

Episode 56YZ October 16, 2024. Burlington Vermont McNeil wood burning plant closing discussion.

Episode 56YZ October 16, 2024. Burlington Vermont McNeil wood burning plant closing discussion. Part 2 Headlines In Episode 56YZ 1A Heat Pumps United States. 1B Heat Pumps United Kingdom. 2 United States 3 California 4 Connecticut 5 Illinois 6 Wisconsin 7 United Kingdom 8 India 9 PM2.5 and human health. Commentary on Excerpts in Episode 56YZ 1 North Carolina 2 South Carolina 3 Vermont. Main Content. 1A Heat Pumps United States. US DOE publishes series of geothermal heat pump case studies Think Geo Energy. The US DOE Geothermal Technologies Office has published a series of case studies showcasing the diversity of geothermal heat pump applications. Heat Pumps United States. This government program wants to give \$8.8 billion to American households The Cool Down. For instance, a heat pump can save you up to \$1,000 a year. Meanwhile However, energy savings and a possible Inflation Reduction Act tax rebate. Heat Pumps United States. Homeowners can get \$2,000 to replace their water heaters. here's how to get paid. The Cool Down. heat pump water heaters when compared to traditional electric ones. Utility, state, and municipal rebates made possible by the Inflation Reduction. Heat Pumps United States California. U.S. Department of Energy Announces California's Launch of First Phase of Federal Home. The Ritz Herald. rebates on heat pumps for space heating and cooling i.e., heat pump HVACs, heat pump water heaters, and more. The federal rebates will expand. Heat Pumps United States Maine. Maine heat pump incentives to top \$250 million Energy News Network. HEAT PUMPS Maine has spent \$135 million on heat pump incentives so far, with another \$125 million expected in coming years, though none of the money. 1B Heat Pumps United Kingdom. Q&A Why is the British Heat Pump Revolution Faltering? Sustainability Magazine. Graham Rothwell, CEO of RPS on engineering bottlenecks, government support & why making heat pumps economically viable is essential to achieving. United Kingdom. EDF offers 'free electricity' with new heat pump deal Energy Live News. EDF has teamed up with Ideal Heating to offer a new heat pump bundle aimed at reducing the cost of transitioning to low carbon heating. 'Free electricity' EDF teams up with Ideal Heating for new heat pump offer. Business Green. Energy giant to offer household customers zero energy bills throughout December 2025 if they ditch gas boilers for heat pumps. Heat Pumps United Kingdom. Industrial heat pumps drive decarbonization in industrial sectors Greentech Lead. As renewable energy sources become more prevalent, heat pumps are emerging as a key player in the clean energy transition. Heat Pumps United Kingdom. Taking heat pumps to parliament. Cooling Post. Hosted by the Heat Pump Association HPA, the See, Hear and Feel a Heat Pump event in at Old Palace Yard, Westminster, aims to educate MP's, Lords. David Wallace Wells. 2 United States air pollution monitoring network. US air pollution monitoring network has gaps in coverage, say researchers. EurekAlert! Prior research shows that people of color and people with low socioeconomic status living in the U.S. are disproportionately affected by outdoor PM2.5, US air pollution monitoring network has gaps in coverage, say researchers Phys.org These suspended particles, like soot or liquid aerosol droplets, are smaller than 2.5 micrometers in diameter, garnering the designation PM2.5. 3A California Sacramento. Smoke lingering across Sacramento from wildfires in Northern California. Where are they burning? MSN. PM2.5 is particulate matter that is 2.5 micrometers or smaller. Air quality officials say children, the elderly, and people suffering from heart and lung problems. Fresno Bee. PM2.5 is particulate matter that is 2.5 micrometers or smaller. 3B California Shoe Fire in Northern California. Health officials warn of severe smoke impacts in Northern California due to the Shoe Fire. KRCR. Tehama officials warned specifically of the PM 2.5 chemicals in smoke that originate from the burning plastics and other chemicals. 4 Connecticut New Haven. Berlin FD Battles Two Blazes Over Several Hours. Patch. wood stove, causing smoke damage throughout the structure. The single story home's occupants noticed smoke in the house and called 911, according. 5 Illinois Peoria. No injuries after Peoria chimney fire. WEEK 25 News Now Peoria, IL. burning wood in a woodfire stove. At least one person was home at the time of the fire and no one was injured. Firefighters want to remind. Chimney fire in Peoria's South Side caused by faulty wood burner CIProud.com PEORIA, Ill. WMBD A faulty wood burner is cause for a chimney fire in Peoria residence on Monday. A two story residence

