

Hello All!

A lot of good news for solar in Arizona this month!

1. The new EPS requirement
2. Energy efficient legislation this session: Bills.
3. Current incentives/rebates/subsidies for energy efficiency and renewable energy
4. Quick look at Bush's new direction in energy
5. Local Chapter News.
6. ASEA Elections DEADLINE FOR VOTING

1. First and Foremost, the new EPS requirement finally made it through the corporation commission (aka corp comm). Perhaps the biggest governmental boost to affect renewable energy in Arizona ever, the ruling requires regulated utilities, APS, TEP, Unisource, AEPCO, and others (not SRP) to have 15% of their energy come from renewable sources by 2025. The requirements start at 1.25% by the end of 2006, and steps up a little every year. More details on this will be included in next month's newsletter. Below is a press release corp comm put out earlier this week. At the bottom are quotes from the commissioners, some of whom are up for re-election this November. Hint, hint.

PHOENIX – Renewable energy technologies got a huge boost in an Arizona Corporation Commission vote this week. In a state known for its sunshine but not known for large, swiftly moving rivers and streams or large scale geothermal opportunities, state regulators set high standards for renewable energy, hoping to capitalize on Arizona's sunshine and other "green energy" opportunities. On Monday, Commissioners Marc Spitzer, Bill Mundell and Kris Mayes voted to require regulated electric utilities to generate 15 percent of their energy from renewable resources by 2025.

For 2006, utilities must generate 1.25 percent of retail energy sold from renewable resources.

The Commission's Renewable Energy Standards allow utilities to use solar, wind, biomass, biogas, geothermal and other similar technologies to generate "clean" energy to power Arizona's future.

The rules package outlines what technologies qualify and allow for new and emerging technologies to be added as they become feasible.

In addition to utility-owned projects such as Tucson Electric Power's large solar installation in Springerville, Arizona, the Commissioners also required a growing percentage of the total resource portfolio to come from distributed generation – residential or non-utility owned installations. The distributed energy requirement starts at 5 percent of the total portfolio in 2007 and grows to 30 percent of the total renewable mix after 2011.

In many cases, distributed generation installations – such as a large solar installation on the roof of a shopping mall, or solar panels at someone's home – qualify for utility rebates or state and federal tax breaks that offset some of the upfront costs.

Unlike other states that set aggressive standards but "grandfather" or give credit for existing projects, Arizona's Renewable Energy Standards are focused on adding new generation and taking advantage of emerging opportunities.

If a utility does not meet the standard, it can apply for a waiver and go through a hearing but the Commission may still assess a penalty for non-compliance.

To help offset the increased cost of meeting the more aggressive standard, the current Environmental Portfolio Surcharge amount will change. Currently, customers pay \$0.000875 per kilowatt hour. The new surcharge amount is \$0.004988 per kilowatt hour. There are monthly caps in place limit the total impact on customer bills.

Currently, residential customers are capped at 35 cents. The new cap will be \$1.05. Non-residential customers currently have a cap of \$13 but that will increase to a maximum charge of \$39.00. For extremely energy-intensive commercial accounts (mines, heavy-manufacturing, etc.) the surcharge is capped at \$117, up from \$39.

The Renewable Energy Standards were formerly known as the Environmental Portfolio Standard that topped out at 1.1 percent in 2007. In February 2004, the Commissioners voted to review the rules and consider adopting a more aggressive standard.

The Commission convened a series of intensive workshops involving the Commissioners and staff, proponents of various technologies, environmental advocacy groups and the utilities. The Renewable Energy Standards rules package is the result of this collaborative process.

Before taking effect, the rules must go through a review by the Attorney General's Office and a formal rulemaking process with the Arizona Secretary of State's office. It could be late in the third quarter or early in the fourth quarter of 2006 before the regulations are binding.

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Comments from the Commissioners

Commissioner Marc Spitzer:

"There has been a lot of discussion of the technical issues and economics of renewable energy. The numbers say that fossil fuels prices are going up, natural gas has tripled in three years and that means the future price of electricity is going up. Today we're doing something that transcends numbers. Sick children hooked up to respirators because we've had another bad air day is not something you can quantify. And the people of this country are frustrated that the nation's energy future is tied to unstable nations and natural disasters that threaten our energy infrastructure. We need to change the rules and strike a better balance. Today we've changed the rules. Tomorrow we may strike that better balance."

Commissioner Bill Mundell:

"In 2001, when we passed the current rules we were the first state to do so. Arizona was on the cutting edge. Now we've fallen behind. By passing these rules, we've put Arizona back in the forefront of renewable energy. Not only will we have cleaner air and conserve our water, we will create jobs and economic development in Arizona. This is a vote for our children and grandchildren."

Commissioner Kris Mayes:

"I proudly vote yes on these rules. We are taking our energy destiny into our own hands and making an investment in our state's future. This is a vote for independence from high utility bills, from bad air and from terrorist sponsoring countries that produce oil. A recent poll showed that 75 percent of Arizona customers are willing to pay a little more to ensure our energy independence. This will reduce the need for additional power plants and power lines while allowing us to meet the power needs of the thousands of new people moving into the state each month."

