

ENERGY TIDBITS – February 2010

\$17.4 million in Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants (EECBG) has been awarded to 125 cities, villages, townships, and counties to support local energy efficiency projects. DELEG's Bureau of Energy Systems (BES) has two separate programs: 1) Multi-purpose competitive grants for smaller communities will support energy efficiency measures, 2) Light Emitting Diode/Solid State Lighting (LED/SSL) competitive grants will fund demonstrations of LED/SSL technology in various applications such as exterior parking, street and traffic lighting. State EECBG grant awards generally range from \$50,000 to \$140,000 for single cities, townships, or villages and up to \$650,000 for single counties and multi-jurisdictional recipients. Selected projects and funding amounts at www.michigan.gov/energyoffice.

Center for Climate Strategies has completed an analysis that indicates the Michigan Climate Action Plan - if fully implemented - would create 129,000 new jobs over the next 15 years. The plan's 54 recommendations call for greater use of renewable energy and more conservation in sectors such as industrial, farming and transportation. The center's analysis also predicts a \$25 billion net gain in the gross state product and lower prices for energy sources such as electricity, gasoline, fuel oil and natural gas.

General Motors has manufactured the first advanced lithium-ion battery for the Chevrolet Volt at GM's Brownstown Battery Pack Assembly Plant. GM announced last August a \$43 million investment to prepare the 160,000 sq.ft. plant for production of lithium-ion battery packs for the Volt and other electric vehicles.

Two Michigan Regions have been designated by the MPSC as wind energy resource zones. MPSC is required to base its decision based on the findings of the Wind Energy Resource Zone Board, which submitted its final report (<http://www.michigan.gov/windboard>) on Oct. 15, 2009. MPSC designated as the primary wind energy resource zone an area that includes parts of Bay, Huron, Saginaw, Sanilac and Tuscola counties. It also designated parts of Allegan County as an additional wind energy resource zone. The MPSC also submitted to the Michigan legislature its report on the impact of setback requirements and noise limitations in the wind zones and recommended that decisions about setback distances and noise levels be made by local planning and zoning authorities. MPSC will also expand the role of the Wind Working Group, which will review current scientific information on the process for determining setbacks.

Alternative Energy Conference: Creating Solutions; Driving Change sponsored by The Engineering Society of Detroit will be held on March 3 at the DoubleTree Dearborn. The conference will look at Michigan's opportunities and challenges in becoming a "hub" for alternative energy. Hear about Success Stories & Opportunities, Global and National Policy Benchmarking, VC and funding, technology, education and training, and much more. www.esd.org

MPSC annual net metering program report shows that the number of net metering customers in Michigan has more than doubled from July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009. The MPSC in May last year adopted net metering and interconnection rules for small, renewable electric generation projects onsite. The report said the number of net metering customers increased from 53 in 2007/08 to 137 in 2008/09. Wind proved the most popular with the number of installations increasing from 29 to 96 during the period, while solar installations increased from 23 to 39. www.michigan.gov/netmetering

8th Annual Renewable Energy Conference will be held on Saturday, March 20 at Pierce Cedar Creek Institute. The conference is ideal for homeowners, renewable energy enthusiasts, and students who wish to learn something new and meet other individuals that are interested in promoting and using renewable and alternative energy technologies. This year's keynote speaker, Pat Murphy, will present Beyond Sustainability - Surviving the Oil Depletion and Climate Change with Community Solutions' Plan C. Attendees can choose from a variety of break-out sessions including Renewable Energy in Your Home, Food Security and Local Foods in Michigan, Peak Oil and the Future of Transportation, and Financing your Renewable Energy System. www.cedarcreekinstitute.org

U.S. Department of Labor has awarded SER Metro-Detroit, Jobs for Progress, Inc. and the International Training Institute for the Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Industry approximately \$5.3 Million in Energy Training Partnership grants. Approximately \$4.3 million has been awarded to SER Metro-Detroit, Jobs for Progress, Inc. to coordinate several partnerships to provide academic, occupational and on-the-job skills training plus employment or apprenticeship opportunities and support services to 340 people in Wayne County. The International Training Institute for the Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Industry will utilize about \$1 million to prepare 240 unemployed and incumbent sheet metal workers for careers in energy efficient building construction, retrofitting, and manufacturing through a series of customized training courses.

