

## **Mayor Almon's Speech on Clean Energy Day July 18<sup>th</sup> 2008**

Since the beginning of this administration my team and I have worked hard on what we have called the "greening" of East Haven. We have sought out clean energy programs for several reasons:

Using fossil fuels -- coal, oil and natural gas -- to make electricity dirties our air, consumes and pollutes water, hurts plants and animal life, creates toxic wastes, and causes global warming. I am encouraged to see that there has been an increased awareness of these environmental concerns right here in East Haven. My young friends at Tuttle School recently held a walk-a-thon to enable them to purchase acreage in the South American rainforest for conservation. This week I received a letter from Momauguin School student Cole and his brother Sage, they told me how much they care about the Earth and how excited they are that their school will be fitted with solar panels.

East Haven taxpayers will reap economic benefits from clean energy as well. As we all know energy costs continue to rise and it is imperative that we, as a community, begin to seek alternative sources. We cannot continue on our current path hoping that some one else will find the answer. Hope is not a strategy. Our strategy is to take advantage of the technology and programs that have worked for years in many of our neighboring communities.

Let me tell you about some of the projects that we have been working on:

The first is "East Haven Harnessing the Sun":

My staff and I have identified four schools with roofs that are at least twenty years old; Momauguin School, Deer Run School, Overbrook School and Melillo Middle School. This allows the Town of East Haven to automatically qualify for 67.86% reimbursement from the State of Connecticut for replacing the roofs. In addition, we are working with the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund to obtain grant money to place solar panels on these new roofs. It is important to undertake both of these programs at once to maximize our reimbursement/grant funds. These are the same programs that the City of New Haven has participated in to renovate or rebuild nearly every school in their district.

The cost of the project is roughly \$10mill but through these reimbursements programs the final cost to the town will be less than \$3mill. Over the twenty five year life of the panels the town is projected to realize a savings of \$8mill and the calculation is based on today's energy rates.

We have also taken on some energy saving measures at our ice rink. We have installed energy efficient lighting and a new insulated blanket in the ceiling rafters to keep the cool air in. The most dramatic change in the rink is the upgrade of the chillers, the cooling system which makes the ice and keeps it frozen. The current chillers are 35 years old. They were appropriately referred to as 'museum pieces in operation'. It is only a matter of time before they fail. When they fail it will be during the hockey season and will be costly and devastating to our community—who is very proud of our hockey team completing the season with the best record in the state 19-3. These energy efficient updates were acquired with a grant from UI allowing us to use the savings to pay for the equipment over time. The payback period is only a matter of a few years.

This summer the Town of East Haven will undertake another project with UI at the East Haven high school. We will use our generators during peak times, which we need to do to ensure they are in working order, and UI will pay us nearly \$40,000 to establish of a clean energy fund. This will allow us to continue investing in money-saving efforts.

Lastly, East Haven will also be looking at the possibility of switching from oil heat to natural gas, which could realize a savings of \$400,000 in the first year, along with reestablishing the timer system for the interior lights at East Haven High School to stop the waste of electricity.

Thank you so much for joining us here today as we embark on a new path for East Haven. We are joined by our friends Shaw Keeney from UI with energy efficient lighting solutions, Thomas Dobkowski APlus building supplies, Sarah Morrill from Town of East Haven who will be helping you sign up for CT Clean Energy Fund which helps earn solar panels for the town, Eric Bartone from Precision Construction who will be giving a demonstration on solar panels and Joe Santino who is cooking up lunch for us and thank you to my staff for pulling this event together.

I encourage you to take advantage of clean energy options in your own home as we do the same throughout the town.