

ENERGY TIDBITS

August 2006

Governor Granholm has signed a package of legislation that will create incentives for consumers who buy alternative fuel vehicles and service stations that make ethanol and biodiesel available to their customers. The seven-bill package reduces the gas tax by 36% on fuel that contains ethanol and by 20% on biodiesel blends. The legislation also provides grants to service station owners who want to renovate or expand their existing stations to make E-85 and biodiesel available and allows for the creation of new agriculture renaissance zones to help spur additional ethanol and biodiesel plants.

Bosgraaf Homes has reached an important milestone, their 1,000th Energy Star home. Bosgraaf Homes has been an Energy Star partner since 1999 and is a 100% Energy Star builder in Holland.

<http://www.bosgraaf.com/>

Energy Choices for a Sustainable Future Conference will be held on August 26, 9:30 am - 5:30 pm at Upland Hills Ecological Awareness Center in Oxford. Keynote addresses will be by Debra Rowe, University Leaders for Sustainable Future, and Jennifer Alvarado, Great Lakes Renewable Energy Assoc. Workshop topics will include renewable energy basics, home energy audits, green building, biodiesel fuels, geothermal, zero energy homes, natural building, hydrogen, tax credits, small wind basics, and solar energy. Contact: uheac@earthlink.net or 248-693-1021.

K-12 Energy Education Resources has been posted at www.michigan.gov/energyoffice Click on "Related Links" on the green menu on the upper left hand corner. Under "Energy Education", click on the first link, "K-12 Resources"

City Council of Ann Arbor recently passed resolutions to 1) establish a goal of installing 5,000 solar hot water systems in Ann Arbor, 2) establish a City program to encourage the purchase of flexible-fuel plug-in hybrid vehicles for City fleet operations and support local, state and federal policies that will promote flexible-fuel plug-in hybrid vehicles, and 3) incorporate energy efficiency into city building and zoning ordinances.

Battle Creek Police Department green roof has a mix of green sedum and colorful native flowers on 18,000 sq. ft. rooftop. Named project of the year by American Public Works Assoc., the green roof is estimated to have 40-70 year life. The roof retains 60% of annual rainfall. The \$470,000 roof project paid for by the city and a DEQ grant could translate into 50% energy savings.

Green Advantage to Buying and Selling Real Estate will be held on August 10, 7:30 – 9:00 pm at Recycle Ann Arbor. Air Sealing & Insulating Practices for Energy Efficiency will be held on August 12, 9:30 – 12:30 pm. Contact: Jason@recycleannarbor.org or 734-662-6288 ext. 118.

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Solar Thermal Geexchange System in Oshawa, Ontario is said to be the first production home to integrate solar and geothermal technologies reducing energy consumption by 79%. The systems gather heat using a loop extending through a central heat pump to solar panels on the home's roof and to a depth of 180' below ground. During the winter months, the system transfers heat from the sun and the ground into the home and, during the summer months, heat in the home is transferred to the ground.

<http://www.renewableenergyaccess.com/rea/news/story?id=44231>

Conscientious Cruiser Bio-Diesel Bus is traveling Michigan to promote bio-diesel. Check it out at the Ypsilanti Heritage Festival and Parade on August 18-20, the Upland Hills Ecological Awareness Center conference on August 26, the University of Michigan Energy Fest on Sept. 12 & 14, and the Bioneers Conference in Traverse City on Oct. 20-22.

Lawrence Kinney, Harmony Homes in Traverse City, was highlighted in the July 17 issue of Newsweek. The article "Going Green" describes a variety of green initiatives across the U.S. <http://www.harmonyhomeconstruction.com/>

Intermediate Photovoltaic Seminar will be held on August 5 (9 AM - 4 PM) at the GLREA Energy Demonstration Center in Dimondale. Introductory Renewable Energy Seminars will be held on August 19 (9 AM - 5 PM) at the Environmental House in Ann Arbor. Solar Electric Power Systems for Code Officials training will be held on August 24 (1-4 PM) in Grand Rapids. Contact: www.glrea.org or 800-434-9788.

Jump-Start Your Plant's Energy Savings with Quick PEP describes the Plant Energy Profiler (PEP), a new, easy-to-use software tool that can help manufacturing firms identify ways to save energy and money in their plants.

<http://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy06osti/40158.pdf>

Renewable Portfolio Standard proposal from the MPSC and comments from interested parties is at

www.dleg.state.mi.us/mpsc/electric/capacity/energyplan/renewables/renewables.htm.

Look under Renewable Energy Documents.

Demand Response program in New York has reduced the electric load on the system by 650 MW. Hot weather in July prompted the New York Independent System Operator to call on companies that had committed to reducing their demand by up to 1470 MW if needed. For example, the managers of 750 Seventh Ave. in New York City switched off their electric billboards on three sides of the building and with other adjustments reduced their demand by 250 kW.

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Building a Solar Panel Workshop will be held on Sept. 9, 9 am - 1 pm at the Pierce Cedar Creek Institute in Hastings. A similar program for teachers, Solar Energy in the Classroom, will be held at Pierce Cedar Creek on Oct. 14, 9 am-3 pm. This workshop is intended for middle school science teachers. Teachers will build their own 12-watt PV system to take back to their school. These systems can run small appliances or tools that use no more than 400 watts. Participants will also receive supporting curriculum, supplies, and ideas that are aligned with Michigan Curriculum Framework Science benchmarks. Contact 269-721-4190 or groenm@cedarcreekinstitute.org.

NextEnergy has been awarded funding for a Biofuels Infrastructure Incentive Grant from the Energy Office. This grant will enable NextEnergy to offer incentives to retail gas stations to sell ethanol and biodiesel. A total of \$50,000 is available for stations on a reimbursement basis. Awards can range from a minimum incentive of \$2,000 up to \$12,500 per station. These funds can be used for design, engineering, labor costs, and promotion of the biofuels installation by the station. Incentives are only available for B20 and E85 infrastructure installed at retail stations in Michigan. Applications for funding can be obtained by contacting Dan Radomski at danr@nextenergy.org and must be submitted no later than August 31, 2006.

Consumers Energy has been ordered by the MPSC to stop collection of the five-cent per meter per month customer charge used to provide funds for its renewable resource program and to refund amounts previously collected from its customers. The Court of Appeals determined that the MPSC lacked direct statutory authority to authorize Consumers Energy to charge the five-cent customer charge. The Michigan Supreme Court, on June 21, denied the Commission's application for leave to appeal.



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www.michigan.gov/energyoffice under Publications.

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