



Tim Rose and Steve Aratare

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But the need to recycle, and the case for sustained efforts to expand recycling, both remain strong! In Truro, Tim Rose reports that Integrated Paper continues to take our recyclables under a new arrangement: we pay \$40 a ton to have them haul away our plastics, cans, and bottles, less credit for the several grades of paper and cardboard, for which there is still a good market, partly offsetting the total cost.

**Every pound of waste we recycle saves money—and more.** It still is a better bargain than SEMASS, not only in terms of immediate cash flow but, more responsibly, in terms of the indirect environmental health, and economic effects of various methods of waste disposal. There are quite a few of those effects. As compared to landfilling or burning at SEMASS:

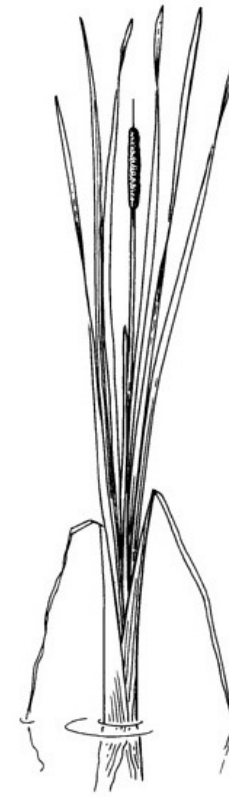
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- b) Recycling reduces the amount of poisons poured into our air, groundwater, oceans, and soil. Combustion produces, besides some useful electricity, wastes that are hazardous to our health, from dioxins to heavy metals, in the ash and via air-borne vapors that condense on the ground and in waters.
- c) Finally, recycling helps provide jobs at local industries, and adds useful feedstock for the production of new glass, metal, paperboard, etc. That relieves the pressure on virgin materials and aids- the process of changing from the old, unsustainable, once-through system (raw material⇒something used once⇒trash) to a sustainable one, converting all waste into valuable things.

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# Truro Tidelines



## Town Energy Initiatives The Truro Central School

Brian Davis has been in education for more than 30 years, the last 13 years as principal of the Truro Central School. He remembers waiting in line for gas in the 1970's which had an impact on his personal life and his career. Being in education offered him the opportunity to help young students understand issues of global warming and energy, and fortunately, the Massachusetts Department of Education built these concepts into the curriculum for 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders.

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Mary Hutchings, who has a Masters in Environmental Education, established a **recycling program** for all recyclable materials used by teachers and students. Every Tuesday they gather around to weigh it and then graph it on a chart. Goals are established and the students learn about the use of recycled materials. In addition, several years ago, the custodian initiated a **change in cleaning products** used in the school. For example, vinegar solution is used, decreasing the costs and the negative impact of chemicals on the environment. Another example of the school's commitment occurred eight years ago. The school underwent an energy audit conducted by the Cape Light Compact. At no cost to the school's budget, all of the **gym lights were replaced with energy-efficient lights**, and everyone now

knows the importance of **turning off their computers**. And then in a few years ago, **photovoltaic solar panels** were placed on the roof to begin to decrease the use of electricity generated by burning fossil fuels.

The commitment to energy efficiency, conservation and recycling is not only made by students and staff, but is very much supported by the School Committee. They meet and review the budget in conjunction with energy usage. They recognize the value of combining **the knowledge of energy efficiency with changes in behavior**, which has helped to improve not only the environment but the school's budget as well.

Lastly, Brian was pleased when a high school student, who had attended Truro Central School in the past, came to meet with him to talk about ways to decrease the use of fossil fuels. Ultimately this conversation led to redesigning the school bus routes, which cut the use of buses in half, decreasing the use of fuel and saving money. "The role of education today," Brian states, "is far more than the mastery of basic skills. It is the mastery of creativity, divergent thinking, and an awareness of the interconnected world in which our students live today and will live in, 40 years from now. The tools of today will not be adequate to meet the challenges of the future. Therefore, the development of curious, imaginative, and informed minds must be our priority."

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- Rebecca Bruyn
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Editor: Rebecca Bruyn

Layout & Design: Marc Kundmann



## More Green Electricity for Our School

The photovoltaic (PV) panels on the south-facing roof of Truro Central School function well, and are steadily producing some electricity. Their work is closely followed by students, who are learning a good deal about renewable energy, a topic that will bulk large in their futures. But since Truro earned this small PV installation a few years ago, a new state administration has made much more money available in matching grants to encourage expansion of this beachhead.

Tasked with the responsibility to help Truro do its part in the struggle with the climate change crisis by developing cost-effective renewable energy, the Energy Committee has produced the following plan. It will be put to the voters at Annual Town Meeting on April 28. Here is the text of the warrant article:

*"To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds, the sum of Seventy Thousand dollars and no cents (\$70,000) to match a grant being sought for a solar photovoltaic system, to supplement the electricity provided to the Truro Central School, or take any other action relative thereto."*

This investment will be the first sustainable energy project funded by the Town. It will provide over \$6,000 worth of electric power per year at today's rates, and has an expected life of at least 30 years.

