

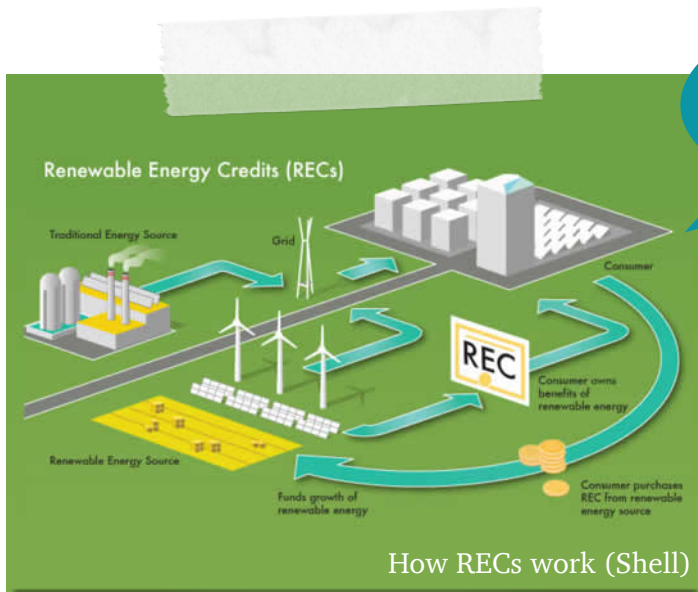
# Environmental Action Newsletter

What YOU Can Do for Our People & Planet  
Issue 3: Energy Habits

## What are Renewable Energy Credits?

Drew Langan

*Our Tri-Co's effort to improve sustainable energy on campus*



RECs are useful, but as always, the best way to reduce pollution is to reduce consumption!

Both Swarthmore and Bryn Mawr Colleges “offset” 100% of their greenhouse gas emissions caused by electrical consumption through the purchase of wind Renewable Energy Credits (RECs). In a

nutshell, our colleges pay slightly more in electrical costs in exchange for investing in wind energy and all of its environmental benefits. RECs offer the co-benefits of supporting the renewable energy industry and upholding our institutional commitments to environmental protection.

*Read in more detail about RECs [here!](#)*

## BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE CAN LOWER YOUR ENERGY BILL -ZOEY WERBIN

In this [TED Talk](#), Alex Lasky tells the story of a successful intervention to limit household overconsumption: social pressure. Being informed that you use twice as much energy as other homes in your neighborhood is an incredible motivator to pay attention to your habits. This suggests the importance of having conversations about environmental issues in general; the fact that you care can motivate and inspire those around you!



## Philadelphia Environmental Film Festival

PHILA  
ENVIRO  
FILMFEST

Fri. April 21st to  
Sun. April 23rd  
Prince Theater  
Philadelphia  
*Showcasing  
powerful new shorts  
& features that  
entertain, inform &  
inspire personal  
action*



Earth Day  
Extravaganza!  
*Sustainability  
Research Fellows  
Sat. April 22nd  
10am, Crumhenge  
Learn how to bird,  
tour the flora, or  
release your creativity  
at art & writing  
workshops!*

# Energy Use in the College Bubble

**Sarah Freda**

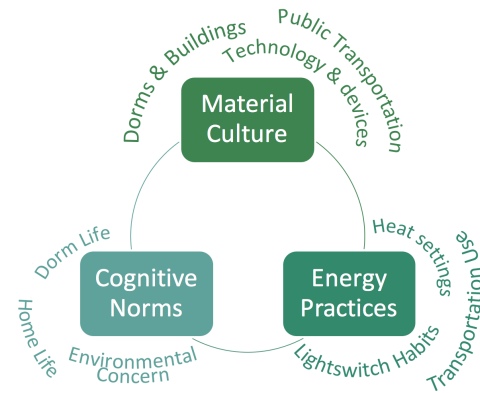
How does the Tri-Co energy culture shape our habits and how can we change them?

As Tri-Co students, we are incredibly spoiled. With no bills to pay, many of us likely pay little attention to our daily habits. Do we remember to turn the bathroom lights off? Unplugging our chargers when not in use? I bet most of us are guilty of some of these – I know I am. In the college bubble, there is little incentive to closely monitor how we use – or abuse – energy use.

This student lifestyle is not seen everywhere in the world. When studying abroad in New Zealand, I noticed a complete shift in energy use. First of all, the flat is always cold. Roommates huddle together under blankets without the heat pump running (not to mention the poorly-insulated windows and rooms). Wet clothes are hung to dry, even during winter. And, boy, do people *love* their cars. A friend of mine bought and raised Debbie, a gas-guzzling, 1990s Honda, until she went to her grave.

So how does this differ to life on campus here?

While abroad, I learned about the “[energy cultures framework](#)”: material culture (our surroundings), cognitive norms (beliefs and understandings), and energy practices (what we do). Think about your own energy culture on campus. For material culture, how energy efficient is your dorm? Do you feel drafts of air coming through your windows? Think about your cognitive norms. What are your environmental concerns? Have habits from home affected your dorm habits? And now energy practices. What temperature do you like to keep your room at? When do you turn your lights on or off?



