



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: March 12, 2010

Earth Festival Seminar Series Focuses on Renewable Energy, Natural Gas, Conservation

MILFORD: Building on the success of its January renewable energy workshop, and in response to the growing public interest in alternative energy, the Otsego County Conservation Association has teamed with Wildlife Learning Company to offer an Earth Festival Seminar Series next month on topics ranging from energy audits and retrofits to natural gas drilling to zero waste.

On Saturday, April 10 in the Milford Central School auditorium, industry professionals will give presentations on geothermal and solar thermal energy and Finnish wood stoves. The importance of energy audits will be discussed, as will both residential and commercial energy retrofitting. With the information and materials provided, home and business owners will be better able to assess renewable energy options and evaluate the compatibility of these energy sources with their individual sites and lifestyles.

The seminar series will also explore various aspects of natural gas drilling, as four speakers take the stage to share their perspectives and concerns. Representatives from the environmental, oil and gas, and legal communities will discuss drilling currently underway in Otsego County by Gastem, an oil and gas exploration and development company; flaws in the proposed New York State regulations on horizontal drilling and high-volume hydraulic fracturing; how to recognize and report possible violation of environmental laws and regulations; and legal considerations for individuals and towns.

The Earth Festival Seminar Series will run from 8:30 a.m. (registration) to 3 p.m. Pre-registration is required by April 2 at www.occainfo.org (click the "Seminar Series" link) or by phoning 607-547-4488 or 607-547-4010. The fee of \$10 covers attendance at any or all of the presentations and refreshments, and includes admittance to the traditional Earth Festival activities held concurrently in both gymnasiums. Payment should be received by OCCA before April 9. The registration fee will be waived for students, and scholarships are available for those who would otherwise be unable to afford to attend.

Seminar topics and presenters include:

Energy audits/retrofits and solar thermal heat -- Equity Energy
Energy issues with new/retrofit commercial construction -- NYSERDA
Finnish wood furnaces and ovens -- German Mike's Masonry
Geothermal -- Great Brook Enterprises
Low Carbon Diet -- OCCA
Natural gas drilling -- Lou Allstadt, former Mobil executive; Orville Cole, Gastem; Erik Miller, OCCA; and Mary Jo Long, attorney
Zero waste -- Chris Burger

Now in its fifth year, Earth Festival is an environmentally focused, interactive event featuring exhibits, workshops, vendors, food and entertainment, all with a fun, earth-friendly twist. Students from Milford Central School will be leading children's activity stations throughout the day, and are currently preparing a

wide array of eco-art for public viewing. The Milford Education Foundation will end Earth Festival with a special "recycled fashion" show (by ticket only).

Earth Festival activities will kick off with a free Family Movie Night, including a special eco-art/fashion preview, at the school on Friday, April 9 beginning at 6:30 p.m. with the movie "WALL.E."

Earth Festival 2010 is sponsored by OCCA and Wildlife Learning Company, and is funded in part by the Bezos Family Foundation. Those interested in exhibiting or making a financial contribution should call OCCA at (607) 547-4488 or e-mail admin@occainfo.org.

The Seminar Series agenda is as follows:

Renewable Energy Session

8:30-9:00am - Registration

9:00-9:15am - Energy Audits, Bennett Sandler, Equity Energy

9:15-9:30am - Energy Retrofits, Bennett Sandler, Equity Energy

9:30-9:40am - Q & A

9:40-9:50am - Break

9:50-10:10am - Geothermal, Dave Austin, Great Brook Enterprises

10:10-10:30am - Solar Thermal, Norm Farwell, Equity Energy

10:30-10:40am - Q & A

10:40-10:50am - Break

Natural Gas Drilling Session

10:50-11:10am - Erik Miller, Otsego County Conservation Association, on how to document/record important observation information and who to call in the event of environmental harm or public safety issues

11:10-11:30am - Lou Allstadt, former Mobil executive, on his concerns regarding the NYS DEC's draft SGEIS

11:30-11:50am - Orville Cole, Gastem, on drilling currently underway in Otsego County

11:50-12:10pm - Mary Jo Long, attorney and Afton Board member, on legal considerations for individuals and towns

12:10-12:30pm - Q & A

12:30-1:00pm - Break

Energy Session, Continued

1:00-1:20pm - Energy Issues with New and Retrofit Commercial Construction, Joe Morosko, NYSERDA

1:20-1:30pm - Q & A

1:30-1:50pm - Zero Waste, Chris Burger, Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter Solid Waste Committee

1:50-2:00pm - Q & A

2:00-2:10pm - Break

2:10-2:25pm - Low Carbon Diet, Martha Clarvoe, Otsego County Conservation Association

2:25-2:45pm - Finnish wood furnaces and ovens, Mike Lorenz, German Mike's Masonry

2:45-3:00pm - Q & A and Wrap-up