located at 927 South. 6 Wisconsin Green Bay. Think home safety as colder weather comes in WBAY. fired up, it's. 7A United Kingdom. Households with wood burners hit with threat of £300 fine from October. MSN. Households have been warned they face £300 from October for incorrectly using their log burners. They've become an increasingly popular household. These rules mean that only some people with a woodburning stove or open fire will pay a fine for using it. 7B United Kingdom. Urgent warning to anyone with a log burner or they could face a £300 fine. The Mirror. Penalties for using a woodburning stove only kick in if you fail to adhere to the correct legislation, for instance, if you burn the wrong fuel. 8 India. Pimpri Chinchwad Hotels and Bakeries to Switch from Wood to Clean Fuels. The Bridge Chronicle. Burning wood and coal releases harmful pollutants into the atmosphere, including particulate matter, carbon monoxide, and volatile organic compounds. Pimpri In a bid to reduce air pollution caused by the burning of coal and wood at bakeries, hotels, and roadside eateries, the Pimpri Chinchwad. 9A PM2.5 and childhood. Air pollution's numerical, spatial, and temporal heterogeneous impacts on childhood hand. BMC Public Health BioMed Central. Results. Our findings highlighted the relatively higher stationary contributions of fine particulate matter PM2.5 and ozone O3 to HFMD. 9B PM2.5 and electric vehicles. New research reveals how largescale adoption of electric vehicles can improve air quality. U of T Engineering News University of Toronto. PM2.5. "Modelling these pollutants is very different from modelling CO2, which lasts for decades and ends up well mixed throughout the atmosphere. 9C PM2.5 and hyperactivity. Association Between Ambient Air Pollution and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Cureus. Current trends indicate that particulate matter PM2.5, PM10 and nitrogen dioxide NO2 levels remain high in rapidly developing regions.

Episode 56YZ October 16, 2024. Burlington Vermont McNeil wood burning plant closing discussion. Part 3. RAWSEP Commentary on Excerpts. 1 North Carolina 2 South Carolina 3 Vermont. 1 South Carolina. New York Times. **RAWSEP View.** An opinion piece on climate change denial in North Carolina in the wake of Helene and Milton, despite the facts being stated even by a North Carolina Republican congressman. Also it is interesting to note that the cost of destruction from Helene is estimated at \$175 billion, which is half the cost of the green energy investment cost of the Inflation Reduction Act of approximately \$350 billion. There will undoubtedly be more of these extreme weather events which are also costly in monetary terms. Proactive preparation money from the Inflation Reduction Act used to switch to clean energy like Heat Pumps for home heating and cooling and IRA money used to develop truly clean renewable alternatives to industrial wood burning such as wind solar and geothermal energy sources sent to a modern electrical grid may help to protect us from future events similar to Helene. **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates, a 501c3 nonprofit organization.** Oct. 11, 2024. The Latest Hurricanes Are Creating as Much Delusion as Damage. It was not two weeks ago that Hurricane Helene made landfall 160 miles from Tampa, Fla., and moved northward from there, killing more than 200 people and producing damages now estimated at \$175 billion. **That is almost half as much money as the green energy investments the Congressional Budget Office projected would be paid out over a decade by the Inflation Reduction Act,** often called the largest and most consequential climate legislation ever passed anywhere in the world. So half of that decadelong estimate, in damages, accrued from one single storm. The damages from Hurricane Milton appear, at the moment, considerably smaller than those generated by Helene. Chuck Edwards, a Republican congressman from North Carolina, tried to clarify a long list of delusional stories for his constituents "Hurricane Helene was NOT geoengineered by the government," "Local officials are NOT abandoning search and rescue efforts to bulldoze over Chimney Rock," "FEMA is NOT stopping trucks or vehicles with donations," "FEMA has NOT diverted disaster response funding to the border or foreign aid," and "FEMA cannot seize your property or land." For decades, climate advocates believed that warming itself would ultimately defeat denial. once a disaster of inarguable intensity arrived, the world would belatedly wake up. I've wondered whether our stronger adaptive reflex wasn't toward simple normalization, allowing us to navigate ever harsher and more unpredictable climate realities while telling

