



News Release

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
New England Regional Office
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Connecticut Organizations and Residents Recognized by EPA for Environmental Achievements

BOSTON – Seven winners from Connecticut were recognized today at the 2016 Environmental Merit Awards ceremony of the US Environmental Protection Agency’s New England regional office. The environmental leaders were among three dozen recipients across New England honored for helping to improve New England’s environment.

Each year EPA New England recognizes individuals and groups in the six New England states who have worked to protect or improve the region’s environment in distinct ways. The merit awards, given out since 1970, honor individuals and groups who have shown particular ingenuity and commitment in their efforts.

“We are proud to honor those citizens, businesses and organizations who have gone the extra mile to help protect and preserve our region’s natural resources,” said Curt Spalding, regional administrator of EPA’s New England office. “These New England award winners are committed to making our towns, cities and countryside of New England healthy, vibrant places with clean air, land and water.”

The Environmental Merit Awards, which are given to people who have already taken action, are awarded in the categories of individual; business (including professional organizations); local, state or federal government; and environmental, community, academia or nonprofit organization. Also, each year EPA presents lifetime achievement awards for individuals.

Merit Award Winners from Connecticut listed by category are:

Lifetime

Robert Moore Durham, Conn.

Robert Moore has played a major role in shaping the environmental history of Connecticut. Many of the state’s environmental programs, including its environmental justice policy, water diversion program, Brownfield program, pesticide management programs, and Superfund program, were developed under Moore’s leadership. Moore’s entire working life, including 25 years with the Conn.

Department of Environmental Protection and more than 10 years with the Metropolitan District Commission, has been dedicated to environmental protection.

Moore started with the Connecticut Water Resources Board as Director of Water Compliance, and worked his way up to chief operating officer of DEP. He developed and put in place the state's ground water program. He was instrumental in Connecticut's nitrogen reduction strategy, including the award-winning nitrogen trading program, as well as the development of the state plan for complying with Connecticut's Clean Air Act. In addition, Moore oversaw Connecticut's recycling program and solid waste management plan, initiated its Urban Site Remediation Program, and established its Clean Water Fund, which has funded more than \$1.5 billion of water infrastructure improvements. Many of these programs have been models for other state programs. Moore's commitment to the environment continued as he moved to the MDC as chief administrative officer, responsible for developing a \$2.1 billion combined sewer overflow program, and a \$2.5 billion drinking water program. In addition to providing water and sewer service, the commission also maintains parks and facilities and manages more than 30,000 acres of watershed land.

Moore has served on numerous boards and committees related to the environment, including the State Emergency Response Commission, the Association of State and Interstate Water Pollution Control Administrators, the New England Water Pollution Control Commission, the Connecticut 208 Areawide Water Quality Management Planning Board, and the Farmington River Wild and Scenic River Study Committee. As current Chair of the Policy Subcommittee of the Connecticut State Water Plan Steering Committee, Moore will continue to play a key role in water planning in Connecticut.

Margaret Miner
Rivers Alliance of Connecticut
Litchfield, Connecticut

In nominating Margaret Miner, US Sen. Chris Murphy called her "a true champion of the planet." Since 1992, Miner has been executive director of the Rivers Alliance of Connecticut, a non-profit that protects rivers and streams in Connecticut by promoting sound river-conservation policies and helping watershed protection groups statewide. Miner has spent numerous days walking the legislature's hall, going from meeting to meeting to testify on legislation affecting environment. Miner is an environmental activist who provides advice and guidance on a range of environmental policy.

