



CLIMATE ACTION NEWSLETTER

SHOMREI HA'ADAMAH



Guardians of the Earth

FROM THE DESK OF THE CLIMATE ACTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Welcome to the third edition of the *Shomrei Ha'Adamah* newsletter. The name of our newsletter means guardians of the earth. This is both our directive as humans and our mission in working on the environment from a social action perspective.

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This summer, we have felt the burden of climate change very close to home: severe heat to the point of code red warnings, severe storms, and poor enough air quality that we reached code purple. This comes at a time when the federal government has reduced and ended programs to protect the environment and prevent further environmental catastrophe.

While we think globally, we will act locally to ensure that we can keep ourselves aware and engaged with the environment. Instead of being bowled over with worries about what is to come, we will take action and continue to build awareness.

As we approach the High Holidays, think about what you have done for the environment over the last year.

- What are you most proud of?
- What can you do as we approach a new year to continue this great work?
- What can you do with the Chevrei Tzedek community to keep us all focused on this work?

Please reach out to the Climate Action Committee through [Sally Grobani](#) to share your ideas!

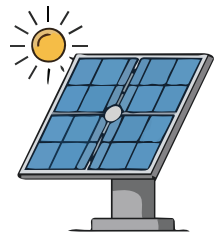
CHEVREI TZEDEK'S CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

>>> FACILITIES AND CLEAN ENERGY

At Chevrei Tzedek, we are awaiting the completion of the construction at the Myerberg in order to launch our composting program. Stay tuned!

Neighborhood Sun continues to bring new solar farms into the program which offer consumers a 10-20% discount off of the energy portion of their BGE bills. Speaking of bills... Neighborhood Sun (NS) customers now get one bill that incorporates the NS credits directly into the BGE bill. For more information, including a link to register, click [here](#).

Maryland is considering making changes to the EmPOWER MD program in an attempt to balance affordability and environmental needs. Click [here](#) to learn more.



>>> FOOD AND FOOD WASTE

We are excited to share some of the positive changes we have made to our kiddush practices, which are becoming our new norms:

- We do not buy any petroleum based utensils, cups, or plates.
- We recycle cans and glass bottles
- We have reusable tablecloths.
- We always have pitchers for ice and water
- We avoid food waste by
 - not leaving open food containers in the refrigerator, and
 - encouraging congregants to take home left over food after kiddush.

As we know that even “recyclable” plastic is not always recycled, we have asked that kiddush sponsors consider bringing drinks in aluminum cans. Aluminum is consistently recycled.



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>>> FOOD AND FOOD WASTE

For the future?

We hope to continue minimizing our use of plastic. We are limited by the lack of our own dedicated kitchen. Sadly, almost all kosher restaurants and caterers in the Baltimore area use plastic trays and other containers made of plastic. We are searching for a long-term solution to this conundrum. We hope to come up with ideas that both fit our financial and eco-friendly needs.

We would be happy to hear feedback from anyone who has ideas, especially if you are willing to join us in this struggle. You do not need to join the Social Action Committee, or the Climate Action Committee, to share your suggestions.

Please contact [Nechama Bernhardt](#) with your thoughts.

>>> ADVOCACY

This legislative season we closely followed the progress of the "bottle bill" which would establish a fee and subsequent financial return for the reuse and recycling of beverage containers. The bill did not pass, but had a strong hearing in the House, important new stakeholder support, and amendments that greatly improve the bill. There is support from the House Speaker and the Senate President, and there is strong belief amongst activists that the bill will pass next year.

This being an election year makes it the perfect time to remind legislators which issues you care about!

You can do this by:

- Attending town halls
- Attending candidate forums
- Signing onto action alerts from organizations such as the Sierra Club
- Emailing and/or calling your elected officials to tell them how you feel about the issues

And please: Do not forget to **VOTE** on Tuesday, November 3rd.

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that the direction of your ceiling fan's rotation can help maintain cooler temperatures in the summer and warmer ones in the winter? And that it can also save you some money in energy costs?

- In the summer, set the blades to spin counterclockwise to cool the room;
- In the winter the blades should spin clockwise to keep your house warm.



CHEVREI TZEDEK'S CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

>>> EDUCATION

CLIMATE ACTION SUMMER ACTIVITIES

The education subcommittee has been social this summer! In May, we gathered together at Gunpowder Falls State Park for a delightful hike. Walking through the woods together was a lovely time to engage with nature around us and get to know each other better. The end of the hike even involved a dunk in the water for a few adventurous hikers! We were very lucky to get ahead of the summer heat for this walk!

In August, we co-sponsored Movie Night at the Myerberg with ECPC and showed the film: *Soylent Green*. This story illustrates the severity of climate change including the impact of global warming, pollution, food scarcity and extreme inequality based on class, wealth and gender. We were thrilled with a great turn out: 20 people came out for the movie and enjoyed pizza and popcorn, and a lively post movie discussion.

>>> FINANCE

Investing in Climate Action: Put Your Money to Work

When we think about climate action, we often think about reducing energy use, changing what we eat, or advocating for better policies. But where we invest our money can also make a difference.

Climate-focused investments can take several forms, including green bonds, which finance environmentally beneficial projects; sustainable or green equity funds, which invest in companies working toward a more sustainable economy; and other investments designed to support renewable energy and climate solutions.

But there is an important caveat: not everything labeled “green,” “sustainable,” or “Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG)” is necessarily making a meaningful contribution to climate action. Some funds marketed as sustainable have been found to hold significant investments in fossil fuels and other high-emitting industries. This practice, known as greenwashing, makes it difficult for investors to know whether their money is actually supporting the change they want to see.

That means responsible investing requires more than looking at a fund's name. We need to ask: What does this fund actually invest in? What are its standards? How transparent is it about its holdings? And does it engage with companies to push for meaningful change?

Governments, development banks, financial institutions, and large asset managers are increasingly directing capital toward climate solutions, while regulations are also developing to improve transparency and reduce greenwashing.

For individuals and congregations, this creates both an opportunity and a responsibility. Our investments are one more way we can align our financial choices with our values—and help build the cleaner, more sustainable world we want to see.