Commissioner Mike Gleason: Gleason voted against the rules.

"This is going to get very expensive. The experts from the utilities say

this is going to be very, very difficult to achieve. Years from now when the costs go through the roof, people will be asking 'What were they thinking when they passed this?' "

Chairman Jeff Hatch-Miller was out of the country on previously planned travel. In a February 16 letter to his colleagues, Chairman Hatch-Miller signaled his opposition to the Renewable Energy Standards.

2. Most of the bills we have been watching this legislative session are still alive. Three have made it through the House, and are on their way to the Senate. The others that are still alive come to a House vote very soon, and need your support.

The Three that made it through the house are HB 2429 solar energy tax incentives, HB 2430 energy cost saving measures; requirements - which make it easier to make schools and state buildings more energy efficient, and HB 2427 making renewable electricity sales more profitable, are on their way to the senate. Please contact your senator now and have them support smart energy policy!

Below is how your representatives voted on these matters (for some reason, info on the vote for HB 2427 is not available online)

House Vote on HB 2429 AND HB 2430--hold your representatives accountable!!!

Y=yes n=no nv=not voting.

1st column is for 2429, 2nd is for 2430:

Amanda Aguirre	Y	Y
John M. Allen	N	N
Manuel V. "Manny" Alvarez	NV	Y
Mark Anderson	Y	Y
Ray Barnes	Y	Y
Nancy K. Barto	Y	N
Andy Biggs	N	Y
Tom Boone	Y	Y
David T. Bradley	Y	Y
Jack A. Brown	Y	Y
Judy Burges	N	N
Jennifer J. Burns	Y	Y

Meg Burton Cahill Y Y
Olivia Cajero Bedford Y Y
Ted Carpenter YY
Cheryl Chase Y Y
Ted Downing NV Y
Eddie Farnsworth NV N
Steve Gallardo Y Y
Martha Garcia Y Y
Pamela Gorman N N
Chuck Gray Y Y
Trish Groe N N
Pete Hershberger Y Y
Steve Huffman Y Y
Russell L. Jones Y Y
Ann Kirkpatrick YY
Laura Knaperek N Y
Bill Konopnicki Y NV
Leah Landrum Taylor Y Y
Phil Lopes Y Y
Linda Lopez Y Y
David M. Lujan YY
Lucy Mason Y Y
Marian A. McClure Y Y
John McComish YY
Debbie McCune Davis YY
Nancy G. McLain N Y
Robert Meza YY
Ben R. Miranda NV NV
Rick Murphy N N
John B. Nelson YY
Warde Nichols N NV
Tom O'Halleran Y Y
Jonathan Paton YY
Russell K. Pearce N N
Gary L. Pierce Y Y
Tom Prezelski YY
Doug Quelland Y Y
Michele Reagan Y Y
Pete Rios YY
Bob Robson Y
Colette Rosati N N
Kyrsten Sinema Y Y
Bob Stump Y N
Albert Tom Y Y

Stephen Tully N Y
Jerry P. Weiers N Y
Steven B. Yarbrough Y Y
James P. Weiers Y Y

Other bills we are looking at this session below:

HB 2501, giving money to schools to make them more energy efficient. Still in house. Please contact your representatives and tell them to support this before they vote on it!

HB 2374 cities and towns; energy code - died to a strike everything amendment. Everything in it was taken out, and replaced with something about dentists.

HB 2435 water protection fund; funding, still in house. Ensures that water protection gets funded. Contact your representatives in the house.

HB 2843 tax credit; energy efficient products (air conditioners, washing machines, and ceiling fans)- still in House. Contact your representatives in the house.

- \$150 credit for a central air conditioner or an air source heat pump that would qualify for the federal tax credit.
- \$100 for a washing machine certified as Energy Star by the USDE or the EPA.
- \$25 for a ceiling fan certified as Energy Star by the USDE or the EPA.

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Outside of the Phoenix area, you may call your legislators office toll-free at 1-800-352-8404. For more information on legislation go to <http://www.azleg.state.az.us>.

3. current energy efficiency/renewable energy subsidies/rebates, etc. Just as oil, natural gas, coal, and nuclear are all heavily subsidized by the government, so too is energy efficiency and renewable energy.

For a comprehensive look at all this stuff, go to a website hosted by our parent organization, ASES:

<http://www.findsolar.com/index.php?page=taxcredit>

As far as current incentives in AZ for solar equipment such as solar water heating and solar electricity, they are in a transition period. As soon as the government and utilities publicly make up their mind, I will let you know. Any information that I release now will be obsolete within 1 month. So, for now, we'll just have to wait.

4. Alliance to Save Energy Comments on Bush's FY '07 Budget

Last week, Alliance to Save Energy President Kateri Callahan remarked regarding the Bush Administration's FY 2007 Budget, "In a remarkable 'about face,' the president and his top energy lieutenant, Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman, have submitted a budget request that slashes funding for federal energy-efficiency programs after spending the past several months extolling the potential for energy efficiency to address the severe economic, energy security, and environmental issues surrounding the nation's energy use." Callahan added, "The administration has called upon American consumers and businesses to do something that the FY '07 budget request does not: make meaningful investments in energy efficiency.