ourselves, on balance, that everything is fine. But the paranoid flotsam crowding the floodwaters in the wake of Helene suggests a third possibility, that an increasing number of increasingly intense disasters will push at least some of us deeper into cocoons of paranoid delusion. Far from the “return of the real,” climate change now looks as much like a portal offering at least some of us an Info wars style exit from an ever harsher reality. 2 South Carolina. Cleaning Up the Dirty South An environmentalist’s story. **RAWSEP View.** This environmentalist on 10/15/2024 spoke before a group about his Environmental Justice path. Like wood burning PM2.5, some emissions from factories are injurious to human health but it is difficult for a resident to point this out. His father was told his cancer could have been prevented. That was one fact that led to an environmentalist’s advocacy path. Excerpts below are from a July 19, 2017 online Groundswell article. **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates, a 501c3 nonprofit organization.** Today, this environmentalist is a legendary name in environmental advocacy and a 13 year veteran of the South Carolina State House with an impressive record and reputation. In 1993, he was just a young man searching for an answer to why his Spartanburg community was suffering from a spate of fatal respiratory sicknesses. After founding the Re Genesis project in 1997 to clean up the Arkwright and Forest Park communities that were contaminated by waste and chemical sites, the environmentalist turned his mission into a grassroots movement that spread statewide and won national allies. With passion, persistence and a focus on building partnerships, he leveraged an initial EPA grant of \$20,000 into \$270 million worth of community investment. Now, these communities boast 500 new affordable housing units, several community health centers, job training and employment programs that empower residents through economic opportunity, new retail development, a state of the art community center, and the transformation of contaminated brownfields into viable properties. We caught up with the environmentalist this week, shortly after his retirement from the South Carolina State House, for a conversation starting with his path to becoming an environmental justice warrior. Here’s what he had to say **ON HIS PATH TO ADVOCACY** It was something that I was not looking to do. After I left school, I was throwing up blood, and the doctors couldn’t determine what was going on for 8 or 9 months. I was back at the house where I grew up, my grandmother’s house, where my parents lived. That’s when I ended up finding out about the fertilizer plant there. It was right across the street, abandoned. **ON WHAT HE DID NEXT.** I called the local county. I was shifted around to a bunch of agencies and all of a sudden I ended up at the state environmental agency. The lady there by mistake she gave me all the files on the site. When I started looking through the files, it was like a slap in the face. I was obsessed with what I found. Looking at all of the stuff in there started making me think of my sister’s death. We didn’t know what it was at first, because she was an infant. Listen as the environmentalist tells the story of the dramatic meeting where he first convinced his community and federal regulators that there was a coverup of dangerous contamination at the abandoned fertilizer plant. I ended up [enrolling in online classes] at Duke University this was around 1993, compiling a list of chemicals that I found in the files, and that’s when I saw the long term short term exposure from the waste pile in front of the house. And I took that to the coroner about my sister’s death. I didn’t tell him anything about the fertilizer plant, but he told me breathing that kind of stuff in is not good for women, especially during pregnancy. I looked at the deaths on that street – nobody died of natural causes. Everyone died from lung cancer or respiratory diseases. I knew nothing about the environmental movement or environmental justice, and it just ran over me like a Mac truck. 3 Vermont Burlington. **RAWSEP View.** Excuses. **The common excuses that most wood burners hide behind. Common Excuse 1** Not counting PM2.5 emissions from wood burning is allowed. **Common Excuse 2** Not counting CO2 emissions from wood burning is allowed. **Common Excuse 3** Subsidies are available for wood burning because wood burning is deemed renewable because wood is taken from a living tree that is killed but wood can be replaced by planting a tree that will live until it is killed for a wood burning harvest. **Common Excuse 4** Photosynthesis from a living tree absorbs some CO2 and so sequesters some CO2 carbon emitted by wood burning. **Common Excuse 5** The forestry industry and loggers will make a profit by cutting down trees and selling wood for burning. **Common Excuse 6** Clean renewables like wind solar and

