

The RE-Source

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER ABOUT RENEWABLE ENERGY & CONSERVATION | WINTER 2016

TOM BUTT, MCE VICE CHAIR
AND MAYOR OF RICHMOND



Welcome From the Board

Ask anyone and they'll tell you I'm a big believer in the virtues of follow-through. So I was quite pleased to be asked to introduce the second issue of The RE-Source newsletter. The RE-source is just another example of MCE's commitment to serving those who live and work in its member communities and is a way of sharing the stories and spotlighting the themes that move and affect us all.

I believe it was legendary House Speaker Tip O'Neill who coined the phrase, "All politics is local." As an MCE board member and the mayor of MCE's largest member-municipality, Richmond, I heartily agree with that sentiment.

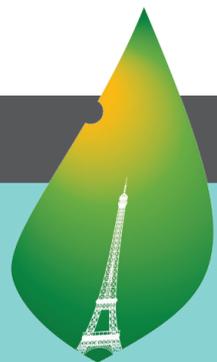
As many of you are aware, I recently had the honor of attending the United Nations Framework Convention

on Climate Change in Paris (COP21). It was a powerful meeting of the minds as officials and experts gathered from around the world to engage in fighting climate change with policies and solutions that are ambitious and equitable. One of the main take-aways from COP21 was that the measures and initiatives we take *locally* have profound impacts on our *global* community.

In this issue, you'll hear more about what was discussed at COP21, along with some of the local stories and projects that are making a difference in our communities. How's that for follow-through?

Best regards,





COP21 • CMP11
PARIS 2015
UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE

OUR 2025 GOALS FOR LIGHT GREEN
RENEWABLE ENERGY SERVICE

MCE was invited to the U.N. Climate Change Conference in Paris to present on community choice for energy and its benefits:

MITIGATING CLIMATE CHANGE
BY REDUCING GREENHOUSE
GAS EMISSIONS

CREATING LOCAL JOBS

STABILIZING ENERGY COSTS

CREATING A COMPETITIVE
ENVIRONMENT FOR
MONOPOLY UTILITIES

95%
CARBON-FREE

80%
RENEWABLE

GLOBAL BUZZ

MCE at COP21

by Dawn Weisz, MCE CEO

MCE was honored to join countries and leaders from around the world at the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Paris. The historic international agreement that resulted signifies the beginning of the end of over a century of economic and governmental reliance on fossil fuels.

OUR TRAVEL

The esteemed delegation MCE traveled and presented with – including leadership from Governor Jerry Brown's office, LEAN Energy US, and the City of Richmond, and organized by Kyoto USA and the Sequoia Foundation – represented California's trailblazing Community Choice Aggregation policies.

It was truly inspiring to witness such an enormous and diverse group of people from around the world unified in an effort to solve a crisis that crosses the usual chasms of culture, language, development, and access to resources.

A LOOK INSIDE

There were two main areas of COP21 – the Green and Blue Zones. The Green Zone was a large civil society space where non-governmental groups shared their work through presentations and information booths. While learning and sharing with others here, MCE discovered the relevance that the community choice model has in other countries, especially regarding

community empowerment and financing. Japan in particular is looking closely at adopting the model.

MCE was also invited to participate in the Blue Zone, a restricted area for international delegates. Within the huge mass of temporary structures, each participating country and region was given space to display highlights of their accomplishments to date and actions underway. A few themes surfaced as the most globally pressing and common:

- » Climate change mitigation and adaptation – particularly among low-lying and island countries that have been greatly impacted
- » Constraints of renewable usage in developing countries – such as intermittency and high cost of storage
- » Environmental justice – vulnerable indigenous communities and developing countries have been most heavily impacted by the effects of climate change, despite having had the least to do with creating the problem

With the terrorist attacks in Paris having occurred just weeks prior to the conference, the feeling among participants and ourselves was both somber and intensely hopeful, as is often the case when we arrive at a critical turning point.

The atmosphere of sharing at COP21 helped to highlight and connect the significant and far

reaching impacts that climate change has had around the globe. These range from the more commonly discussed direct effects such as drought, floods, and ocean acidification, to linkages to the lesser examined, indirect consequences like famine and civil unrest due to depleting access to water, food, and other necessary resources.

