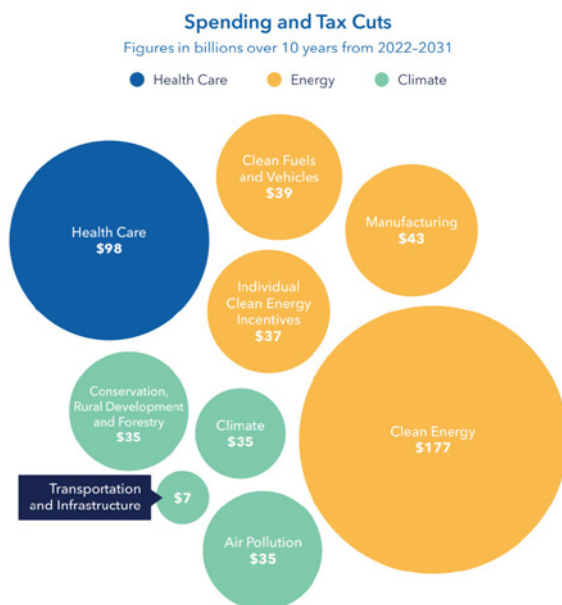




Inflation Reduction Act Passes and with it the Largest Climate Bill in History

With the passage by Congress of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) bill, there will be lower prescription costs for medications such as insulin, lower health insurance costs, lower energy costs for families, a 15% tax on corporations, and 369 billion for the most aggressive action ever to confront the climate crisis. This includes tax credits for the purchase of new and used electric vehicles, heat pumps and solar panels for your home, wind power, and more. As well, there will now be tax incentives for companies to reduce methane emissions (20x more damaging than carbon dioxide) and billions of dollars for environmental justice, addressing the fact that typically underserved communities have borne the brunt of environmental pollution. President Biden states that with this bill, the U.S. can reduce its emissions by 40% by the end of the decade, aligning with the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement. This very large step forward will hopefully assist Secretary of State John Kerry in encouraging other countries to pass similar climate laws, especially India and China, who, like the U.S., are the biggest polluters.



Heat Pumps and Electric Stoves in Your Homes

In order to reduce the use of natural gas, which is a fossil fuel contributing to global warming, now is the time to talk to your service professionals about installing a heat pump or electric stove. For those like me with an old gas-fired furnace and radiators, I recommend considering changing

your AC unit to a heat pump (up to \$8000 government credit) and using it as much as possible to both heat and cool your home. Then, when the weather becomes very cold, you can set your system so that the gas furnace will help out. This technique can reduce your use of natural gas by 90%. Changing a gas stove to electric is much more straight forward, but in the meantime, it is important to always use a vent when using your gas stove because it produces cancer-causing emissions.

Are We Done? What Else Is There to Do?

Around the house, there are many things we can do to be more sustainable. They include:

- 1. Compost:** Call the Town Hall if you are not yet signed up to receive FREE composting service. Already half the town is signed up
- 2. Insulate your house:** Have a professional come to your home for an assessment. Insulating your home better will reduce your energy bills significantly, saving money in the long run
- 3. Use less plastic** in any way possible, such as substituting reusable shopping bags and not buying plastic items
- 4. Rake more and blow less:** Electric blowers should only be used to clean drain areas and hard surfaces, not the grass, where leaves should be mowed into the grass to create free mulch
- 5. Buy an electric vehicle or mower**
- 6. Ask restaurants to consider not using plastic utensils, plates, and packaging**
- 7. Divest in fossil fuels:** This could be not using banks that fund fossil fuel companies, index funds, etc.
- 8. And, most important, the four Rs:**
REFUSE to buy or use wasteful or nonrecyclable items
REDUCE the use of harmful, wasteful, or nonrecyclable items
REUSE items and use fewer single-use items
RECYCLE whenever possible

Please discuss ideas with your family.

Please let us know if you have any comments or ways that our town can become more sustainable by emailing us at: tos.environmentcommittee@gmail.com.