geothermal are lumped in the same renewable category and usually receive the same government subsidies as dirty renewables like wood burning. **The Vermont biomass burning utility McNeil leader also adds these three unique excuses** for burning wood at a monetary loss for the utility and the state of Vermont. McNeil Excuse 1 Wood burning is excused because if McNeil this one wood burning power plant exists it doesn't have to buy electricity from another wood burning power plant Ryegate in Vermont. **The McNeil wood burning power plant brought the department of the government an estimated between \$7.4 million and \$14.8 million** because electricity did not need to be bought from another wood burning power plant in Vermont. For example, **the utility doesn't have to purchase energy** from the often more expensive **Ryegate Power Station, another biomass-burning plant in the Northeast** of Vermont. McNeil Excuse 2 Wood burning is excused because natural gas, a cleaner alternative, costs more because it involves fracking and other logistical problems. A leader of the utility said that arguments of the environmentalists excuse the use of fossil fuels such as natural gas. McNeil Excuse 3 There are no clean alternatives in Vermont to polluting wood burning, polluting fossil fuel burning or clean but unreliable wind and solar energy not available on demand. **RAWSEP Answers to Common Excuses.** 1 PM2.5 emissions from wood burning should be counted. 2 CO2 emissions from wood burning should be counted. 3 Subsidies should not be available for wood burning. Wood burning should not be lumped with clean renewables for purposes of receiving government subsidies. Wood can technically be replaced by planting a tree that will live until it is killed for a wood burning harvest. But it takes decades or centuries for the planted tree to attain the stature of the tree that was cut down and burned. 4 Photosynthesis from a living tree absorbs some CO2 and so sequesters some CO2, a form of carbon, emitted by wood burning. But a newly planted and growing tree before it attains the stature of the cut down tree absorbs less CO2 than the tree that was cut down. 5 Profit for the forestry industry and loggers by cutting down trees and selling wood for burning is profit for an obsolete industry. Training for the clean energy economy of wind solar and geothermal should be available for loggers who are put out of work. 6 The practice of clean renewables like wind solar and geothermal being lumped in the same renewable category and usually receiving the same government subsidies as dirty renewables like wood burning should end. 7 Just do not burn wood to begin with and you will save money on healthcare, funerals and save money in generating clean energy by turning to wind solar and geothermal and encouraging use of Heat Pumps that run on electricity from an electrical grid that extends to all rural areas. Put government money into these clean energy areas. Do not put more money into the losing proposition of wood burning. Placing a wood burning facility at a hospital will increase hospital admissions but in all other way this will be a disaster for public health and if we learn anything from the McNeil wood burning power station, a wood burning power station at a hospital will lose money. **RAWSEP Answers to McNeil** woodburning power station leader's arguments for continued losing money wood burning. 1 You did not address the human health problems caused by PM2.5 from wood burning. You are concerned only with the monetary aspect of wood burning in Vermont. Wood burning emits 90% PM2.5, particulate matter of 2.5 micrometer size, the perfect size to infiltrate the human lung, setting off a cascade of human health problems and early deaths. Along with CO2, wood burning emissions are not counted by any nation in the world in calculating whether the nation is meeting its climate goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This allows states like Vermont and cities like Burlington to also ignore PM2.5 in calculating whether their plants are emitting PM2.5 at levels that harm human health as well as at levels that hasten climate change. The way to avoid these PM2.5 caused health problems is to just stop burning wood and turn to the truly clean renewable energy sources with no harmful emissions, wind solar and geothermal energy. Increasing Vermont residents' health problems and early deaths is costly in increasing monetary costs of human healthcare, and human funerals as well as increasing insurance costs. Do not cite buying electricity from another wood burning facility in Vermont as a future cost. The future costs should be building and maintaining wind solar and geothermal facilities in Vermont. 