

PRESS ADVISORY

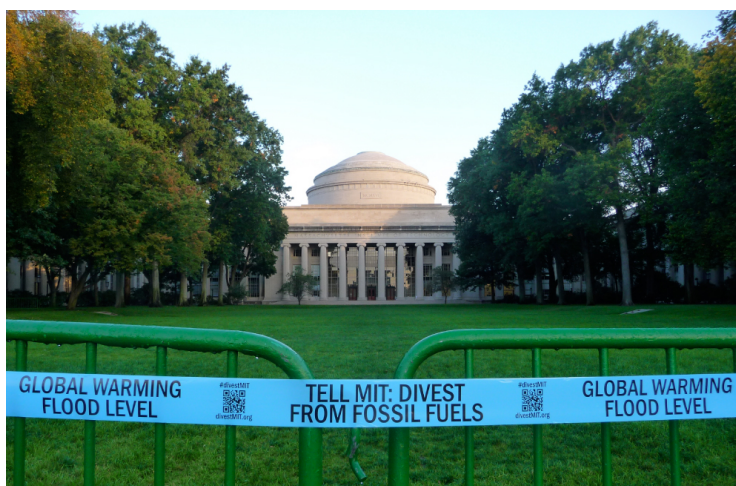
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Four-Mile “Global Warming Flood Level” Demonstration Makes Waves Across MIT Campus

Cambridge, MA, April 29, 2014 – On May 2, 2014, members of MIT student group Fossil Free MIT, in coordination with the 2014 MIT Sustainability Summit, will be affixing four miles of blue caution tape, bearing the words, “Global Warming Flood Level – Tell MIT: Divest From Fossil Fuels”, to buildings and landscaping throughout the campus. The “Blue Line” will range from 1-5 feet above ground level, and will remain in place for the duration of the 6th MIT Sustainability Summit (May 3-4, 2014), whose theme is “Coastal Cities – Sustainable Future”.

The Blue Line will demonstrate the immediacy of flood risks to the Boston area from disasters such as Superstorm Sandy because of global-warming-induced sea level rise. According to a report from The Boston Harbor Association¹, the 5-foot storm surge experienced by the Boston area during Sandy, when added to projected sea level rise by 2050, would be enough to overtop the Charles River dam and put vast areas of Cambridge and Boston under several feet of water. Paul Kirshen MS ‘72 PhD ‘75, a professor of civil engineering at the University of New Hampshire and MIT alum, was a lead author of the report.

The objective of this climate change demonstration is to inspire more energetic debate about MIT’s responsibilities and opportunities for leadership and action in the face of the burgeoning climate crisis, by highlighting one local impact of global warming. This demonstration, co-organized by Fossil Free MIT and the MIT Sustainability Summit organizing committee, is part of a two-week “BeyondEarthDay” climate action initiative by the Fossil Fuel Divestment Student Network, for which students across the country are taking bold action to push for more divestment victories².



What to Expect on May 2, 2014. More example photos can be found at www.fossilfreemit.org/10-04-13-mit-underwater

¹ See www.tbha.org/preparing-rising-tide-report for full report.

² www.350.org/press-release/beyond-earth-day-students-use-holiday-to-launch-a-new-wave-of-fossil-fuel-divestment-actions/

Background Information

Fossil Free MIT is a student group made up of everyone from freshmen to faculty to alumni, working to create a safer climate and a stronger MIT. Fossil Free MIT is calling on the Institute to lead the global effort to combat climate change by divesting its \$11 billion endowment from the fossil fuel industry. This industry's business practices are fundamentally inconsistent with the science of climate change mitigation. Moreover, these companies' complicity in lobbying against climate change action legislation and in disinformation campaigns undermines the science by which MIT stands and the mission to which MIT aspires. Fossil Free MIT's petition has been signed by more than 2,500 MIT students, staff, faculty, and alumni. Since early last summer, members of Fossil Free MIT have been in ongoing negotiations with the Executive Committee and senior Administration.

The 2014 MIT Sustainability Summit has the theme of "Coastal Cities – Sustainable Future". Coastal cities are caught at the nexus of three forces that dominate the 21st century: rapid urbanization, climate change and destabilization, and continued integration of the global economy. The objective of this 6th Sustainability Summit is to engage the audience with the coastal city sustainability challenge by bringing experienced and knowledgeable speakers, using interactive workshops, providing the opportunity to brainstorm on real sustainability problems from cities and companies, and bringing together a diverse audience with expertise and interest in sustainable solutions for coastal cities futures.

For more information, visit www.FossilFreeMIT.org and www.sustainabilitysummit.mit.edu.