Architectural Resource and Meadowlark Builders will present a "Behind the Drywall Tour" of their new home at 4675 Arkona Road in Saline. The house is near zero energy and features solar panels, geothermal heating and cooling, and other advanced elements. The highly unusual and specialized building envelope of the home is made to capture and store heat on cold winter days and to remain cool and dry in the summer. A guided tour will take place every hour-on-the-hour from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m Saturday, Feb. 13th. Each tour can accommodate up to 30 people. Since this is a construction site, boots and appropriate winter attire should be worn. Interested parties can signup for the tour by going to www.behindthedrywall.com or calling (734) 332-1500.

2010 Michigan Wind Energy Conference hosted by the Great Lakes Renewable Energy Assoc. will be held April 20th & 21st at COBO Hall in Detroit. In 2009, the Michigan Wind Energy Conference was the largest Michigan wind event and showcased over 25 wind industry companies, 1500 attendees and two days of presentations on manufacturing, financing, off-shore development, policy and more. www.glrea.org

First class of Energy Auditors at Glen Oaks Community College graduated Dec. 17. The Energy Auditor/Workplace Readiness training program was funded with a \$100,000 grant made possible through the Kalamazoo-St. Joseph County Michigan Works! and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Instruction in the GOCC Business Development Center came from professional trainers and energy consultants/trainers. The program is part of a state-wide effort to retrain displaced workers in “green” energy-related occupations. If you are looking to hire any energy auditors, contact Brandi at Building Science Academy 616-887-2311.

West Michigan Chapter of the Assoc. of Energy Engineers will have its first meeting of 2010 on Feb. 2, 11:30-1:00 at Bobarino’s and include a tour of the Veolia Energy Steam Plant. <http://www.acteva.com/booking.cfm?bevoid=197242>

Michigan Businesses won \$242 million in tax credits as part of a White House effort to create 17,000 green manufacturing technology jobs through a total of \$2.3 billion in tax credits. The tax credits awarded to 183 firms provide a 30% write-off for building advanced technology equipment such as wind turbines, batteries and solar panels. Among the Michigan companies was Hemlock Semiconductor, which got \$142 million to make solar components -- the largest single award. Other Michigan tax incentives include: \$27 million to Dow Corning to build a new monosilane facility, \$22 million to Merrill Technologies Group to help buy advanced manufacturing equipment to support the production of components for Northern Power's new 2.2 MW wind turbines, \$17.8 million to Dow Chemical to produce photovoltaic cells, \$9.8 million to Stirling Energy Systems to produce azimuth drives used to track the sun for the SunCatcher, a 25 kW solar dish, \$1.3 million to Great Lakes Industry to produce components for wind turbines, \$1.3 million to Ilumisys to automate production of LED replacements for fluorescent lights, \$2.7 million to Guardian Industries to produce unique low-iron pattern glass used in solar applications, \$300,000 to Rogers Foam Automotive to manufacture a component to be used in the thermal management system of lithium ion battery assemblies for vehicles, and \$2.6 million to Ventower Industries to become a full service manufacturer of wind turbine towers.

Michigan’s Largest Earth Day event is being planned for April 23-25. The MI Earth Day Fest will welcome to downtown Rochester an anticipated audience of 100,000 people from around Michigan, eager to learn about green and healthy living. Businesses and organizations are invited to participate and gain the benefits of exposure, recognition, sales, community service, networking and association with this high-profile, family-friendly event’s Earth Day message. For information about sponsoring, exhibiting, presenting or volunteering, visit www.miearthday.com or contact Steve Rogge at steve@trigreen.biz or 248-535-9390.

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