2 Wood burning emits 450 times the PM2.5 as the fossil fuel natural gas burning. Natural gas is indeed the cleanest burning fossil fuel. Natural gas can serve as a bridge to the cleaner energy sources of wind solar and geothermal.

Pointing out this bridge fossil fuel natural gas alternative to wind solar and geothermal does not endorse natural gas a long term bridge solution. 3 Batteries can be developed to hold the energy from wind solar and geothermal energy so that clean energy is available and on demand during any emergency. Money needs to be invested into battery storage solutions rather into the losing proposition of wood burning for energy. Wood can be used for furniture and home building and can also be composted for usable soil rather than burning it. Composted soil is not flammable. Porter, a Burlington-based activist, and Persampieri, an environmental lawyer, their arguments for closing McNeil wood burning plant. See the two articles below and see how some of their arguments match those arguments of RAWSEP. The environmentalists bring up that wood burning emits more harmful PM2.5 and CO2 than even the fossil fuel coal burning. RAWSEP agrees with the environmentalists since wood burning emits 2.8 times the CO2 and PM2.5 as coal burning as shown by testing of the cleanest burning wood stove in the United Kingdom the Ecodesign wood stove. A recent report by Ember showed that after replacement of wood burning at a United Kingdom power plant that previously burned coal, CO2 emissions increased by 400 percent or by 4 times. In June 2023 apparently the McNeil leaders did not release enough financial information and dragged their feet until October 2024 to fully release financial statistics for the McNeil wood burning power plant. RAWSEP Extended Explanation. At the heart of the argument about continuing to run the air polluting wood burning power plant called McNeil in Burlington Vermont rather than replacing it with truly clean renewable energy sources such as wind, solar and geothermal, is the scientifically debunked theory of the Carbon Neutrality of Wood Burning. Carbon Neutrality of Wood Burning argues that wood burning emissions can be ignored because trees through photosynthesis absorb some CO2 and so sequester some of that carbon from CO2 emitted from wood burning. However wood burning emits 90% PM2.5, particulate matter of 2.5 micrometer size, the perfect size to infiltrate the human lung setting off a cascade of human health problems and early deaths. That leaves 10 percent or less of wood burning emissions as CO2. And PM2.5 is not absorbed by trees or absorbed at possibly the same rate as a blanket placed on a forest floor absorbs PM2.5. A recent study has shown that when trees are exposed to wood burning wildfire smoke which is 90 percent PM2.5 the trees hold their breath like humans and close their pores against the PM2.5. This closing of pores results in slowing down of the photosynthesis ability of trees in the path of wildfire smoke. The presence of wood smoke PM2.5 drastically slows down the desired photosynthesis of trees that absorbs some CO2. As mentioned before PM2.5 is not absorbed by trees in any natural process or process that is beneficial in removing carbon from the air. But it is convenient to push the scientifically debunked theory of Carbon Neutrality of Wood Burning to justify continuing to burn wood. The scientifically debunked theory of Carbon Neutrality of Wood Burning has been used to justify all nations in the world erasing CO2 and PM2.5 emissions from wood burning from the count of air pollution emissions when calculating if each nation is meeting its climate change goals. RAWSEP View. Two Vermont articles are excerpted here. One from October 2024 and one from June 2023. The October 2024 article is about the cost of running a wood burning power plant versus using an alternative cleaner and cheaper form of energy generation. The June 2023 article touches on the human health costs of burning air polluting wood for energy generation rather than using a cleaner form of energy generation. RAWSEP View. In October 2024 there are two opposing parties. 