

Get Started Guide

For Oil Awareness Meetup / Post Carbon community groups

This meeting guide is for use by Oil Awareness Meetups, interest groups, and Post Carbon Community Groups. It is intended as guide (as opposed to hard and fast instructions) for helping the group get started quickly and effectively. The guide is a work in progress so please send any comments to: dave@postcarbon.org.

Name Tags

Optional - but many people like them when meeting new people.

Printed Materials

Bring printed materials to the meetings to share with attendees. This could include the following:

- The agenda (refer to Request Agenda Items below)
This could be brought by the assigned host.
- A summary of Post Carbon Institute, the local outpost and links to the END of SUBURBIA screening guide, meeting guide, a summary of the email lists and discussion group.
- The latest Post Carbon Institute newsletter.
- The latest local group announcements and flyers for any local peak oil events.
- Peak Oil Information - particularly information good for newbies that might show up.
- Copies of good books, videos or END of SUBURBIA DVDs. These can be sold at meetings and events.

Assign someone to maintain an email List

At each meeting pass around an email signup list for announcements. The list would be maintained locally and also passed along to Post Carbon. In addition the attendees could be added to a local discussion list (could be on [YahooGroups](#)). The discussion list should be optional - ask people at Meetups if they are OK with being included in the discussion list. Typically most people would agree. If they wanted announcements only, note it on the signup list. The signup list could also include phone number, city - or complete address.

Assign someone to take minutes

This is important, because otherwise people might forget what was discussed and not follow through.

Assign a facilitator/host

The host will go through the list of agenda items and allow people to discuss each item. If there are six or more people - consider having the host recognize speaking order. People can raise their hand when they want to speak. This way it isn't just the most outspoken that get a chance to speak.

Introductions

If there are new people, allow people to briefly introduce themselves. Here are some suggestions for questions that people new to the group can use to introduce themselves:

- To get to know you a little, please give us two sentences describing your background.
- How did you become interested and involved in this effort?
- What have you done to inform decision makers and the public?
- What do you suggest this group do?

Decide On the Next Meeting

If the group finds for one reason or another finds the Meetup venue ineffective (e.g., too loud, too many people), it may make sense to consider meeting at another venue and date. We do not recommend holding an alternative group meeting at the same time as the Meetup; if at least one person from the group goes to the Meetup, the Meetup could be a good way to bring more people into the fold. Ask for volunteers each month to go to the Meetup (and make sure that at least 2 people RSVP so that the Meetup will happen if a new person RSVPs). Assuming the group is planning on sending representatives to the Meetup, we recommend that the group meeting be scheduled about a week after the Meetup. Before adjourning the meeting, the group should decide on the time and place of the next meeting.

Request agenda items

Consider sending an email on the local announcement list to suggest agenda items. This could be done by the current host. The host would summarize the agenda suggestions and post them to the announcement list. Also agenda items could be brought up at the start of the meeting. When suggesting agenda items at the start of the meeting it should be very brief with no discussion held until the agenda item comes up.

Send Minutes by email to the local announcement list

The person taking the minutes would be given access to the announcement list. If people have corrections additions to the minutes, they could reply to the person taking the minutes. These would be collected and the updated minutes re-posted.

Focus on Action

The focus of the meeting should be a group discussion on what actions the groups wants to take to raise awareness and/or begin preparing for low energy living. These discussions should include selecting an action or actions to pursue, laying out next steps, and getting commitments from group members on specific tasks. After introductions in following meetings, one of the first things to discuss will be status on the next steps from the previous meeting.

This guide includes contributions from Eric Einem and Dell Erickson.