RETURNING HOME

MCE's ability to connect government representatives and community members was a relevant model at COP21, as was the ability to redirect existing fossil revenue toward renewable sources. So, as always, MCE is inspired by all the good work that continues to be done by each of our member communities, customers, and advocates! ■



PHOTOS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP):
At the COP21 Green Zone
Dawn Weisz, MCE CEO, presenting in the Blue Zone
Tom Kelly, Kyoto USA; Tom and Shirley Butt, City of Richmond; and Dawn Weisz, MCE, paying respects at the Place de la République memorial
Tom & Jane Kelly providing information on Community Choice Aggregation at the Green Zone
Shawn Marshall, LEAN Energy US; Cliff Rechtschaffen, California Governor's Office; Dawn Weisz, MCE; and Tom Butt, City of Richmond presenting at the Green Zone

WATTS HAPPENING: ENERGY EFFICIENCY NEWS

Lighting the Way to a Brighter Planet

Energy efficiency is a great way to save money on your energy bill, and is one of the easiest and most effective strategies for fighting climate change. Over the past three years, nearly 5,000 homes and businesses have participated in MCE's energy efficiency programs to make energy savings part of their everyday life. **In 2015 alone participants saved enough energy to equal the annual electricity needs of about 156 homes, in addition to saving over 7 million gallons of water!** Participating MCE customers saved

2015 was a big year in energy savings for MCE customers!

7 times more energy in 2015 than in 2013. That's a big leap in reducing harmful greenhouse gases!

To build on this success, MCE is laying the foundation to expand its programs and become a one stop shop for energy conservation and renewable energy development for all customers, including residential, business, agricultural, and industrial users.

START SAVING

We invite you to take advantage of our energy saving programs for homes, businesses, and multifamily properties at: mceCleanEnergy.org/energy-savings. Anyone in MCE's service area can participate, even non-MCE customers! ■



2015 MCE ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAM OUTCOMES



Richmond

Richmond is a city of paradoxes. Once simply known as a refinery town, Richmond is now forming a reputation as a green city on the rise. A recent report by UC Berkeley and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District recognized Richmond for having one of the smallest per-capita carbon footprints in the Bay Area. Twelve years ago, Richmond was ranked the 12th most dangerous city in America. Today, its innovative crime-prevention strategies and community policing have decreased crime significantly and have been nationally recognized as effective urban anti-crime policies.

Richmond both cherishes its unique history and looks to a bright future. Home to Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park, Richmond is a diverse and thriving city of over 108,000. In the coming years, it is slated to be the site of a new San Francisco Bay Ferry Terminal and proposed UC Global Campus.

If that wasn't enough, MCE's largest member city is about to boast the largest publicly-owned solar farm in the Bay Area. The 10.5 megawatt Solar One project will utilize 80,000 ground-mounted solar panels across a 49-acre site within the grounds of the Chevron Refinery. Solar One will produce enough electricity to power approximately 3,400 homes and represents about 100 new on-site construction jobs, at least half of which will be filled by Richmond workers. ■

A Fond Farewell to Chief Chris Magnus

We bid a bittersweet goodbye to Chris Magnus, who so ably and honorably served as Richmond Police Chief for the past decade. Chris has meant so much to so many — visionary leader, canny reformer, creative innovator, and community-minded cop. For us at MCE, Chief Magnus was a source of unreserved support, and above all, a faithful friend. We wish him and Terrance the very best in Tucson, though we will miss them greatly.

See you later, Chris. Cheers to new beginnings!

MEET A DEEP GREEN CHAMPION

Catahoula Coffee Co.

12472 San Pablo Ave., Richmond, CA 94805
Mon - Fri: 7am - 5pm & Sat - Sun: 8am - 3pm

catahoulacoffee.com



THE INSPIRATION: Catahoula (pronounced: cat-ah-HOO-la) opened its doors in Richmond in 2008 after owner, Timber Manhart, decided he had been traveling too far for good coffee. "Initially, our goal was just to have great coffee as close to home as possible," he explains. "Now we take pride in breaking the mold, investing in our community, and cultivating a 'liquid culture' that brings people together."

THE CONCEPT: Timber recalls many skeptics who said he was crazy for opening a coffee shop "in *that* part of Richmond." This particular stretch of San Pablo Avenue lacked the typical circumstances favorable to a small roastery. And Catahoula opened amidst the second largest economic downturn. Today, the business has won the coveted Bay Area A-List's "Best of Bay" for its coffee five out of the last six years. With quality in every cup, Timber's dedication to the pure form of the product is what his customers — affectionately called "Catahooligans" — have come to appreciate. "We care about quality in everything — from the beans we select, to the wellbeing of the farmers who grow them, to the air we all breathe."

