



- Climate Activists Strike to Demand Action
- DC Attorney General on Environmental Priorities
- Chapter Tackles Methane Gas Emissions
- Zero-Emissions Vehicles on National Mall
- Zero Waste Efforts at the DC State Fair
- Our New Chapter Coordinator
- Reducing Climate Pollution & Water Use
- Sierra Club Asks DC Council for Safer Streets
- Sierra Club Wrapping Calendars in Plastic?!
- DC Chapter Executive Committee Election
- Events and Volunteering
- Committee Meetings
- Outings
- Thank you for your support!



Sierra Club activists at the Climate Strike in Washington on September 20

Climate Activists Strike to Demand Action

Sierra Club DC Chapter members joined thousands of youth from around the region and country on September 20 in the Climate Strike in DC. Inspired by Swedish 16-year-old Greta Thunberg and timed three days before United Nations Climate Summit in New York, it was part of a series of international strikes and protests to demand immediate action on climate change. An estimated four million people worldwide participated, making it the largest climate protest in history.

The DC Chapter organized a meetup before the event for members, volunteers, and the Sierra Club's Washington office staff. With thousands of others, Sierrans marched from John Marshall

Park to the Capitol.



Karl Racine at the Sierra Club DC office

DC Attorney General Talks with Chapter About Environmental Priorities

DC Attorney General Karl Racine spoke to the Sierra DC Chapter on September 26 about environmental cases his office is pursuing.

Under Racine, DC has joined lawsuits against the Trump administration's moves to undermine vehicle emissions standards, weaken the Clean Water Act, and end the Obama administration plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from power plants.

Locally, the attorney general has taken legal action against auto shops in Ward 5 that have illegally dumped oil in public spaces and a landlord in Ward 7 who ignored repeated orders to remove lead paint from residential units.

During Q&A with Sierra Club members, Racine confirmed that his office is planning a lawsuit against Exxon Mobil for lying to the public about climate change.

He took questions about the implementation of the Clean Energy DC Omnibus Act and the possibility that Metro may seek to evade the law's requirement that all public buses in DC transition from fossil fuels to electric power over coming decades.

Racine also pledged to hold Washington Gas to commitments it made before the Public Service Commission, including an agreement from the gas utility to change its business model from selling fracked gas to new endeavors that are consistent with DC's commitment of carbon neutrality by 2050.

And the attorney general promised to start a working group with environmental stakeholders to advise his office.

Chapter Tackles Methane Gas Emissions

With passage of the Clean Energy DC Omnibus Act last year, DC's electricity will be supplied by 100 percent renewable sources like wind and solar by 2032, with incremental increases over the next decade.

Methane gas, piped into homes, offices, schools and other buildings in DC, is estimated to be responsible for a fifth of DC's emissions of the greenhouse gases that cause climate change. (Academic research shows methane emissions are usually much higher than official estimates.)

For DC to meet its commitments to reduce carbon emissions 50 percent by 2032 and 100 percent by 2050, the District will need to transition off gas and end methane emissions completely.

To help advance the transition off gas, the Chapter's Clean Energy Committee established a Beyond Gas Subcommittee to explore policies to reduce gas emissions and advocate for shutting off the gas pipeline. To learn more about our efforts and get involved, please contact the Beyond Gas Subcommittee's co-leads, Matthias Paustian (paustian@gmail.com) and Mark Rodeffer (rodeffer@gmail.com).



Sierra Club volunteers at National Drive Electric Week on the National Mall

Residents, Tourists Check Out Zero-Emissions Vehicles on National Mall

Hundreds of electric vehicle enthusiasts and pedestrians on the National Mall got a glimpse of some of the latest electric vehicles last month at an event co-hosted by the Sierra Club DC Chapter.

The chapter's Clean Transportation Subcommittee helped organize the annual National Drive Electric Week event on September 14, in partnership with Plug In America and the Electric Auto Association.

It was an opportunity for people to learn about a range of electric cars, ask questions, and speak with other owners. Electric vehicle enthusiasts and passersby were excited to have conversations about the potential to go electric, or just take their pictures in the driver's seat of a few eye-catching cars.

The chapter hosted the event on a pedestrian walkway section of the Mall, with a broad range of vehicles to see, from sleek sports cars to fun two-seaters, and even a Pepco utility truck. In addition to electric vehicle owners, the event was attended by representatives from Tesla, Nissan, Pepco, and members of the Electric Vehicle Association of Greater Washington.

For more information about vehicle electrification efforts in DC, contact Matt Bearzotti (mjbearzotti@gmail.com).



Zero waste volunteers at the DC State Fair

Zero Waste Efforts at the DC State Fair

At this year's DC State Fair, the chapter's Zero Waste Committee helped recruit green team volunteers to monitor waste stations and assist fairgoers in properly disposing of waste at compost, recycling, and trash bins.

To help divert more of the waste toward the compost bin, fair organizers convinced 60 percent of vendors selling or providing food to use only compostable service ware.

