

# Sustainability + Handbook



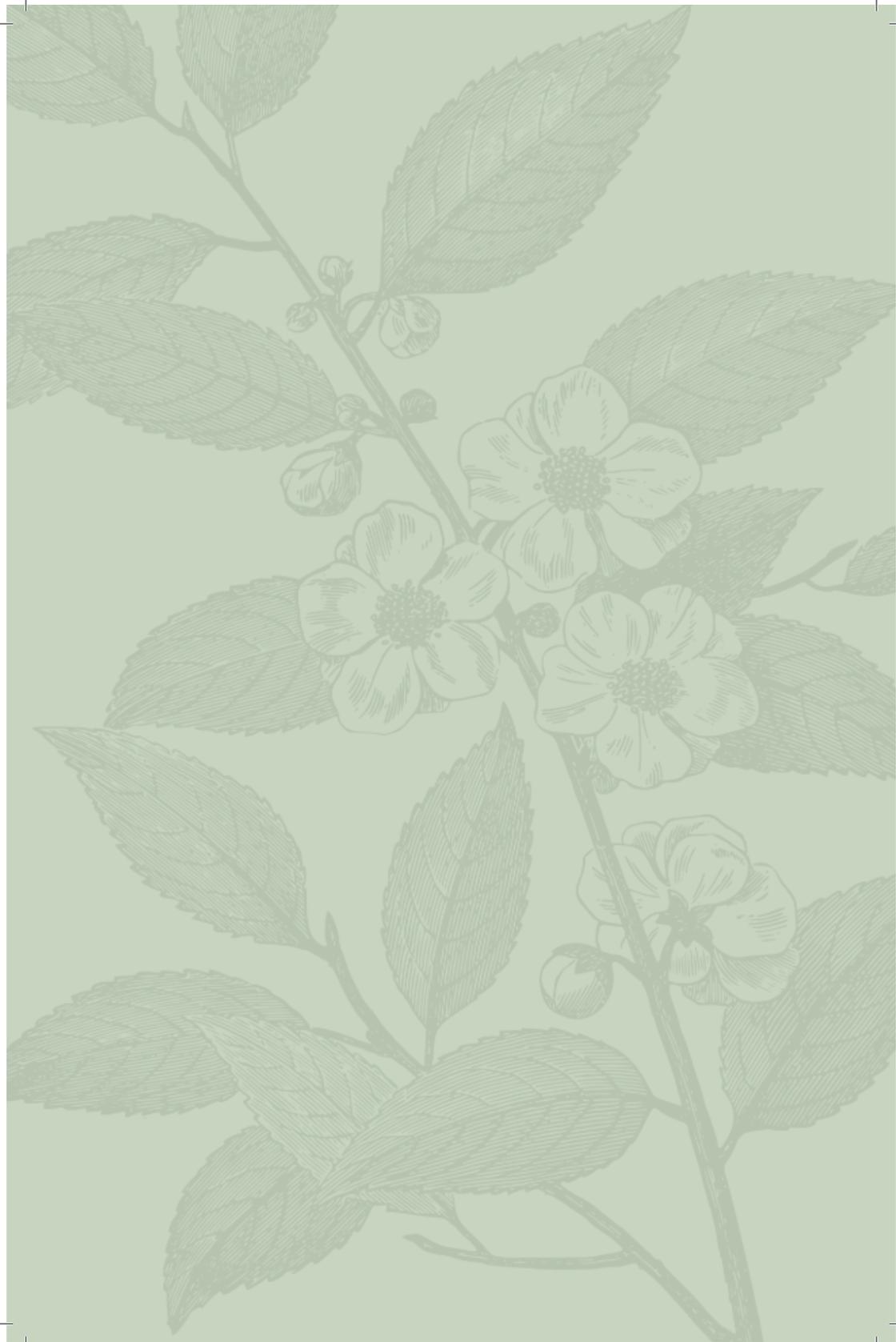
*Sustainable*  
**MEDFIELD**  
[SustainableMedfield.org](http://SustainableMedfield.org)

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## Save This Handbook

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# Sustainability Handbook

***Sustainable Medfield*** created this handbook to help homeowners make better informed, more sustainable choices when replacing old heating systems, buying a new car, fixing up their property, and more. Energy-saving technologies change quickly. Both experienced and new homeowners can benefit from learning about the most recently available options before starting on home improvement projects. There are actions on our website, [sustainablemedfield.org](http://sustainablemedfield.org), a great place to find independent information on home and yard improvements, often with money-saving bonuses. Testimonials under each action on our website provide advice from fellow Medfielders who have made many of the decisions you may face. Join your neighbors in making the most of our wonderful community.