"In the face of energy costs that have ballooned to roughly \$4,500 a year for the average American family, the administration is proposing cuts in key energy-efficiency programs such as building codes, the Environmental Protection Agency Energy Star program, and weatherization programs," she said.

"Building energy codes set a floor for minimum efficiency standards in new construction, locking in energy savings for decades; the Energy Star label provides consumers with valuable guidance for purchasing the most efficient energy-using equipment; and weatherization programs make energy more affordable for low-income people."

Callahan continued: "Congress made energy efficiency a cornerstone of the recently enacted Energy Policy Act of 2005, including important new and expanded authorities for energy-efficiency programs that are completely ignored in the president's proposed budget. The Alliance to Save Energy calls on the Congress to fulfill its commitment to the American people by saying 'no' to proposed cuts in ongoing federal

energy-efficiency programs and by appropriating additional, new funding to initiate the innovative efficiency initiatives in the Energy Policy Act.

“Slashing funding for programs that deliver energy savings, make our country more competitive and spark investment in our economy is short-sighted; we need to invest more, not less, in America’s greatest energy resource, energy efficiency. The Congress and the president made a commitment to do so just this past summer. It is time now, in the fiscal year 2007 appropriations cycle, to make good on that promise.”

The Alliance to Save Energy is a coalition of prominent business, government, environmental and consumer leaders who promote the efficient and clean use of energy worldwide to benefit consumers, the environment, economy and national security.

5. Local Chapter news.

The Phoenix Metro Area chapter has the following events/meetings:

Thurs. Mar. 16

Az. Solar Energy Association/Arizona Solar Center 2006 Lecture Series

The Phoenix Metro area Arizona Solar Energy Association/Arizona Solar Center lectures and workshops continue with the 2006 Environment and Energy series starting February 16 under the auspices and sponsorship of the Scottsdale Green Building Program.

The lecture series occurs every third Thursday of the month, running through November 2006, at the City of Scottsdale Urban Design Studio located at the Northeast corner of 75th St. and Indian School Road. The free lectures are from 7 p.m. to 9 pm, with no need for registration.

Lecture topics will range from big picture energy issues to site and environmental design to solar equipment and do-it-yourself hands on implementation.

Some lectures will provide attendees with materials and information re: actions and activities that can be implemented.

The lectures build on each other. Starting with understanding the problems we are facing, later in the season we move to more solution based lectures.

March Environment and Energy Lecture

Transportation issues - Phoenix is one of the most energy intensive and least efficient cities when it comes to transportation. The film, "The End of Suburbia: Oil Depletion and the Collapse of The American Dream," will be showed. Blurb below:

Since World War II North Americans have invested much of their newfound wealth in suburbia. It has promised a sense of space, affordability, family life and upward mobility. As the population of suburban sprawl has exploded in the past 50 years, so too has the suburban way of life become embedded in the American consciousness.

Suburbia, and all it promises, has become the American Dream.

But as we enter the 21st century, serious questions are beginning to emerge about the sustainability of this way of life. With brutal honesty and a touch of irony, The End of Suburbia explores the American Way of Life and its prospects as the planet approaches a critical era, as global demand for fossil fuels begins to outstrip supply. World Oil Peak and the inevitable decline of fossil fuels are upon us now, some scientists and policy makers argue in this documentary.

The consequences of inaction in the face of this global crisis are enormous. What does Oil Peak mean for North America? As energy prices skyrocket in the coming years, how will the populations of suburbia react to the collapse of their dream? Are today's suburbs destined to become the slums of tomorrow? And what can be done NOW, individually and collectively, to avoid The End of Suburbia ?

There will be a speaker as well - TBA

For further information regarding the Environment and Energy lecture and

workshop series please check the Az. Solar Center website - www.azsolarcenter.com

or contact Dan Aiello (ASEA/AzSC) at j2envarch@aol.com or 602-952-8192.

Thurs. March 23rd 6:30 pm

Spring Solar Tour Planning Meeting.

Tentatively at Sweet Tomatoes, just west of Mcklintock on the N side of Southern in Tempe

Sat. March 25th 11-4

The Arizona Science Center 600 E. WASHINGTON ST. PHOENIX, AZ
85004 PHONE 602-716-2000

Solar Weekend Saturday and Sunday, March 25 and 26, 11 a.m.–4 p.m. As part of Solar Month, learn all about the power of the sun and how it affects our world! Talk with local experts to find out how you can incorporate solar energy into your daily life. There will be a series of fun interactive activities that incorporate the effects of UV rays and the opportunity for solar viewing through solar telescopes.

ASEA Phoenix will have a table setup out front to help educate the public. With solar cookers, fountains, cars, etc., this event is geared towards families and the little ones. WE NEED VOLUNTEERS TO HELP INFORM THE PUBLIC ABOUT SOLAR AND SUSTAINABLE ENERGY. To volunteer, simply reply to this email, and we'll take it from there.

6. Elections for ASEA Statewide Board of Directors 2006 will close on March 31st. All ballots must be postmarked by then to be counted.

That's all for now. Have a great month!

Ben
ASEA