1A) the environmentalists in 2024. Throughout the last year since 2023, environmentalists have been arguing that the McNeil Generating Station, Vermont's largest in-state power source, should be phased out. the debate has mostly been focused on the environmental impacts of burning wood RAWSEP interjects which include the adverse health effects of burning wood. In July 2024, environmental advocates Pike Porter and Nicholas Persampieri submitted their case against McNeil in a proceeding that's playing out before the Public Utility Commission, the quasi-judicial body that regulates Vermont's utilities. Porter, a Burlington-based activist, and Persampieri, an environmental lawyer, argued that McNeil is bleeding money, as Seven Days reported at the time — that the plant is not economically viable now and will not be in the future. McNeil had lost money in seven out of nine years from 2016 to 2024, Porter and Persampieri maintained, totaling roughly \$29 million in losses. Persampieri, a lawyer who has worked on

environmental issues at the Vermont Attorney General's Office and the U.S. Department of Justice, argued that even if McNeil was "scraping by," the plant's environmental record should be weighed heavily in a big-picture conversation about its value. More generally, he said Burlington Electric's arguments contain "some holes." 1B) The leaders of McNeil Generating Station a wood burning power plant. On the other side in 2024 are the leaders of the utility that burns wood and on paper loses money. On Friday, the city's electric department presented its rebuttal, arguing in a filing with the commission that Porter and Persampieri had not taken into account a number of **savings and streams of income** that McNeil's profit and loss statement doesn't show. In sum, they contend, McNeil has lost money in some years, but throughout the last decade, the plant has provided a **net financial benefit** to Burlington Electric Department and its ratepayers. The department estimates that, with losses accounted for, **McNeil brought the department between \$7.4 million and \$14.8 million** from 2014 through 2023. Burlington Electric's general manager, argues that the income is value added to an operation that already serves Burlington ratepayers by providing an **alternative to buying electricity on the open market**, a more expensive option. It's also an energy source the department can draw from **on-demand**, whereas some renewables, such as solar and wind, are less **reliable**. For those reasons, "you could make a pretty good argument, even if McNeil was, on average, **losing a little bit of money each year, that it was worth it**," Burlington Electric says the **\$14.8 million in net economic benefits** come from seven different factors, all connected to McNeil's existence, that provide savings or cash to the utility. For example, **the utility doesn't have to purchase energy** from the often more expensive **Ryegate Power Station, another biomass-burning plant in the Northeast Kingdom**, a requirement that applies to other utilities in the state. That arrangement saves the utility hundreds of thousands of dollars per year. A **credit** that comes from a 1991 agreement with the Vermont Electric Power Company saves hundreds of thousands more, and McNeil exempts Burlington Electric from the Standard Offer Program, which would require the department to purchase energy from other in-state renewable energy projects. The first article, from October 2024, At what cost? Utility leaders and environmentalists debate Burlington's woodburning plant. VT Digger. While the debate has mostly been focused on the environmental impacts of burning wood, more recently it's turned to cost including in a new. Utility leaders and environmentalists debate Burlington's wood-burning plant. **Environmentalists have argued that McNeil has lost millions of dollars in the last decade.** In a new regulatory filing, Burlington Electric Department says their analysis is flawed. **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates, a 501c3 nonprofit organization.** BURLINGTON —While the debate has mostly been focused on the environmental impacts of burning wood, more recently it's turned to cost, including in a new regulatory filing the plant's owners published late last week. At the time, leaders of the Burlington Electric Department, which owns 50% of the plant, couldn't present a response, they said. They needed to crunch the numbers and carry out their own legal processes, which involved discovery on Porter, Persampieri and Paul Messerschmidt, a consultant who helped the advocates file their argument with the commission. **READ MORE. RAWSEP View.