Sustainable Medfield is an initiative of the Medfield Foundation. It is a 100% volunteer-run 501(c)3 non-profit charitable corporation whose mission is to build community.

***Sustainable Medfield*** would like to thank the Medfield Foundation Legacy Fund for its generous donation to support the creation of this handbook. The Medfield Foundation Legacy Fund is a professionally-managed endowment created to support community-driven projects. Volunteer-run and designed to complement the initiatives of Medfield organizations, the Medfield Foundation Legacy Fund raises funds from the community and makes grants to established non-profit organizations through a competitive process. For more information or to contribute to the Medfield Foundation Legacy Fund, please visit [medfieldfoundation.org/legacy-fund/](http://medfieldfoundation.org/legacy-fund/).



# Home Energy

About half of the greenhouse gases in town come from buildings, with **40% from residences**. When you are reaching the natural transition points of replacing a heating system or other appliances, plan to adopt the latest electric technology.



At the 2021 Town Meeting the townspeople passed Article 22: Climate Goals/ Net Zero Resolution. This affirmed the Massachusetts Net Zero goal and recognized that to achieve this will take the efforts of residents and businesses to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Massachusetts supports making our homes more fuel efficient while reducing the carbon footprint, starting with a free Mass Save assessment. An approved energy company will evaluate your home for efficiency and make recommendations. Benefits may include discounts on insulation, windows, LED lightbulbs (at no cost and installed free of charge), and guidance on MA rebates and heat loans. Check them out here: [masssave.com/](https://masssave.com/)

Our website has advice on solar panels and heat pumps. Zero percentage loans are available for heat pumps and hundreds of Medfield homes have solar panels. A payback period of four to six years on solar panels can make for an attractive financial return, too. Energy Sage has consultants that can guide you in evaluating your home and selecting installers. [energysage.com/](https://energysage.com/)

Heat pumps are increasingly efficient for heating and cooling. They are frequently quieter and provide for a more comfortable home than prior technologies. Eversource offers a reduced electric bill for homes using at least one heat pump for heating from November through April. The discount is applied to the entire electric bill, another great incentive.

Hot water heat pumps and induction stoves or cooktops are other appliances that can reduce emissions (rebates are also available). Gas cooktops have been linked to childhood asthma, so switching to electric stoves has health benefits, too. [pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9819315/](https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9819315/)

## Electric Vehicles

*Many Medfielders* have upgraded to electric vehicles (EVs) including BEVs (Battery-only EVs), PHEVs (plug-in hybrid EVs), and standard hybrids. These options are less polluting than gas-only vehicles



and prices have become competitive when considering the total cost of ownership. Massachusetts has rebates of up to \$6,000 for new and used cars. EV owners save between 40-50% on maintenance. There are fewer visits to a mechanic as the cars don't need oil changes and other work related to engines, and brakes last longer, too, saving owners time. About 40% of the greenhouse gases generated in Medfield come from passenger vehicles, so going electric is a great way to reduce pollution. With a growing variety of models suited to different lifestyles these vehicles have grown in popularity with over 100 options for sale in the US alone. Electric vehicles (EVs) are one in four of passenger cars sold globally at this writing. There are several public charging stations in town: on Janes Avenue behind Avenue and at the Bank of America office on Main Street. Most home owners with EVs have a Level 2 charger installed in their garage for convenience and rebates for home chargers are available. Learn more here: [mor-ev.org/](http://mor-ev.org/), and about various EV models: [greenenergyconsumers.org/drivegreen](http://greenenergyconsumers.org/drivegreen).

**Pro-tip:**  
*Add solar panels to your roof and power your car with solar!*

Note that idling for more than five minutes is against the law. Turning off the engine if stopped for more than 10 seconds saves fuel and money.

## Water

We are fortunate to have **good, clean water** in Medfield, blended from six wells. Our key issue is managing regular droughts, so being water-wise helps keep the aquifer healthy while reducing your water and sewer bills. Irrigating between 6 PM and 9 AM saves about 30% on water use, with early-morning watering ideal. Irrigation can result in unexpectedly high expenses. There are irrigation management tools for optimizing outdoor use such as Rachio, which can regulate usage based on soil moisture. The short payback period makes a small investment worthwhile financially and environmentally.

Read about our two watersheds, the Neponset River and the Charles River: [neponset.org/](http://neponset.org/) and [crwa.org/](http://crwa.org/).

Consider a rain barrel to collect roof run-off water you can use in your garden and containers.

