only if the upfront cost is manageable.

We would like this program to serve low- to moderate-income households. According to the office providing qualified low-income households with fuel assistance, home improvement and, when needed, heating system replacement, available financing programs do not allow converting from one type of home heating system to another. If they already heat with oil, and need a new boiler, the new system has to use oil. However, limited income households that do not qualify as low income are eligible for 15-year, 0% loans for a minimum of \$5,000 that could be used to convert to a different heat source. We



hope that the financial incentives and bulk purchasing advantages available for HeatSmart heating and cooling technologies will make them financially accessible to a wide range of Arlington households.

Arlington rolled out its Community Choice Program on August 1, 2017. To date, we've had a higher than typical percentage of households opting up. Will residents feel we're rolling out too many programs, too fast, or will they feel that Arlington is moving ahead at a smart pace to address the mounting issues associated with climate change?

One of the drawbacks to promoting new heating and cooling systems is that the initial expense is high. However, HeatSmart participants must have a free Mass Save energy audit as a required first step. Initial outreach is much easier when the first ask is "have you had a free energy audit?" Along with offering free energy audits, we can also continue to encourage additional opt-ups under Community Choice Aggregation. Having three different offerings (free energy audits, the opportunity to opt-up to more local renewable energy for a very modest cost, and HeatSmart heating and cooling technologies), reinforces the message that there are many different ways to change the climate impacts of our daily energy use. These simple options provide a good start to a conversation leading up to HeatSmart technologies.

Currently, about 30% or 5,600 Arlington households rely on oil or other high cost heating fuels (2016 ACS data), making them prime candidates for the adoption of clean heating technologies.

Marketing Strategy

Early marketing has already occurred with the Town's online HeatSmart survey, Town email announcements, two news articles in YourArlington.com and outreach through Sustainable Arlington and Mothers Out Front to their members. When the application is approved, we will immediately begin publicity through those same channels, and also through face-to-face outreach at regular Town events (e.g., pop-up Recycling Center event at the DPW on one Saturday each month), monthly meetings of Town committees, volunteer groups and organizations (Planning Department, Arlington Recycling Committee, Tree Committee, Open Space Committee, Arlington Land Trust) articles and guest columns in local print and online news media (Arlington Advocate, ArlingtonWickedLocal.com, YourArlington.Com, Arlington Patch), posting flyers (both libraries, the Senior Center, Boys and Girls Club, and local businesses), submitting announcements to local newsletters (Arlington Land Trust, Friends of Spy Pond Park, etc.) and creating a short spot to run on local community television.

The HeatSmart team will create a website and Facebook page to guide residents who want to learn about the technologies, financing options, the installers, and upcoming information sessions, house parties, and visits to homes that already have air source heat pumps, a ground source heat pump, solar hot water, or modern wood heating.

The Town's Public Information Officer created and maintains a page on the Town's website for Community Choice Aggregation and will create one for HeatSmart with links to MassCEC, the installer and other appropriate resources. Sign-ups for Mass Save energy audits and appointments with the installer could also be linked.

The Town's community television station, Arlington Community Media Inc. (ACMi), has separate channels dedicated to public, education, and government topics, professional equipment for making videos, and a staff experienced in putting together news programs and interviews to benefit the



community. ACMI coverage will be important to outreach. Once aired, programs can be viewed on demand and the link included in future publicity.

Mothers Out Front is sponsoring a fall 2018 class through Arlington Community Education called "Induction Cooking: Taste the Future" to help make this more energy efficient, fossil-fuel free cooking method better known. Mothers Out Front will submit a class proposal for the spring catalog relating to the technologies offered by HeatSmart. The class may include a meet and greet/Q&A with early local adopters of air source heat pumps, ground source heat pumps modern wood heat and solar hot water. The Arlington Community Education catalog is mailed to all Arlington homes. A course offering is thus an effective outreach tool.

Envision Arlington develops an annual public survey in consultation with Town departments, agencies, and committees. Survey topics are chosen to provide timely data to Town entities charged with planning and decision making. The questions that are asked not only gather information, but are also a means of presenting information. The 2019 survey which will be "live" from January to March, is now under construction. Questions to be submitted will cover each household's current heating and cooling systems, areas of needed improvement, and awareness of and receptivity to adopting new technologies (an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of the four that will be offered). Survey response has been from 20% to over 30% in recent years. Annual survey data are reported to Town Meeting and included in the Town's Annual Report.

Another key publicity opportunity is the annual Arlington EcoFest, a free public event held at Town Hall on a Saturday in March. EcoFest includes a keynote speaker, tables for over 20 vendors and organizations, selected for their relevance to the year's theme, to educate the public and provide Q&A opportunities, as well as entertainment for families with children. The topic for March 2019 will relate to home energy efficiency and renewable energy, providing a platform for publicizing different aspects of HeatSmart.

