

SEASONAL ENERGY TOWN HALL



A Seasonal Energy Townhall will draw attention to the importance of community connection and building resilience to extreme weather events such as floods, wildfires, heatwaves, and cold spells. The event provides an opportunity to discuss local needs concerning these seasonal weather events and co-create solutions that mitigate their adverse effects, ultimately improving your community's resilience and adaptation efforts.

▶IMPACT

Resilience is a key component of the **Climate Action Pathways** outlined in the Marrakech Partnership tools to enhance climate action and ambition towards achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement. Warming global temperatures means that there will undoubtedly be more frequent and severe weather events around the world. With **over 5,700** wildfires burning across Canada this year alone, it is becoming widely apparent that connecting with community members to develop climate emergency action plans is essential to maintaining the health and safety of communities across the country. When severe weather events strike, local residents are often the ones who are the most adversely affected. Droughts, wildfires, floods, heatwaves, etc. can all have far reaching negative implications on communities as a whole, impacting physical, social, economic, and **overall well being**. These are important points to address throughout this Town Hall so that you can collectively brainstorm solutions, and create accessible resources specific to the needs of your neighborhood.

In hosting this event, you will be fostering a sense of connectedness between community members, joining together to identify your seasonal weather-related challenges, pooling local knowledge and resources together, and developing an actionable response plan for facing climate disasters. Researching pre-existing resilience-building organizations or support programs in your area is a great first step in planning out the objectives of your Town Hall and deciphering how you can work together to build off of what is already developed for your community. For example, the **ResilientTO** Center for Connected Communities developed a resilience toolkit to guide Toronto residents on how to host their own solutions-driven resilience convenings. Furthermore, the **PlanH Program in B.C.** provides grants

and resources to help local and Indigenous governments create their own action policies responding to social and environmental challenges. If there are no such organizations near your community, you can start your own by repurposing resources and toolkits to suit the needs of your neighborhood, similar to those that are available on the Building Resilient Neighbourhoods' **Resources** webpage. Though these are great resources to build off of, **directly consulting community members** about their needs and concerns when it comes to seasonal weather events and how they would like to be supported will be especially effective in mitigating the risks and adverse impacts of climate change on your community.

RESILIENT CONVERSATION TOOLKIT. THE 6 TOOLS OF RESILIENCE



The Resilient Conversations Tools helps move neighbourhood conversations from awareness and local analysis to vision creation. Each tool bring something different to the process and aims to promote a rich and in depth dialogue. (ResilientTO, 2019)

▶ HOW TO HOST A SEASONAL ENERGY TOWN HALL

▶ STEP 1: COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EVENT PLANNING

- Ask your friends, neighbors, and other community members if they have any questions, issues, or concerns about the impacts of seasonal weather events in your neighborhood and start a list of key points to raise during the energy town hall.
 - Research local organizations preparing for and adapting to climate disasters and compile a list of resources and or resilience toolkits that you can build off of

▶ STEP 2: PREPARE TO HOST YOUR TOWN HALL

- Work with your neighbors and community members to schedule the Town Hall for a date and time that works best for everyone.
- Prepare an agenda or “run of show” for what you wish to accomplish at the Town Hall and how much time you wish to allocate to each agenda item
 - Start with objectives of the town hall meeting;
 - Prepare a list of questions to ask community members what kind of environmental challenges they face;
 - Prepare a map of local businesses, hubs, or centres that can provide assistance when building out your community’s specific resilience plan, and invite them to attend the Town Hall
 - Finally, plan out the format of this event. Since you will likely want a collaborative event that encourages people to discuss their challenges and needs, consider arranging chairs in a circle, and having one or a couple of hosts who can help to facilitate an open discussion.

▶ STEP 3: TRACK YOUR IMPACT

- Keep track of people as they enter and make note of how many people attend in general
- If you do end up creating a climate event response plan or toolkit, share this on social media and think of ways to distribute this to community members who could not attend the Town Hall
- Take photos throughout the event and share them along with your impact results on social media and feel free to share your results and photos with us at research@studentenergy.org so we can see your awesome work!

Have fun!

▶ REFERENCES

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