You can find information about Medfield's water here: [town.medfield.net/636/Water-and-Sewer-Division](http://town.medfield.net/636/Water-and-Sewer-Division)



## Trash and Recycling

**Residents can choose** to use the Transfer Station with a paid sticker or opt for a paid curbside service to pick up trash and recycling. Learn all about the Transfer Station and how to get a sticker (pass) here: [town.medfield.net/2333/Transfer-Station](https://town.medfield.net/2333/Transfer-Station)

The success of all recycling programs depends upon successful economics. Recycling only officially accepted items is very important. “Wish-cycling” (recycling what you hope can be recycled if it is not officially accepted) is more harmful than erring on the side of more trash.

## Beyond Trash and Recycling

Even if you have **curbside** trash and recycling service, opting for a Transfer Station sticker gives you access to the Transfer Station where you can dispose of hard to recycle items such as metals, rigid plastic items like buckets, empty propane tanks, appliances, and plastic bags. Mattresses are accepted for a



fee. There are also areas for yard waste, compost, and ashes. There are periodic collections for hard, white foam like that used for packing, and electronics.

One of the gems in Medfield is the seasonal **Swap Shop** at the Transfer Station. They accept most household items, toys, yard tools, furniture, and more. You can drop off these items and then you “shop”. The Swap is open May to September and welcomes volunteers.

There are donation bins year-round for textiles, clothes, and small household items. Did you know that any clean, dry textile, regardless of condition (holes/tears, etc.) can be donated in the textile bins, including shoes? Various clothing drives occur throughout the year. Reducing fast fashion has global benefits.

## Composting

Composting has many **advantages**: diverting food waste away from incineration, reducing methane pollution, and saving Medfield taxpayers money. Many Medfielders compost in their backyards. Also, at the Transfer Station there are food waste bins to the right of the tip-floor, making it easy for residents to dispose of their food waste without backyard composting. Another option is curbside food-waste composting. Black Earth Compost has a paid service that will pick up your food waste curbside. Learn more at [blackearthcompost.com](http://blackearthcompost.com). Composting at the Transfer Station and through Black Earth can include items that cannot be composted in your backyard such as meats and bones.

**Any effort that you can make to reduce consumption is the first and best step toward ultimately generating less waste that needs to be disposed of.**

Have questions about what you can recycle? We have answers. [recyclesmart.org](http://recyclesmart.org) is the state-wide site and [town.medfield.net/2333/Transfer-Station](http://town.medfield.net/2333/Transfer-Station) covers Medfield-specific information.

**Christmas trees:** Local Scout Troop #89 has an annual fundraiser and will pick your old tree up and bring it to the Transfer Station for composting.

**Pumpkins:** Unity Farm in Sherborn collects undecorated pumpkins after Halloween and can accept Christmas trees that certify they have not been treated with chemicals that would be harmful to their animals. [unityfarmsanctuary.org/](http://unityfarmsanctuary.org/) They also have open houses, a fun time to bring the family and visit the gentle animals living there in peace.



**Repair Cafés:** Sustainable Medfield organizes **Repair Cafés**, also known as fix-it clinics, where you can bring broken items such as lamps, clocks, bicycles, sewing projects, and what-have-you. Local volunteers with special skills in repairing items do their best to fix your item for free. Watch our newsletter and social media for details about upcoming events.

## Pest Management

**Got bugs?** Don't we all? Some bugs are easy to like such as butterflies, lightning bugs, and dragonflies. Dragonflies can eat large numbers of mosquitoes a day and they eat flies and other pests, too. Address pests by starting with the most targeted methods that are least hazardous to nature. Two effective ways to fight mosquitoes are with mosquito dunks, available at hardware stores (they prevent the insects from developing) and repellents like Thermacell machines. Both are environmentally-sensitive ways that really work. Norfolk County drops larvicide in area



waterways each spring. You may hear the helicopters overhead. Getting your yard sprayed for mosquitoes and ticks may create a false sense of security as they have limited effectiveness, and kill beneficial insects such as dragonflies and bees. Ticks usually enter our yards on mice. Tick tubes are a good way to kill ticks. They contain permethrin-soaked cotton that mice use to build their nests. That reduces transmission of tick-borne diseases. Commonly used tick sprays are **toxic to birds and fish** and shouldn't be used near any food including vegetable gardens. [thermacell.com/products/tick-control-tubes](http://thermacell.com/products/tick-control-tubes). If you choose another product, find one that can be used near agriculture. Treating clothing with permethrin is a great way to repel all insects.

Learn how to deal with rodents on our website and at [massaudubon.org/](http://massaudubon.org/) for best practices. Avoid rodent poison that sickens and kills family pets and raptors and cruel glue traps.

Ensure that any holes around the outside of your home are sealed to prevent problems. That can save heat loss and reduce water damage, too.

