

## ENERGY TIDBITS – August 2010

Natural gas furnaces and hot water heaters have been added to the State of Michigan appliance rebate program effective August 1. Purchases prior to that date will not be eligible. The rebate for a 95% AFUE natural gas furnace will be \$500. The rebate for a 95% AFUE natural gas furnace with an ECM (electronically commutated motor) will be \$650. The rebates for natural gas hot water heaters (storage EF $\geq$ .67; tankless EF $\geq$ .82) will be \$300. State rebates are available until the dollars run out. Federal tax credits end December 31. This is a good time to upgrade your natural gas, propane, or oil furnace. Go to [www.michrebate.com](http://www.michrebate.com) or 1-888-642-4674.

Small Wind Turbine sales grew 15% last year according to the American Wind Energy Assoc. and the industry passed a milestone of 100 MW of installed small wind power. Over half the total sales were made in the past 3 years despite a freefall in the housing market and the economic crisis.

Michigan Public Service Commission has unveiled its new and improved energy efficiency website (<http://michigan.gov/mpsc/0,1607,7-159-52495---,00.html>), one that makes it easy to find information on utility-run energy efficiency programs; Michigan Saves program; and tips on how to reduce energy consumption at home.

Michigan Saves is now enrolling energy auditors and installation contractors for the Michigan Saves Home Energy Loan Program. Contractor enrollment is open now ([www.michigansaves.org/contractors.html](http://www.michigansaves.org/contractors.html)). After an application is approved, contractors must attend a half-day training session, available August – November that will be held in five locations. The Michigan Saves Home Energy Loan Program is available in 36 counties. Contact Todd Parker at (517) 484-6474 or [registration@michigansaves.org](mailto:registration@michigansaves.org).

Chevrolet has announced that the Volt will sell for \$41,000 and also be available for lease at \$350 a month. Buyers are eligible for a federal tax credit that will cut the price by \$7,500. Chevy Volt Vehicle Line Director Tony Posawatz expects the demand will exceed the Volt supply.

Dow Building & Construction has been selected by DOE to lead a multi-year project that will combine research and residential in-home testing to develop enhanced home energy efficiency retrofits. Dow will work in partnership with Habitat for Humanity, Michigan State, Ferris State, Duke Energy, DTE, and Exelon. The team will conduct pre- and post-retrofit homeowner market research, designed by MSU, to build a stronger understanding of consumer considerations and concerns. Innovative new systems devised by Dow and Ferris State's Granger Center for Construction and HVACR will focus on wall and roofing insulations as well as air sealing. The team will also draw upon Habitat for Humanity's knowledge of lower-income homeowner issues and Dow's practical marketplace know-how.

<http://www.cbslocal.com/2010/07/29/dow-msu-ferris-state-named-to-energy-rd-team/>

Michigan Strategic Fund board has approved a \$3.5 million grant to URV USA to manufacture wind turbine hub and bedplate castings at a plant to be located in Eaton Rapids. The company's new casting technology reduces from five days to five hours the time it takes to produce a casting. URV officials said they have already sold out of their initial capacity and will need to expand their operations. With this award, the Center Of Energy Excellence has reached its maximum \$10 million funding limit for the current year. Nine million has been requested for FY 2011.

Oakland University's School of Business Administration and School of Engineering & Computer Science are partnering to deliver a professional certificate program in energy management that will prepare engineering and business professionals to differentiate themselves in their careers and help their organizations become sustainable. The cost of the six-week program is \$1,500. Classes will take place from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays beginning on Sept. 10. [www.oakland.edu/energymgmt](http://www.oakland.edu/energymgmt).

40% of World's Capacity to Produce Lithium-Ion Batteries for automobiles will be in Michigan by 2015. President Obama recently attended the groundbreaking in Holland for the LG Chem-Compact Power plant. In June, Vice President Biden attended a groundbreaking at Dow Kokam in Midland for a new battery factory. In all, \$2.4 billion in federal grants have gone for advanced battery manufacturing factories in Michigan.

Detroit Edison & Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan have signed a 20-year agreement for a 200 kW, \$1 million PV system that will be installed on the roof of a BCBSM four-story parking structure in downtown Detroit. The solar array will cover 31,000 sq. ft. of the 42,000 sq. ft. roof and should be operational next spring. The installation is part of the SolarCurrents program that calls for 15 MW of PV systems to be installed on customer rooftops or property over the next 5 years. Detroit Edison plans to invest more than \$100 million in the program. The PV systems will be owned, installed, operated and maintained by the utility. BCBSM and other customers that participate will get an annual credit on their energy bill, as well as a one-time, upfront payment. Detroit Edison also continues to offer PV incentives to their residential customers. [www.dteenergy.com/solar](http://www.dteenergy.com/solar).

Learn Fundamentals of PV System design and installation on Aug. 23-27. A one-week intensive Solar PV Training Workshop (cost \$775) will be held at Northwestern Michigan College. The content follows NABCEP's learning objectives for the entry-level exam. The optional NABCEP Certificate of Knowledge Exam is offered on Aug. 28 for \$105. Call (231) 995-1700 or (800) 748-0566 ext. 1700, or visit [www.nmc.edu/energy](http://www.nmc.edu/energy)

Colleges are Using Green as a Selling Tool. In 2010, the Sustainable Endowments Institute found that 69% of colleges and universities were incorporating a sustainability message during the admissions and student orientation processes. My alma mater, American University in D.C., takes students through the school's arboretum and green-certified buildings.

Enbridge and First Solar will expand the Sarnia Solar Project from 20 MW to 80 MW with a total system cost of approximately CAN \$300 million. When completed in the second half of 2010, it is expected to be the largest PV facility in North America. The first 20 MW began full commercial operation in December 2009.

Nine Stores in Manhattan and the Bronx have been hit with \$200 fines for leaving their doors open on hot days in the hope that the escaping cool air will lure sweaty customers. They are the first fined as part of a new law passed in 2008. Last year, only warnings were given out. This year, the city's Department of Consumer Affairs has inspected 105 stores. Seventy were in compliance, 26 were issued warnings and nine that had been warned last year were hit with fines.

Sacramento Municipal Utility District has awarded contracts to Recurrent Energy to install 60 MW of solar panels in Sacramento County. Rather than construct a central solar power station, Recurrent will locate a dozen 5 MW installations near an existing substation, which means that the solar arrays can be plugged directly into the grid without requiring any expensive transmission upgrades.

Renewable Energy for New & Historic Buildings will be held on August 4, 3-6. Join Detroit Geothermal, LLC for a site visit of two historic, sustainable building renovations in Midtown Detroit's Sugar Hill Arts District; Newberry Hall Apartments and 71 Garfield Apartments. The afternoon will feature tours, demonstrations and a workshop that will serve as a case study of how geothermal and solar technology work to provide renewable energy for rehabilitated and newly constructed buildings.  
<http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e2z6ey5i84ebc85b&oseq=>

Energy Tidbits is free and prepared by John Sarver, Michigan Dept. of Energy, Labor, & Economic Growth. To subscribe, contact [sarverj@michigan.gov](mailto:sarverj@michigan.gov). Previous copies can be found at [www.michigan.gov/energyoffice](http://www.michigan.gov/energyoffice) under Publications.