



Windsor Essex County

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

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Environment Committee launches public education campaign

Windsor-Essex, ON — The Windsor-Essex County Environment Committee (WECEC) today launched a Public Education Campaign aiming to increase environmental awareness of the benefits of solar energy and technologies in Windsor-Essex. The Public Education Campaign showcases how solar energy and technologies in our region contribute to providing sustainable energy resources for the betterment of our environment.

In 2011, the City of Windsor completed The Environmental Attitudes Survey which identified that the primary environmental concern of residents was air pollution. Air emissions (CO₂, SO₂ and NO_x) omitted during the solar PV construction process are considerably lower than all types of traditional electricity generation with the exception of nuclear.

"The energy generated from solar power is carbon free, making it a powerful tool to help Canada reduce its emissions, mitigate climate change and meet the growing need for energy efficient and carbon neutral buildings, says Charlie Wright, Deputy Mayor of Leamington and WECEC Co-Chair.

"Each megawatt hour of solar energy displaces between 0.3 and 0.6 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions, and solar energy creates no air or water pollution," added City of Windsor and WECEC Co-Chair Councillor Alan Halberstadt.

"The social benefits of solar energy and technologies include the creation of more jobs per megawatt output and per dollar invested than any other energy source," says Mark Bartlett, President of the CAW Windsor Regional Environment Council. "Many of these jobs may be widely distributed in small and medium-sized businesses in communities across the country, and far-reaching economic spinoffs to Canadians."

The renewable energy sector in Germany has grown from 6.7% of its electricity coming from renewable energy to 20.1% in ten years. In 2012, the country recorded 36 Billion Euros of revenue and 361,360 jobs, based on strong growth in the Solar PV Sector. Windsor-Essex's geographic location may be one of the most desirable Canadian location for solar-energy installations. The region's manufacturing sector has many transferable skills and the education system has begun implementing curricula surrounding this market sector.

"The economic impact of solar energy and technologies is well documented," says Rakesh Naidu, Vice President of Business Development, Windsor Essex Economic Development Corporation. "There are approximately 650 members of the Canadian Solar Industries Association, and the cost of solar PV modules has fallen by 30% since 2005 and is estimated to drop 20% with each doubling of global solar capacity."

Notably, the Province of Ontario built the world's largest solar park in North America several years ago. The solar park is an 80 megawatt project that powers over 12,000 homes. Solar thermal systems, which offer simple and cost-effective ways to save energy and money, are also fast gaining ground given that about 30% of our total energy consumption is used to heat water.

In 2009 the solar thermal industry alone generated \$5 million in exports—*Survey of Active Solar Thermal Collectors, Industry and Markets in Canada, SAIC, 2009*.

Partnering with WECEC in the Campaign are the WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation, and local solar manufacturers OYA Solar, Green Sun Rising and Great Lakes Energy.

Windsor-Essex County Environment Committee

The Windsor-Essex County Environment Committee (WECEC) is an external advisory committee of City and County Council, and is comprised of a group of environmental-related organizations that meet monthly to ensure the ongoing health and stability of our local environment. WECEC's mission is to protect and enhance the quality of the environment for residents in Windsor and Essex County by providing advice, guidance and counsel to City and County Councils on policies and procedures, and by providing and supporting advocacy, community education and outreach programs. Further information on the Public Education Campaign can be found online at www.wecec.org

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For further information

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