## Property Care

**Native plants** are not only beautiful, they support nature, are generally more resilient to weather extremes, and don't need fertilizer or nearly as much water. Check out the ideas on our website to learn how to integrate them into your property.

Make sure service providers such as landscapers are good environmental stewards. Ask them to refrain from unwanted services which may include insecticides, fertilizer, and herbicides. You will have a more natural landscape that is healthier for you and your pets, and save money.

If you're investing in new lawn care equipment, consider going electric. This equipment is quieter, requires less maintenance, and produces zero direct emissions, making operating this equipment healthier for homeowners.





## Shopping

*The Medfield Community Market* is a seasonal market with farmers, artisans, and specialty retailers. [medfieldcommunitymarket.com/](https://www.medfieldcommunitymarket.com/)

Check out local farms for the freshest produce, cheese, and meats. And ice cream. And cookies. Did you want flowers, too? How about some blueberries?

Consignment shops and secondhand stores are growing in popularity and quality as people learn about the negative impact of fast fashion and offerings improve. Area stores include Savers thrift store (deep bargains), 560 Boston Providence Hwy, Norwood, 2nd Hand Rose (designer goods), 937 Great Plain Avenue, Needham, The Closet Exchange (luxury items), 906 Great Plain Avenue, Needham, and Bethany House Hope Chest, 1134 Main St., Millis.

## Get Outdoors

**Good for easy walks, strollers, and dogs.**

Medfield Rail Trail: Ice House Road parking lot.

Medfield State Hospital on Hospital Rd.

In back of the Wheelock School on Elm St.



### **Wildlife and forest walking**

Mass Audubon and the Trustees of Reservations have a variety of challenging hikes and nature walks. [massaudubon.org](http://massaudubon.org). [thetrustees.org/](http://thetrustees.org/). We have six Trustees properties right here in Medfield with Hale Reservation, [hale.education/visit/](http://hale.education/visit/) nearby in Dover and Westwood. Some Trustees properties and Hale Reservation have mountain biking, too.

Check out [traillink.com](http://traillink.com) and the Bay Circuit Trail [baycircuit.org/](http://baycircuit.org/) for further explorations including off-road bike riding.



*Holt Pond*



The Medfield Library has a **Library of Things** where you can borrow a Kill-a-Watt device to see which appliances are costing you the most and an induction cooktop to test before making a purchase. There are electric lawn tools, musical instruments, camping equipment, and more.

[medfieldpubliclibrary.org/borrowing/unusual-items-2/](https://medfieldpubliclibrary.org/borrowing/unusual-items-2/)

**Medfield Community Electricity:** Eversource delivers and services electricity in Medfield. They maintain the wires and fix problems from storms. The town's Medfield Community Electricity program sources electric power with a default of 10% more renewable energy than Eversource's basic rate service. This program, the default for our homeowners, provides stable and competitive rates. Opting up to 100% renewable energy is a great way to reduce your carbon footprint, especially if your roof isn't suited for effective solar panels. Check it out here: [electricity.medfield.net/](https://electricity.medfield.net/). The discount is applied to all electricity consumption, another great incentive.



## Gardens

**Native Plant Trust** (aka  
The Garden in the Woods)  
They sell native plants, too.  
[nativeplanttrust.org/](http://nativeplanttrust.org/)

New England Botanical  
Garden Tower Hill,  
[nebg.org/](http://nebg.org/)

The Massachusetts  
Horticultural Society,  
[masshort.org/](http://masshort.org/)



## Stay and Get Connected

Far more information is available on our website, [sustainablemedfield.org](http://sustainablemedfield.org). In addition to providing resources to help residents learn about steps they can take to improve the environment, Sustainable Medfield brings local groups together who are interested in sharing information, resources, and implementing environmentally sound solutions.

Sign up for our newsletter here: [info@sustainablemedfield.org](mailto:info@sustainablemedfield.org). Would you like to contribute to Sustainable Medfield? Please note on the website that your donation is for Sustainable Medfield. Thank you! Click here: [medfieldfoundation.org/make-a-donation](http://medfieldfoundation.org/make-a-donation).

Would you like to get involved? Email us to learn about the many opportunities in Medfield. It is a great way to build community and meet interesting people.

Visit [sustainablemedfield.org](http://sustainablemedfield.org) and follow us on Facebook [facebook.com/SustainableMedfield/](https://facebook.com/SustainableMedfield/) and Instagram [instagram.com/sustainablemedfield/?hl=en](https://instagram.com/sustainablemedfield/?hl=en).

Contact Sustainable Medfield at: [info@sustainablemedfield.org](mailto:info@sustainablemedfield.org)