You may have noticed that your cognitive norms may not fully align with your energy practices. For instance, you may worry about carbon emissions and

support renewable energy, but grew up with the heater running through the winter. Some of your practices are also completely out of your control. The dorms aren’t well insulated and have drafty windows (I know that’s definitely the case in my room). We don’t have nearly enough solar panels for every student on campus, and all of our lightbulbs may not even be energy efficient.

So how can we change our (or even the Tri-Co’s) energy culture? First of all, there is power in individual action. Be conscious about your energy use: remember to turn the lights off when rooms (even public spaces) aren’t in use; don’t leave your phone and laptop charging overnight; turn the heat down (and keep the windows closed) during colder months. There’s plenty of power in sharing information, too! Tell your friends about this framework and compare your energy habits and cognitive norms. There’s also plenty you can do on campus. Join a sustainability group. Take a class on energy use and renewable sources. Propose suggestions to the administration. Maybe perform a study on energy use at Swat. Check out [Sustainability Degrees](#) and [Electric Choice](#) for more tips!

# Call Your Rep's: Bills of the Week

Here are this week's most controversial bills related to environmental issues.

*Call your representatives and have your voices heard!*

## Who to call:

### Sen. Robert P. Casey Jr. (D)

+1 202-224-6324

*Line busy?*

*Try local office numbers:*

Central PA: 814-357-0314

Erie: 814-874-5080

Harrisburg: 717-231-7540

Lehigh Valley: 610-782-9470

Northeastern: 570-941-0930

Philadelphia: 215-405-9660

Pittsburgh: 412-803-7370

### Sen. Patrick J. Toomey (R)

+1 202-224-4254

*Line busy?*

*Try local office numbers:*

Erie: 814-455-9925

Harrisburg: 717-782-3951

Johnstown: 814-266-5970

Lehigh Valley: 610-434-1444

Philadelphia: 215-241-1090

Pittsburgh: 412-803-3501

Scranton: 570-941-3540

### Rep. Robert A Brady (D)

+1 202-224-4731

*Line busy?*

*Try local office numbers:*

Delaware County: 610-874-7094

Philadelphia (E. Clearfield) 267-519-22

Philadelphia (Memphis St.): 215-426-4616

Philadelphia (S. Broad St.): 215-389-4627

## Prevent EPA Budget Cuts

*Trump's Budget would:*

Eliminate the Department of Energy's funding for advanced energy and vehicle research

Reduce funding for the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

Jeopardize renewable energy jobs

***Call your senators & reps!***

## Stop the Midnight Rules Relief Act

*S.34 would:*

Permit Congress to strike down large groups of legislation that were submitted to Congress during the last 60 days of the previous administration.

Allow your congressional representatives to vote against or block individual programs or legislations without having gone on record about their stance.

This obscures the legislative process and will make it easier for Congress to overturn Obama's environmental protections and other legislation.

***Call your senators!***

## Tips:

- ▶ Say your name, city, and zip code to the staffer
- ▶ Mention why you care! Add something related to why this bill matters to you
- ▶ If leaving a voicemail, give your full address
- ▶ Remember to thank them for their time & attention!

*Go to [5calls.org](http://5calls.org) to learn more!*

# YOUTH CONVENTION BEFORE PCM!

Friday, April 28th, Washington D.C.

Young people are gathering on 04/28 the day before People's Climate March to talk about the role of students and youth in this political moment, build relationships with other climate justice leaders from across the country, and strategize for what comes next.

## The convening will include:

- ▶ A lineup of powerful speakers
- ▶ Training on organizing skills and movement-building strategy
- ▶ Opportunities to make connections and share stories
- ▶ Preparation for the youth block and march on Saturday

Transportation  
will be provided  
both ways!

Young people have a critical role to play in this political moment, and we are ready to show up strong to fight for our futures.

Sign up to secure your spot at the youth convening and the People's Climate March (04/29) [here](#).

Contact [eweisko1@swarthmore.edu](mailto:eweisko1@swarthmore.edu) for questions.

## Tip

### NO GARBAGE BAGS

You really don't need them!  
Just toss trash into the larger, public trashcans.  
Wash between uses and refill!

## DIY

### SHAMPOO

1/4 cup Coconut Milk  
1/4 cup Liquid Castille Soap  
20 drops Essential Oil  
Combine ingredients, shake well.  
Apply on hair.  
Only 1 tsp/use!  
Lasts for 1 month

# Earth Week at BMC

## Bryn Mawr Sustainability Leadership Group

- ▶ Hour of Darkness Fire Pit and S'mores  
Monday, April 17th, 7:30, Senior Row
- ▶ Dorceta Taylor: Power and Privilege in America  
Wednesday, April 19th, 7-8pm  
Wyndham Ely Room



*Dorceta Taylor is a James E. Crowfoot Collegiate Professor of Environmental Justice and Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at the University of Michigan*

- ▶ BMC Earth-a-Palooza!  
Friday, April 21st, 5-7pm, Erdman Walkway

## Fact

If global food waste were a country, it would be the **3rd largest** greenhouse gas emitter after China & the USA!

[fao.org](http://fao.org)