

Town of Acton

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Town of Acton Marks Earth Day With Reflection on Sustainability Milestones and a Look at Ongoing Efforts



Left to right: Representative Tami Gouveia, Senator Jamie Eldridge, Representative Danillo Sena, Town Manager John Mangiaratti, MassDEP Commissioner Martin Suuberg. (Courtesy Photo Town of Acton)

ACTON — The Town of Acton joined the more than one billion people worldwide who celebrated Earth Day today, recognizing the progress it's made toward sustainability and looking ahead to efforts in the future.

Acton marked the day by planting a new heptacodium tree at NARA park, which will feature flowers and provide shade to parkgoers. Attendees also took part in a litter clean-up and free bike and helmet safety checks by Pedal Power Bike and Ski. Free helmets were provided courtesy of Town of Acton Nursing Services.

"Earth Day is a great opportunity to take stock of the work we've done as a community to stave off the impacts of climate change, through our commitment to sustainability and reduced emissions townwide," Town Manager John Mangiaratti said. "I am grateful for the efforts of everyone in our community — as well as our partners in this work — for their sharp focus on these critically important goals."

Additionally, Acton yesterday welcomed Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Martin Suuberg, Sen. Jamie Eldridge Rep. Danillo Sena, Rep. Tami Gouveia and members of the Select Board to Town Hall, where they celebrated the fully-funded DC fast charger for electric vehicles, which will be installed at Veterans Ball Field — a short walk from the shops on Great Road.

"We appreciate the support from Commissioner Suuberg, our state legislators, and other state officials in helping with financial resources such as the grant we received for the new EV charger," Mangiaratti added. "I am thankful for the ambitious and bold leadership shown by the Select Board in prioritizing and supporting efforts to combat climate change. I also want to recognize the excellent work of Sustainability Director Andrea Becerra in leading the process of developing a Climate Action Plan and several other sustainability initiatives."

Acton Celebrates its Moves Toward Sustainability

The new low-emissions North Acton Fire Station, which uses geothermal heating and cooling, began operations in February. Since then, the station's new solar rooftop has generated 12.2-megawatt hours — the equivalent of planting 143 trees. Additionally, Acton's new triple net-zero elementary school will open with the start of the upcoming school year.

Like its buildings, Acton's municipal fleet is also moving toward a more sustainable future. By the end of 2023, all of the town's marked police vehicles will have been replaced by hybrids,--one hybrid saves over 1,250 gallons of fuel and eliminates more

than \$3,000 in fuel costs. Acton Police are also welcoming their first fully electric vehicle, a Ford Mustang Mach-E, that was partly funded by a MassEVIP fleets Fleets grant. The new car, which is replacing a gas-powered vehicle, will arrive in town later this year.

The town also added a Nissan Leaf EV to its fleet, and is looking into how it can utilize the vehicle's energy-storing capabilities to supplement the energy use at power Town Hall during peak hours when the vehicle is not in use.

In addition to the town vehicle, Acton received 10 fully funded e-bikes as part of a collaboration with Metro Mobility, via an ACT4All grant from the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC). Another grant from MassCEC is offsetting the costs of a Transportation and Mobility Summer Fellow who will focus on initiatives to reduce Acton's emissions — half of which come from vehicles and transportation.

Residents Are Invited to Join the Sustainability Effort

The Town of Acton is actively working to support residents' efforts to go green. The Building Department is implementing updates to the permitting process and reducing barriers to installing rooftop solar arrays and energy-efficient windows.

Additionally, the town is working with Abode Energy Management to provide free consultations to residents and businesses seeking to switch to air source and ground source heat pumps. To learn more, visit abode.energy/acton.

Residents and businesses looking to reduce their carbon footprint are encouraged to visit [Energize Acton](#), which provides information on the steps to take to increase sustainability on an individual level and contribute to a more sustainable future. The initiative is a partnership between the Town of Acton and Acton Climate Action.

