

Hello All!

Below is the May e-newsletter of the Arizona Solar Energy Association.

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1. AZ Solar Politics

People always ask me, "why is there not more solar in Arizona?" Let me tell you, if you think there should be more solar in Arizona, now is the time to act. It is up to you! People have worked very hard to get the proposed legislation on the table. Right now is an unprecedented time for solar politically in AZ and in the US. Below I have provided all the information you need to contact your representatives in government, and let them know that this is important to you. If you don't contact them, you lose your right to complain about the lack of solar in AZ!

The big happening is with the corporation commission. Even though they already voted to increase the Environmental Portfolio Standard (EPS) to 15% renewable energy by 2025, there is yet ANOTHER big vote on it coming up. Details and ACTION ALERT below from Vote Solar:

BIG, BIG OPPORTUNITY AT THE CORPORATION COMMISSION

The next big vote on renewable energy won't take place in Washington. It will take place in Phoenix. Sometime this summer, the five commissioners on the Arizona Corporation Commission will vote on a proposed rule to significantly expand renewable energy in Arizona--15% renewables by 2025, and 30% of that to come from distributed generation resources like solar. We are talking on the order of up to 1,800 MW of solar, a very big deal. The emissions reductions are roughly equivalent to removing 1 million cars from the road--not to mention jumpstarting the clean technologies of the future.

We have a precarious 3-2 majority on the Commission right now,

and the usual suspects are gearing up opposition.

We absolutely have to win this one, and demonstrating the public mandate is critical. We need a full court press to show the Commissioners that Arizonans really want to see intelligent solutions to our energy problems. A full-throated roar of public approval is our best bet for heading off dissent before it gets traction. There's a public comment period culminating in a public meeting on May 23. We've set up a petition, and need to gather as many signatures of support as possible.

If you live in Arizona, please sign the petition, and get your Arizona friends to do so too.

ACTION ALERT: CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW TO BE 2 CLICKS AWAY FROM SENDING YOUR MESSAGE OF SUPPORT TO THE COMMISSION

http://www.democracyinaction.org/dia/organizationsORG/votesolar/petition.jsp?petition_KEY=267

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With the AZ legislative session ending soon, now is the most important time to contact your representatives in government to support sustainable energy and environmental legislation. The bills that we have been supporting that are still alive need a final push of public support to be sure that they will pass and be funded.

HB 2429 - tax credits for solar energy: It awaits action by the Senate Rules Committee and will likely be held for the budget. Tax credits for solar energy equipment, still alive, but weakened. The largest benefit to homeowners has been taken away, which was increasing the cap on the state tax credit to \$2,000. However, it still exempts solar equipment from adding value to the home that would increase property tax, and the sales tax exemption on solar equipment and installation has been raised from its current level of \$5,000 to \$50,000. For commercial entities, there is a 10% state tax credit, and the exemption on sales tax goes to \$50,000 as well. The cap on the total cost of the corporate portion of this bill has been set at \$5,000,000 per year. Strangely enough, our governor is trying to reduce the cap on the tax credits. Originally there would be a cap at \$7 million. The governor

requested \$3 million. The proposed compromise was \$5 million. It is unclear where it stands now. The word on the street is that the governor is against this bill because some of her political enemies happen to be personally invested in solar energy, and she claims and/or mistakenly believes that this bill will only serve to benefit their investments.

ACTION ALERT: Tell the governor to support this legislation, and not to water it down by lowering the cap on the tax credits. You are two clicks away from sending her a letter. Click here:

<http://www.arizonapirg.org/AZ.asp?id=1451&id3=AZ&id4=AZTY&id5=>

Contact the Rules Committee as well (their contact info is below)

HB 2843 It awaits action by the Rules Committee.

Tax credit for energy efficient appliances:

- \$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. The fan provision will be amended out because of changes in federal requirements.

Contact the Rules committee:

Ken Bennett	1	R	kbennett@azleg.gov	926-5584	926-3429
Robert Blendu	12	R	rblendu@azleg.gov	926-5955	417-3168
Bill Brotherton	14	D	bbrotherton@azleg.gov	926-4485	926-3429
Jorge Luis Garcia	27	D	jgarcia@azleg.gov	926-4171	417-3162
Timothy S. Bee	30	R	tbee@azleg.gov	926-5683	417-3147

HB 2430 SIGNED TO LAW BY THE GOVERNOR!!!

Energy cost saving measures; requirements: cleans up several aspects of the statutes addressing energy efficiency and renewable energy. It will encourage state agencies and schools to utilize energy efficiency and renewable energy mechanisms. It will allow agencies to better pay for the investments over a reasonable period of time.

Purpose: Increases the contract terms for energy cost savings

measures to 25 years and removes the 8-year payback requirements for solar energy measures.