Under Miner's leadership at the Rivers Alliance, Connecticut in 2005 passed vanguard legislation requiring the state to adopt flow standards for all rivers and streams. In 2011, the first phase of the flow regulation was adopted. And in 2014, the state for the first time passed a law requiring comprehensive water planning. The Rivers Alliance is fully participating in the statewide water planning process and has extended its goals to the protection of both quantity and quality in headwaters and ground water. In addition, the Alliance helped found the State Lands Working Group, which protects conserved lands. During her years as director, Rivers Alliance has run conferences twice a year, maintained a webpage of conservation news and been a clearinghouse for information on creating and using water trails in Connecticut. With Miner at the helm, the River Alliance has helped individuals and organizations trying to protect the state's waters, often fighting city hall. The organization's helpline guides individuals and groups striving to protect water resources. Throughout her 25 years at the Rivers Alliance, and before that directing the Roxbury Land Trust, Miner has made a difference by organizing count-less people to get involved in her cause, while helping to shape public policy and opinion.

Individual

I M. O'Leary
Waterbury, Connecticut

Mayor Neil O'Leary is being recognized for leadership and vision for brownfields redevelopment and community revitalization in Connecticut's fifth largest city. Known as the Brass City because of its industrial past, Waterbury faces a legacy of hazardous materials and petroleum contamination as it struggles with poverty, foreclosures, crime, and job loss. The city has about 200 brownfields, many along the city's waterways. O'Leary's track record of brownfields success began when he was police chief and had a vision for a new park and ballfield at the Police Activity League complex. O'Leary's focus on results helped guide the project team through to complete the park last year. The complex has been instrumental in transforming a once blighted neighborhood into a vibrant neighborhood focused on improving the lives of local youth.

As mayor, O'Leary set his sights on other critical brownfields. By tackling complicated environmental cleanup in a manner consistent with the needs of industrial tenants, his team managed to get manufacturers who had planned to leave to instead remain and even expand. In addition, by championing the city's local work force, he attracted new manufacturing companies and more than \$40 million in private investment. Most recently, O'Leary built support for an expansive redevelopment of the Freight Street District, which includes the city's train station. This project, involving challenging brownfields issues, offers the promise of a renaissance, transforming dozens of acres of brownfields into new transit-oriented developments. O'Leary exemplifies the leadership and passion for success necessary to develop brownfield sites.

Business, Industry and Trade

United Illuminating Conservation Load Management Team Orange, Connecticut

Pat McDonnell; Sheri Borrelli; Amy Mclean-Salls

United Illuminating takes seriously its responsibility to reduce the impact its customers have on the environment. Because energy is its business, United Illuminating is uniquely situated to promote energy efficiency. The company, in funding its Conservation Load Management team, is making its customer base stronger and its resources go further. The Conservation Load Management team at United Illuminating has developed programs that help low income people and Houses of Worship, educate school children, target high energy usage sectors such as waste water treatment plants, and assist municipalities in saving energy and taxpayer money. United Illuminating works with partners to promote these programs and make them successful models that are replicated across the country. Its partners include the Energy Star program, local educational institutions such as the University of New Haven, Norwalk, Connecticut Community College, Eastern Connecticut State University, retail establishments such as Home Depot, and the religious community. The team has benchmarked and audited more than 30 Houses of Worship as part of the "Making a Visible Difference" project in Bridgeport. United Illuminating sponsors the Energize Connecticut Center in North Haven, which brings in busloads of school children for hands-on, interactive education in energy efficiency.

United Technologies Corporation Farmington, Connecticut

United Technologies Corporation, manufacturer of aerospace products and energy efficient building equipment under a variety of iconic brands, including Pratt & Whitney, Otis Elevator, Carrier, Kidde, and Chubb, has had continuous operations in New England since 1925. Understanding the substantial environmental footprint that factory operations can make, UTC requires all operations annually to reduce their environmental impact operations. As part of UTC's environmental stewardship program, reductions are specified through five year goals and associated annual numeric targets, and businesses are required to reach their targets regardless of business growth. Recent operations have achieved impressive results, and UTC has attained or exceeded nearly all of its goals and targets. In addition to the physical actions taken to meet goals, UTC also engages

with its employees to promote broader operational sustainability, routinely hosting Earth Day celebrations at its headquarters and other facilities, sponsoring a variety of employee and green team awards, and annually contributing hundreds of company sponsored volunteer service hours on behalf of community-based environmental organizations.