Three Upcoming Events Focus on Climate

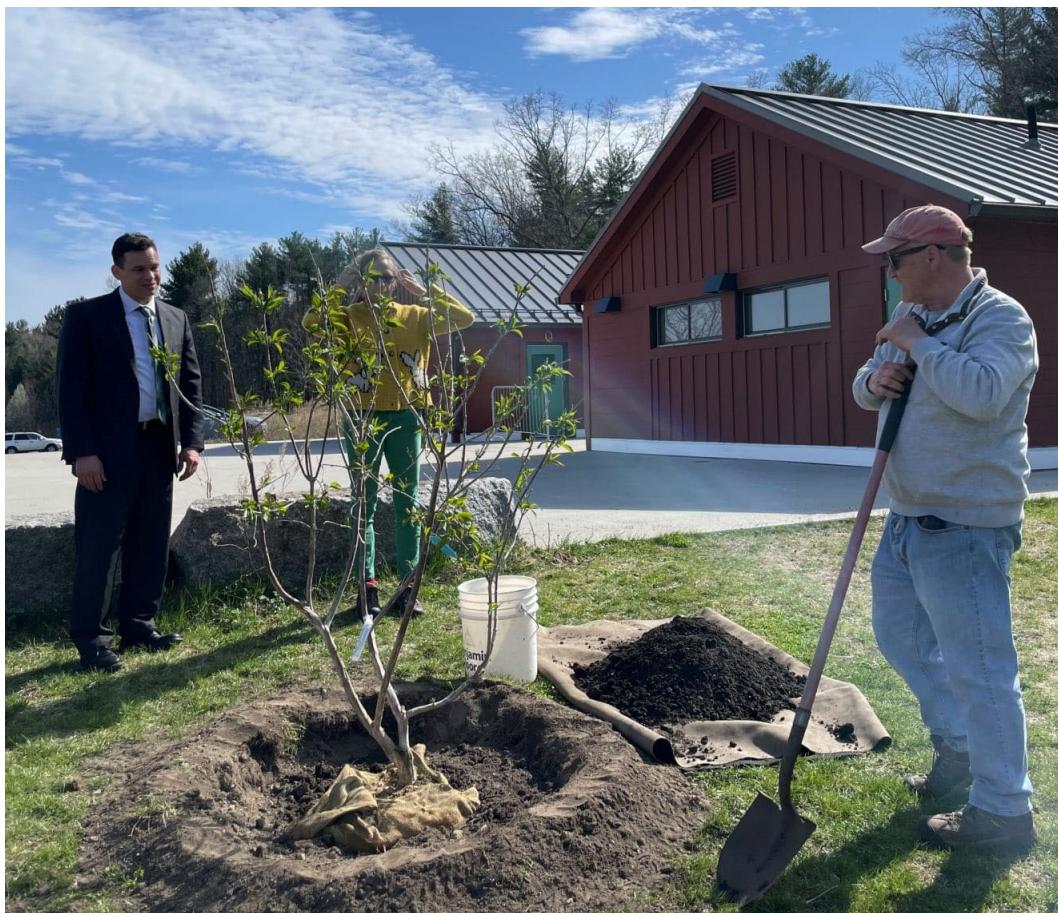
Residents have an opportunity to take part in three events focused on climate and sustainability in the coming weeks.

On Wednesday, April 27, from noon to 1:30 p.m. the town is hosting an online Climate Action Plan workshop via Zoom. To register, click [here](#). To catch up on past workshops and to learn more about the process, visit the CAP page [here](#).

On Friday, April 29, Acton will recognize Arbor Day's 150th anniversary during a ceremony from 9:30-11 a.m. at the Public Safety Facility. The Town of Acton received a Tree City USA designation in 2020, a recognition from the Arbor Day Foundation highlighting Acton's commitment to urban forestry, community improvement, and civic pride. No registration is required.

Finally, Energize Acton is moderating a discussion on building electrification on Thursday, May 12, from noon to 1:15 p.m. The event will feature the latest updates on the Electrification Roadmap, an assessment of the electrification of the highest energy-consuming buildings in Acton and in the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District. The engineering study is funded by the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) program. A registration link will be shared soon, but residents can email sustainability@actonma.gov if they would like to have the link shared directly with them when it becomes available.

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Left to right: Representative Danillo Sena, Natural Resources Assistant Bettina Abe and Natural Resources Director Tom Tidman at the tree planting event. (Courtesy Photo Town of Acton)

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