Later in the Spring, face-to-face outreach will be carried out at local parks, sports events, the Farmers Market and the annual Feast of the East. We will also reserve the "information table" inside the public library's front door which is available to groups for a month at a time to present information to the public.

The goal is to bring Town departments, agencies and committees together with volunteer groups to create an effective, informative, ongoing public outreach program that will engage a wide cross-section of households.

Winchester Marketing and Outreach Plan

Outline a marketing plan that describes methods to create community awareness around the HeatSmart Mass program and includes the following:

Vision Statement:

Winchester has become a respected leader in implementing community programs to improve energy efficiency and reduce our carbon footprint. Through collaboration of the Town government with numerous local environmental groups, Winchester has run several successful programs, such as Solarize Mass, WinSaves (National Grid's community Mass Save program), WinPower (community choice electricity aggregation), and Senior Energy grants. All of these programs have helped residents take practical steps to reduce energy consumption and increase use of renewable energy sources. We are prepared to take on the HeatSmart opportunity utilizing the resources and experience we have gained.

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats:

Winchester has several strengths. We are an engaged community where many residents are involved in local politics and community organizations. Also, Winchester residents tend to be highly educated and therefore may already have a basic knowledge of clean energy and its benefits. Having finished the WinSaves program less than 2 years ago, hundreds of residents have had at least one home energy assessment completed. These assessments would still be pertinent and may have given the owners a clearer idea of their own home's potential for energy saving measures. Now that some residents (50 households) are using 100% renewably source electricity, moving from natural gas or oil heating to an air or ground source pump would put them off fossil fuels entirely. Our previous programs have helped raise awareness that this is a viable option for the average Winchester homeowner. Because the average homeowner is middle to upper middle class, they have the means to invest in home improvements.

As with any town, Winchester also has some weaknesses. The fact that we have so many organizations, committees, and stakeholders can sometimes result in analysis paralysis. It may take longer to accomplish tasks than anticipated. With so many different groups involved, there can be a disconnect as to the distribution of work, resulting in a redundancy of tasks. Another weakness is that we have a predominantly residential tax base and therefore don't have the luxury of funds for municipal projects such as solar panels or regular maintenance of HVAC systems. There has been a great deal of new construction and gut renovations in our housing market. Because of this, new owners of these homes may not see the need to change out newly installed systems. We do still have a significant senior population (16.7%). We have seen this demographic be much more hesitant and anxious about making these changes and decisions without personal support. Our coach and volunteer team will need to be sensitive to this and help where possible.

Marketing Plan:

Winchester has a variety of methods for reaching the public which have been successfully used in previous programs including:

- Two local newspapers and the online WickedLocal daily newsfeed
- Public Access Cable television station which can assist in producing public service announcements, as well as video tape and air the presentations offered for the HeatSmart program
- The Town website and calendar
- Inserts in the Town's Water and Sewer bills to over 6,000 residents
- Winchester Residents Facebook page
- The Jenks Senior Center newsletter and bulletin board
- Weekly School E Newsletters – Community News
- Opportunity for public notices to be posted at the Public Library, Jenks Center and many of the small businesses in town
- Houses of Worship bulletin boards and newsletters
- School STEM events where students connect renewable energy and efficiency to science
- Town Day and Farmer's Market (June – Nov)

- Other local group newsletters with broad readership including Wright Lock Farm, Farmers Market Community Hub, Sustainable Winchester, Multi-Cultural Network and the Family Action Network, as well as others.

Many of our volunteer team members who are part of Cool Winchester, Sustainable Winchester and Green Sanctuary team are also active in other aspects of the town such as Town Meeting and Energy Management committee, allowing for additional face to face outreach and education.

The town has several venues that work well for public presentations including the Public Library community room, Town Hall Auditorium, the Jenks Senior Center and both the Middle and High School Auditoriums. All are in the center of town and easily accessed. Only 15% of residents are renters and 2.4% are low income. By targeting the Jenks Senior Center, we will be able to reach many of these residents.

Finally, we will be able to offer dedicated methods of outreach such as creating a website for the Heat Smart program and have a host of volunteers who can do Facebook posts, door-knocking, flyer distribution and tabling at local events. Since we are promoting all four technologies, we will make sure all marketing materials will include information about each specific technology. We will have informational presentations that give an overview of all of the available technologies and how to determine which technology would be most suitable for each household's situation both functionally and financially. In addition to the general information in the fliers and handouts, we can utilize our CATV to produce and air these presentations repeatedly throughout the program.

Goals:

Based on the poll that was conducted and previous programs such as Solarize Mass, we believe we can accomplish the following installations:

Air-source heat pumps: 80

Solar hot water: 8

Ground-source heat pumps: 7

Modern wood heating: 5

