

I would be interested in your thoughts for next steps. Some town actions: The police department distributed flyers to every school child. Anti idling resolutions have been passed since 2012. it's hard these days to tell which cars are actually polluting. I asked a friend to turn off her engine and she said "but it's electric."

Personally, I ran anti-idling campaigns at Central Ave school when my kids were young. I paid for signs that the principal hung up (they are still there, though faded). The kids did a protest that was on the front page of the paper and we handed out no idling pledges for the kids to take home. What happened? Not much. Given the proliferation of cell phones, the behavior has gotten worse--people idle and check their email.

My perspective: Given the issues we are facing in combating climate change, we should consider what is important to focus on—where we will get the most bang for our buck. EVs are transforming the car industry; the town is a leader in supplying EV infrastructure and promoting EV education (the second annual EV Expo will be held on Earth Day at Sunday Motor Co.; 4 towns will be partnering again).

Tom I encourage you to educate yourself on the NJ Energy Master Plan and the new energy efficiency programs rolled out by the state through utility companies (PSE&G in Madison, JCP&L in Chatham).

If we are going to devote ourselves to climate and health messaging (idling falls in both categories), I think that we should have a strategy on what where we should put our—where is the biggest bang for our buck. People have climate fatigue—they're being told to do this and that every day. It could easily be argued that the noise and emissions from gas leaf blowers are more of a health/climate hazard than idling. What is our choice?

The MEC basically chooses to work on projects that don't take on a hectoring tone—we try to inspire people to create change by offering solutions like the EV Expo, Town-Wide Yard Sale, multi-town composter sale, pollinator plant sale, eco garden tour, Ask an Arborist tree forum and community building eco tip forum. We have found people learn most from their neighbors. Personally the health hazard I'm very concerned about is the increase in mosquito spraying, which is typically a broad spectrum nerve toxin and very damaging to pollinators. The marketing of mosquito spray companies is slick and misrepresentative. We are facing a bird apocalypse underscored by an insect apocalypse. Behavior changes in that arena are critical.