THE COMMUNITY: A Richmond resident since 1999, Timber takes pride that his coffee shop quickly became a gathering spot for the local community. According to him, "Coffee should be an affordable luxury." From Grammy winners to local neighbors, everyone visits Catahoula for a dose of coffee and conversation.

THE CHAMPIONS: Timber, a laid-back father of two, doesn't quite envision himself on the front line of the climate change debates. So why is he a Deep Green supporter? "For us, going Deep Green was a no brainer. Supporting renewable energy doesn't have to be complicated or expensive. With MCE you don't have to bolt anything to your roof and you still get to choose 100% renewable energy." The business alleviated the small additional cost of Deep Green by taking advantage of MCE's Energy Efficiency Program to reduce its energy usage and monthly bill. "We're happy being Deep Green ... and maybe someday we'll even have our own wind turbine!" Highlighting his stewardship and community values, Timber emblazoned the side of every coffee bag with a custom "Deep Green 100% Renewable Energy" label. Swing by the shop to pick up a bag or visit mce.CleanEnergy.org/CatahoulaCoffee to see for yourself. ■



Alexandra McGee, MCE Community Power Organizer



Year Joined MCE: 2015

Education: BAs in Anthropology & International Studies, Humboldt State University; MA in Latin American Studies, UC Berkeley

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE MCE IN THREE WORDS?

Diligent, forward-thinking, enthusiastic.

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB?

I get to work on social issues that are relevant to renewable energy. I coordinate the Community Power Coalition to expand access to affordable renewables and energy efficiency programs, advance local sustainable development, and build inclusive policies. I focus on issues impacting our underrepresented communities – including low-income and Latino communities. When we include diverse perspectives, we become more resilient in the transition to a low-carbon economy.

WHAT DO YOU SEE IN STORE FOR MCE'S FUTURE?

I see communities taking advantage of our Feed-In Tariff to change the narrative of clean energy in our communities by producing clean energy in their backyards. I see happy Net Energy Metering customers with checks in hand for harnessing the sun on their roofs. I see larger publicly owned projects funded in

part by our Deep Green customers – like our 10.5 MW Solar One project in Richmond – making our service area more resilient to climate change, all while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

WHAT HAS SURPRISED YOU MOST SINCE WORKING AT MCE?

Definitely the responsiveness to customer priorities and concerns. A joint powers authority is a special breed of local government. When our customers said they were concerned about unbundled renewable energy certificates (RECs), we set a policy to reduce the unbundled RECs in our portfolio to 3% by 2016. Our customers were concerned about nuclear power, so we passed a resolution to never contract for nuclear. Our customers wanted more local electricity generation, so we began investing in projects like Solar One in Richmond and created a 100% locally-sourced solar service called Local Sol. ■

UPCOMING EVENTS

- * **MCE ENERGY EFFICIENCY WORKSHOP – ROLLING PORTFOLIO & APPLICATION**
Feb 4 | Richmond
- * **SUPER 50 PPK HEALTH BOWL**
Feb 6 | San Pablo
- * **MCE'S ENERGY EFFICIENCY LEARNING CENTER GRAND OPENING**
Apr 22 | San Rafael

Visit mceCleanEnergy.org/meetings for details and a full calendar of events.

GET INVOLVED

Join the Community Power Coalition!

We need your voice! We're calling on community-based organizations to bring their valuable perspective and experience to the Community Power Coalition. We work on a variety of issues ranging from local renewable energy project development – like the Solar One project in Richmond – to environmental justice and consumer protection issues affecting our low-income customers.

If your organization is interested in joining the Community Power Coalition and is located in MCE's service area, please contact Alexandra McGee at: aMcGee@mceCleanEnergy.org or (415) 464-6019. For more information on the Coalition, visit: mceCleanEnergy.org/community-power-coalition



1125 Tamalpais Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901

Stay in touch: [@mceCleanEnergy](https://twitter.com/mceCleanEnergy)



Sign up for our monthly e-newsletter:
mceCleanEnergy.org

info@mceCleanEnergy.org | 1 (888) 632-3674