The 10th Annual DC State Fair was held on Sunday, September 8 at Gateway DC, a park and pavilion at St. Elizabeth's East Campus in Ward 8, making it the first fair east of the Anacostia River. The DC State Fair is a showcase of DC's agricultural, culinary, and artistic talents, and is operated entirely by volunteers.

Thanks to the excellent bin monitoring by volunteers at the fair, twenty-one 42-gallon bags of compost were generated, with less than one percent contamination, according to the compost hauler, Veteran Compost. An estimate of the total waste diversion rate is still being calculated. One key improvement from last year was that all of the native trash cans were covered this year (thanks to the help of the volunteers), so the waste stations captured much more of the waste than last year.

For more information about the DC Chapter's Zero Waste Committee, contact Doreen Campbell (dbc20009@gmail.com).



Chapter coordinator Debbie Chang at the Climate Strike on September 20

Meet Our New Chapter Coordinator!

Debbie Chang started in August as the [new Sierra Club DC Chapter Coordinator](#). Debbie comes to the Sierra Club from the DC chapter of Citizens' Climate Lobby, where she focused on climate advocacy and organizing. Debbie grew up in California and previously volunteered with the Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter in the San Francisco Bay Area. She was part of the Democratic Party's campaign effort during the 2016 general election in New Hampshire.

At the Sierra Club DC Chapter, Debbie will be supporting Sierra Club members and engaging volunteers to advance the Sierra Club's grassroots advocacy for environmental conservation in DC. She will be working on our clean energy, zero waste, water quality and sustainable transportation initiatives. To say hello or to get more involved with the chapter, email Debbie at debbie.chang@sierraclub.org or fill out our [volunteer form](#).

Chapter Backs Legislation to Reduce Climate Pollution, Water Use

DC Councilmember Mary Cheh has introduced legislation to require that appliances sold in DC are more energy and water efficient.

The energy, water, and monetary savings from the bill would be substantial. A group called the Appliance Standards Awareness Project, which worked with Cheh's office to write the bill, estimates that by 2025, these requirements would save 78 gigawatts of electricity, 700 million gallons of water, and \$20 million in utility bills every year (the annual numbers are almost double that by 2035).

Air purifiers, dishwashers, faucets, lamps, showerheads, toilets, and other items would have to become more efficient. The efficiency of some other appliances, such as heating and cooling systems and water heaters, are regulated by the federal government, which preempts states and localities from setting more stringent standards.

The committee on Transportation and Environment, chaired by Councilmember Cheh, has yet to schedule a hearing on the bill. The DC Chapter is urging the committee to schedule a hearing, and we plan to have Sierra Club members testify in support of the legislation.

For more information on the Sierra Club's efforts to pass the appliance efficiency bill, contact Ayk

Yilmaz (ayilmaz83@yahoo.com).



Protected bike lane on 15th Street NW

Sierra Club Asks DC Council for Safer Streets

The chapter's Smart Growth Committee is testifying at an October 24 DC Council hearing in favor of legislation to expand pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

Walking and bicycling are healthy, zero-carbon transportation options, but DC's roads, sidewalks and bicycle lanes need to be safer and more comfortable. Though the DC Council and the DC Department of Transportation have done commendable work on planning for a sustainable future and improving bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure, the issue has not received the urgent attention it deserves.

In April, after the tragic week when bicyclist Dave Salovesh and pedestrian Abdul Seck were killed, the Sierra Club wrote an open letter to the Council of DC expressing our disappointment with the lack of action to make our streets safe for pedestrians and cyclists. The letter called on DC Councilmembers to draft and implement legislation that will require that the DC Department of Transportation install protected bike lanes that are recommended in DC's long-term transportation plan whenever a road undergoes significant repair or capital improvement.

At the October 24 hearing, the DC Council Transportation and Environment Committee will hear testimony on the Mandatory Protected Cycling Lane Amendment Act of 2019, the Vision Zero Enhancement Omnibus Amendment Act of 2019, the Curb Extensions Act of 2019, and the Cyclist Safety Campaign Amendment Act of 2019.

The planet is in the midst of a climate crisis. DC residents continue to die in avoidable traffic incidents despite DC's Vision Zero commitment to end all traffic fatalities by 2024. DC's Vision Zero and climate goals are not compatible with the current car-centric mentality. MoveDC, the District's transportation plan, details a carefully thought-out plan for DC to achieve these goals. The Sierra Club strongly supports legislation to expedite bicycle lanes, pedestrian-safety improvements and other traffic safety measures in alignment with the MoveDC plan.

If you're interested in getting involved in the chapter's Smart Growth Committee, contact Payton Chung (payton@westnorth.com).

Sierra Club Wrapping Calendars in Plastic?!

Earlier this year, a Sierra Club member in DC member expressed her frustration that the Club uses plastic packaging for its calendars. Given that plastic is a major source of pollution, she wondered why it is used by the most influential grassroots environmental organization in the country.

