

that are of concern to our community.

**Jesse Bourdon, Library Director,
Croton Free Library**

To the editor:

As we are surrounded daily by evidence of climate change and its effects on our environment, many residents are making a serious effort at educating us all to what is happening and what can be done. They include Holy Name of Mary's Care for Creation Ministry, with its monthly presentations, the newly emerging group, Croton100, which is evolving from the Croton Climate Initiative (CCI), and the village's Sustainability Committee and Conservation Advisory Council (CAC).

The Village Board has also been involved in many initiatives aimed at reducing the dilatory effects of our operations on the climate. For example, in just the last two months, the village has taken three steps in this direction.

-While we are already identified by the state Department of Environmental Conservation as a Climate Smart Community, we have adopted policies including the separation of recyclables in all village offices and at all village parks and venues and at all village-sponsored events as we pursue Silver Climate Smart Certification by the DEC.

-In December, the Board of Trustees authorized the purchase of an electric vehicle (EV) as a replacement for the village's old Code Enforcement vehicle. This is consistent with our long-range plan for replacement of old vehicles with EVs. We already are using EVs for parking enforcement duties and have installed four charging stations at two locations.

-At Monday's board meeting, a new capital fund was created that is specifically dedicated to funding opportunities for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The initial money in this account will come from another green initiative already in place - the community solar project on the roof of the Department of Public Works building from which the village will receive lease payments of \$25,000 a year - half of which will

To the editor:

Natural gas is a "Bridge to Nowhere."

Two blips appeared in the news about 20 months apart, and finally the dots are getting connected.

The first was a report of an accident at a natural gas well operated by an Exxon subsidiary in Belmont County, Ohio, in February 2018. The second was an article last month (<https://nyti.ms/34tdR7f>) about a paper published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. The paper describes how a Dutch-American team of scientists from the Environmental Defense Fund and the European Space Agency used a new instrument called Tropomi to measure the magnitude of the Ohio leak from a satellite in space.

The report was devastating, finding that the leak "released more methane than the entire oil and gas industries of many nations do in a year." Exxon is downplaying the magnitude of the leak. More importantly, satellite surveillance is finding that leaks are more common and larger than previously thought. The 2015 Aliso Canyon, Calif. leak was bigger than the Ohio leak, as was a long-running compressor leak in Turkmenistan. Even today, ongoing leakage from six super-emitters in a West Texas oil field are significant in magnitude.

So how bad was the Ohio leak really? The scientists calculated that the gas well leaked 120 metric tons of methane per hour for 20 days. That's a total of 57,600 tons. Unburned methane has 80 times the heat-trapping index of carbon dioxide (CO2) over a 20-year period, i.e., the next two critical decades from a global warming point of view. Thus, the leak was the equivalent of 4.608 million tons of CO2. Let's put this in perspective. It is the same emission as the economy-wide emissions of Zip Code 10520 (pop. 12,810) for a period of 18 years! Far from discouraging us, this should make us redouble our local efforts to reduce emissions, look for alternatives to oil and gas, and take up Con Edison on the subsidies they are offering for such alternatives.

If news of the leak makes you frustrated or angry, please consider reducing your dependence on Exxon Mobil products. Consider divesting shares of Exxon Mobil in your investment or retirement accounts. More broadly, ask for shares and mutual funds in your accounts that have high ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) scores. Lobby for reinstatement of recently repealed regulations regarding methane leaks. Publicly speak out about the dangers of fracked gas and how even a small amount of leakage in the system nullifies any clean-burning benefits.

And finally, if someone says that natural gas is a bridge to a clean energy future, have a conversation with them about inevitable leaks.

Sincerely,
**Chandu Visweswariah,
Croton-on-Hudson**

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