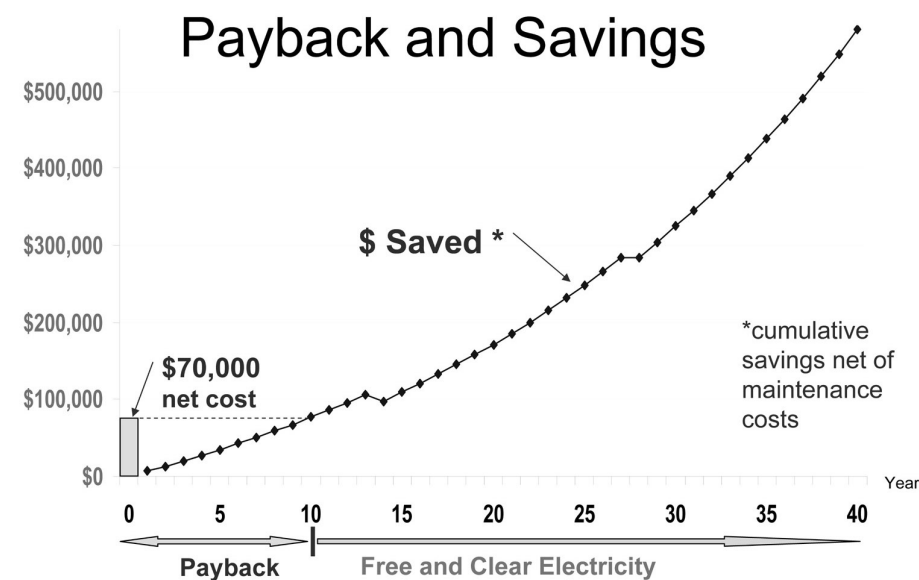
If the price for electric power continues to increase at 5% per year\*, the \$70,000 investment will be repaid in 10 years. By year 20 the photovoltaic system is projected to have saved the Town over \$170,000 in electricity costs.

If a grant for \$105,000 from the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, or other sources, is not received, the money will not be spent.

In plain language, state grant money is available to pay about 60% of the cost of a 25 kW system, which will provide approximately 14% of the school's electricity, and the cost to the town will be under \$70,000. That may seem like a lot of money, but it will all be paid back by 2019, after which the school will enjoy free electricity from the panels for decades into the future. If we think of it as an investment, the payback amounts to a rate of return of about 11.5%!

The present panels are connected to a monitoring system, which provides continuous reporting of the electricity generated in a form children can easily learn to read. The much larger PV installation will be similarly hooked up, and the educational project will continue, while taxpayers will enjoy a steadily increasing benefit.

\* based on historical averages



**Come to Town Meeting on April 28 to vote YES for more solar panels to continue the "greening" of our school!**

### Never flush drugs down the toilet!

So, what should we do with our outdated or leftover prescription pills? Or, for that matter, unwanted (often outdated) medications of any kind? Many people take the easy way and throw them into the toilet bowl, flush & forget. Alas, the groundwater doesn't forget. Remember, anything soluble you flush away ends up, via your leaching field, in the water table below us all. From which we then drink! worse, so do our kids, whose little growing bodies are much more affected by tiny amounts of drugs. So this one is a real NO-NO. Best available solution at the moment: put all pills into one container; pour liquid medicines into another bottle; and then take them to the next Hazardous Waste collection day, June 6, at the Truro dump. Remove and destroy the labels and recycle plastic pill bottles with other plastics unless they have no number in the triangle of chasing arrows. Labels often have your name, that of the drug, and refill information, which might be used harmfully.

**Tidelines Tip**  
Stop and Shop gives 5 cents off at the checkout counter for every cloth or reused paper bag you bring.

### Earth Day Paper Shredding

Thanks to the generous cooperation of the Cape & Islands Shredding Service, there will be a repetition of last year's successful shredding event on Earth Day, April 22, from 9AM to noon at the Transfer Station. It is NOT open to commercial firms, not even home businesses; they should make separate arrangements with the above service. Every family is invited to bring up to two cardboard cartons of their sensitive personal papers to be professionally shredded and recycled.

### What To Do With Old Books

Perhaps you have noticed the disappearance of the GOT BOOKS? steel receptacle for unwanted books at the Transfer Station. The books stashed there tended to mildew. To get rid of old books in good shape, drop them off at the Swap Shop, or bring them to the library. If the books are in bad shape or otherwise not likely to be wanted by readers, tear off and trash any hard covers and put the pages into the paper shack for recycling.



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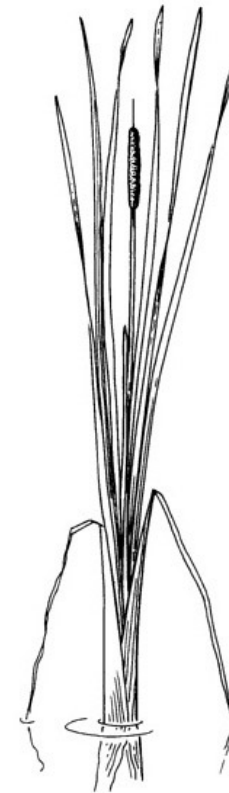
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