The DC Chapter took this complaint to heart and took action on the issue. In July, the DC Chapter Executive Committee unanimously passed a resolution asking that plastic packaging be discontinued for Sierra Club calendars and publications by 2020 (for 2021 calendars). Catherine Plume, the chapter's delegate to the Council of Club Leaders, took the resolution to the Council's September meeting in Oakland, California, where it was unanimously approved.

The Sierra Club is not obliged to adopt resolutions from the Council of Club Leaders, but given the widespread agreement on this issue, the DC chapter is optimistic that plastic packaging use will be discontinued. We're looking forward to a beautiful and plastic-free 2021 Sierra Club calendar. We hope you are, too! (Psst: they make great gifts!!)

DC Chapter Holding Executive Committee Election in Fourth Quarter of 2019

The Sierra Club DC Chapter is holding its annual election to select members of the chapter Executive Committee (ExCom) in the fourth quarter of the year. If you are interested in running or would like to suggest another person, or if you have any questions about the election, please contact Erica Weyer via email at eweyer@gmail.com by Wednesday, October 16.

We are particularly interested in people with fundraising experience or interest who are willing to help raise money for the chapter.

Please note that any candidates for the ExCom and those eligible to vote in the election must be Sierra Club members as of October 31, 2019. You can join or renew your membership [here](#).

Events and Volunteer Opportunities

Autumn Stream Clean-up at Watts Branch followed by noon picnic - Saturday, October 19 at 9am (Kenilworth Park at Watts Branch, 4052 Deane Avenue NE)

The stream clean up involves picking up litter on the stream bank of our 500-foot adopted span of Watts Branch, a tributary to the Anacostia River. All supplies, gloves, equipment will be provided. Cleanup will happen rain or shine. All ages welcome. Wear old clothes; and if you plan to walk through the water, closed toe shoes. There will be plenty of parking. More info and [RSVP here](#).

Forum on Residential Composting - Tuesday, October 22, 6-8pm (Shaw Neighborhood Library / Watha T. Daniel Library, 1630 7th Street NW)

Learn how to organize your building for composting! The Sierra Club DC Chapter is hosting a Composting Forum at which you can learn how to bring composting to multifamily residences (apartments, condos, and co-ops). The forum will feature composting service providers as well as residents of properties that have implemented a composting program to discuss lessons learned, best practices, and how to implement a similar program at your multifamily residence. [RSVP here](#).

Wilderness First Aid certification course - Saturday AND Sunday, November 9-10, 8:30am-7:00pm (Sierra Club offices, 50 F Street NW)
Cost: \$195. \$15 discount for Sierra Club Members. Details on [how to register](#) here.

Two-day course for hands-on learning: how to save life & limb when mired in the wilderness of an urban disaster zone, travel or rural area far from hospital, or natural area miles from an access point, during the critical minutes or hours before ambulance arrival. Blend of classroom instruction and hands-on problem-solving rescue scenario practice. Come away with actual do-it-yourself care-giving skill and confidence. No prerequisites. For adults and teenagers with solid attention spans. Know your loved ones are safe wherever they are.

Save the Date: Holiday Party & Silent Auction - Thursday, December 12

Our Annual Holiday Party & Silent Auction is taking place on Thursday, December 12. If you're interested in volunteering to help make it a success, [fill out this form](#) and we'll be in touch!

We are eager to find new volunteers and activists!

The Sierra Club promotes clean energy, zero waste, clean water, and sustainable transportation. We also sponsor cleanups in the District and outings in DC and beyond. [Fill out our Volunteer Form to get involved!](#)

Committee Meetings

Zero Waste Committee Meeting - *Tuesday, October 8, 2019 at 6:30pm (50 F Street NW)*
Contact Doreen Campbell (dbc20009@gmail.com) for more information. [RSVP here.](#)

Smart Growth Committee Meeting - *Wednesday, October 9 at 6:45pm (50 F Street NW)*
Contact Payton Chung (lists@westnorth.com) for more information. [RSVP here.](#)

Clean Energy Committee Meeting - *Tuesday, October 15 at 6:30pm (50 F Street NW)*
Contact Lara Levison (laralevison@comcast.net) for more information. [RSVP here.](#)

Clean Water Committee Meeting - *Wednesday, October 16 at 6:30pm (50 F Street NW)*
Contact Larry Martin (lmartindc@gmail.com) for more information. [RSVP here.](#)

These and other events are always posted on our chapter calendar at <https://www.sierraclub.org/dc/calendar>

Outings

[Sierra Club Potomac Regional Outings \(SCPRO\)](#)
[Sierra Club DC Inspiring Connections Outdoors \(ICO\)](#)

Thank you for your support!

As always, we couldn't do this without your support. Sign up to be a monthly donor to keep our campaigns, committees, and advocacy going. Giving [\\$5, \\$10, or \\$20](#) a month can greatly affect the way we communicate with our members and activate our campaigns. Just check the box to make your gift monthly.



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