Governmental

Food Waste Management Prevention

Vt. Department of Environmental Conservation - Cathy Jamieson

Mass. Department of Environmental Protection - John Fischer

Conn. Department of Energy and Environmental Protection - Chris Nelson

Massachusetts, Vermont and Connecticut are national leaders in state policies to recover food and manage food scraps and waste. In 2014, Vermont, Massachusetts and Connecticut passed laws limiting food waste sent to landfills. Each law restricts the amount of waste coming from businesses, grocery stores, hospitality, colleges, universities, hospitals and food processors. The first goal of all three states is to increase awareness of food waste and to increase the amount of food being recycled or composted. The bans are now one year in, and these three New England states have reduced food going to landfills. The Vermont Food Bank has seen donations of surplus food increase 24 percent. Massachusetts has seen a significant jump in technical assistance requests for diversion. Recently Rhode Island enacted an organics ban modeled after these three states.

A map done by all three states showing food waste became a model for a national EPA map on wasted food. In addition, Massachusetts set up a model technical assistance program dedicated to working with businesses on food recovery and management. New England and its creative state policies, led by Massachusetts, Connecticut and Vermont, clearly is a leader in food recovery.

State Performance Partnership Improvement Team

NH Department of Environmental Services - Susan Carlson; Vincent Perelli; Ted Diers; Wendy

Waskin; John Duclos; Maine Department of Environmental Protection - Jeff Crawford; RI

Department of Environmental Management - Terry Gray; Vt. Department of Environmental

Conservation - Carey Hengstenberg; Conn. Department of Energy and Environmental Protection -

Nicole Lugli; Mass. Department of Environmental Protection - Deneen Simpson

The State Performance Partnership Improvement Team made the concept of E-Enterprise a reality.

The team used 21st century tools to streamline work plan negotiations and ultimately strengthen oversight and management of the Performance Partnership Grant progress for New England state partners. The work of the team, consisting of representatives from six states, showed that waste can be eliminated, processes streamlined and budget shortfalls tackled through partnerships and on-line cooperation.

With declining funding from EPA over the past few years, New England states needed to address budget shortfalls for environmental efforts. A request by the state of New Hampshire for help in eliminating waste through “lean” processes led to improvements and efficiencies in environmental work across New England. Ideas were generated through the “lean” events that could benefit other states. The State Performance Partnership Improvement Team seized the chance to implement changes in 2015.

Vincent Perelli of the NH Department of Environmental Services was a leader in convening all six New England states to commit to trying this new approach. The state partners worked with EPA New England to design a new SharePoint site, which served as the E-Enterprise platform to conduct real-time state work plan negotiations, provided the opportunity to spur program dialogue in a new way, and allowed codification of negotiated 2-year agreements in a single document. This was the first

time EPA New England used SharePoint for this type of E-Enterprise collaboration on such a large scale with external users. This involved significant time, effort and coordination within EPA and with state information technology offices, to resolve issues as they emerged.

Despite the technical challenges of creating this new E-Enterprise approach, it has been very successful. For instance, the air program completed negotiations through SharePoint with all six states within two months, and agreement for all work plan elements were completed with three states by mid-December – significantly faster than prior years. A high level of interest has been shown nationally for using this model to improve joint strategic planning by EPA and states to save time, resources, and produce measurable environmental results.

This year's Environmental Merit Awards program was dedicated to the historic Paris climate agreement last year at which over 190 nations committed to universally limit global warming. The agreement is a strong starting point and promotes action over time that will protect this planet from the impacts of climate change.

More information on EPA's Environmental Merit Awards, including photographs from the award ceremony: <https://www.epa.gov/environmental-merit-awards-new-england>

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