** 2A)The arguments that environmentalists made in June 2023. Porter and Persampieri, who said they didn't have access to financial information from any years before 2016, included an economic analysis of the time spanning **April 2023 to April 2024, which happened to be a bad year for McNeil: The plant cost the utility \$4 million then**, according to their analysis, which relied on financial statements from Burlington Electric. While McNeil produces greenhouse gas emissions from its smokestacks, the **emissions aren't counted in the state's greenhouse gas inventory because the plant is considered renewable:** The trees being burned for energy regrow and sequester carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. 2A) The environmentalists' argument for closing McNeil. The utility is "relying on the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the state" to avoid a program that would require it "to increase its use of local renewable sources," he said. "People claim, 'Oh, it's carbon neutral, because the trees grow back, so therefore you can ignore the emissions.' That's just counter to the latest science," Persampieri said. If Burlington Electric were to shut down McNeil and replace it "with a contract for any type of renewable energy," it could still be exempted from the Standard Offer Program,

Persampieri argued. He said he doesn't know whether that would be possible for the utility, but that its leaders should try. Persampieri argued that, "per unit of energy generated, burning wood emits more carbon dioxide than burning any fossil fuel, even coal,". 2B)The arguments the leaders of the wood burning utility made in June 2023. The Utility leader pointed to its exemption from the state's Standard Offer Program. Springer argues that the biomass conversation is "nuanced." While what's burned at McNeil is largely the leftovers from logging operations tops and limbs, he said. it still provides a benefit to loggers and Vermont's forestry industry. The argument "ignores all the forestry benefits" and "gives a complete pass to the fossil fuel industry for all of the upstream emissions associated with getting that fossil fuel to that plant, fracking, drilling, extraction, refining, methane leaks and pipelines," Springer said. Springer said Burlington Electric wants to buy more renewable energy. But first, renewable energy facilities need to get built in Vermont and more broadly across New England. "We have to be cautious about simply saying we want to move away from McNeil, if that means moving towards more fossil fuels on the grid, exacerbating our reliance on fossil fuels," he said. "I don't think that's a good outcome economically or environmentally." The Second article from June 2023. Burlingtonians debate the use of biomass and a new district energy proposal. Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates, a 501c3 nonprofit organization June 15, 2023. Burlington Electric's filing with the commission includes two tables that estimate how much money the plant has generated for the utility. The first, which estimates it brought in \$14.8 million over the last decade, includes benefits that are loosely connected to McNeil, or do not directly benefit ratepayers. For example, that table includes a payment that McNeil provides annually to the city in lieu of taxes, which doesn't necessarily benefit ratepayers directly. A second table, which is more conservative in its analysis, excludes that payment and two exemptions from the state's renewable energy standard. Without considering those, the utility estimates that McNeil generated \$7.4 million over the last decade. Burlington Electric and the environmental advocates used different years in their analyses, each producing wildly different pictures of the plant's economic status. Burlington Electric's analysis starts in 2014, which happened to be a good year: The plant netted more than \$7 million. Burlington Electric has not confirmed the \$4 million loss because it doesn't have audited figures. Even if it's true, the department said, figures for the last decade would still be net positive. Both sides argue the other has chosen years that validate their own argument. The debate has been playing out as the city including the Burlington City Council and McNeil's other two owners, Green Mountain Power and Vermont Public Power Supply Authority, [decide whether to expand McNeil](#) by adding a district heating system connected to the University of Vermont.