Background: The Arizona Department of Administration (ADOA), in consultation with the Department of Commerce, establishes practical and effective methods for estimating and comparing life cycle costs for state capital projects. The life cycle cost uses the sum of all expenses associated with the energy system of the building over the expected life of the system or during a period of 15 years, whichever is shorter.

ADOA is required to develop and implement a program to enter into performance contracts solely for the purpose of achieving energy savings. Each contract may be for a period of not more than 15 years.

Life cycle costs means the total cost of owning, operating and maintaining a building over its useful life including fuel, energy, labor and replacement components determined on the basis of a systematic evaluation and comparison of alternative building systems.

There is no fiscal impact to the state General Fund associated with this legislation.

Provisions:

1. Increases the guaranteed energy cost savings contract term from 10 years to 25 years for school districts.
2. Increases the life cycle costs requirements and performance contract term from 15 years to 25 years for state buildings.
3. Clarifies that the maximum performance for energy saving measures extends to 25 years or the life of the energy saving measure, whichever is shorter.
4. Removes the 8-year payback requirement for solar energy, energy conservation design, equipment and materials for schools and state buildings.
5. Removes all reporting requirements for calculating energy and costs avoidance amounts and paybacks to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee, the Legislature and the Governor's office.
6. Requires that all costs incurred from the energy savings measures be covered under the energy and operational savings after any financial incentives or assistance is provided by utilities rather than the contractor bear costs.
7. Defines the term "combined heat and power."
8. Makes technical and conforming changes.
9. Becomes effective on the general effective date.

2. Federal Solar Legislation: ACTION ALERT

From Vote Solar:

The feds are getting into the game--and with the newly introduced "Securing America's Energy Independence Act", we have our biggest opportunity yet to jumpstart solar in this country.

The bill does what it says. The bi-partisan legislation (introduced in the House as HR 5206 and the Senate as S. 2677) would make America's energy future a lot brighter in a very sensible way by making solar energy, in effect, 30% cheaper across the country.

The [bill](#) extends the 30% federal investment tax credit (just enacted but currently set to expire at the end of 2007) for another 8 years to 2015, and lifts the cap on residential credits from \$2,000 total to \$2,000 per kilowatt of capacity.

This is a huge, darn-near-once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. California's \$3.2 billion, 3,000 MW initiative passed earlier this year was big. This is even bigger.

For those new to the game, solar energy has the [potential](#) to provide much of the electricity our country needs. Temporary financial incentives are necessary to build economies of scale—and extending the tax credits over a longer period gives the solar industry the market certainty necessary to make long-term investments.

The game plan is to get as many co-sponsors to sign onto the bill as possible. Energy is a top-level concern for Americans, and Congress is primed to show some resolve before the mid-term elections in November. Bills with legs, as demonstrated by the number of co-sponsors, are much more likely to get the tap to move forward and have a chance at passage.

So—it's on you. Send an email to your representatives. Rally your friends. Take action now, or no complaining later.

ACTION ALERT: CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW TO BE 2 CLICKS AWAY FROM SENDING A PRE-WRITTEN (OR CUSTOMIZED) EMAIL TO YOUR REPRESENTATIVES IN WASHINGTON!!!

http://www.democracyinaction.org/dia/organizationsORG/votesolar/campaign.jsp?campaign_KEY=3665

3. Electric rates rise for APS and SRP

APS has raised rates 13% this year already. They have 13% more requested for later this year for a potential of 26% worth of increases this year alone. The 13% we have already seen was spread over 3 separate increases. The first was on Feb 1, the second was on April 1, and the third was on May 3.

SRP's summer residential rates are 10% higher than they were last year. Although, strangely enough, there has been little to no press coverage of this. Back in November they raised summer residential rates by 6.7%, and just the other day they raised their power supply adjustor (PSA) by 3.4%. The PSA is a line item that can be seen on your bill. It is a rate that varies as the price for fuel and purchased power vary to SRP (and APS). Because SRP invested well in natural gas futures, they aren't going to have to raise rates as high as APS this year. But they will have to raise them more next year, being that you can buy futures only so far out.

4. Local Chapter News Roundup

The Phoenix Metro Area Chapter of the Arizona Solar Energy Association continues its:

Environment and Energy Lecture Series.

Put on by the Arizona Solar Energy Association and the Arizona Solar Center

under the auspices of the City of Scottsdale Green Building Program

Lecture Topic - BECOMING SUSTAINABLE IN THE URBAN DESERT ENVIRONMENT

Learn about Permaculture - a method of integrating various systems that many

homeowners wish to include in their sustainable living space.

Presenter - 4 DIRECTIONS PERMACULTURE designer, teacher and consultant

Donald Titmus.

A recognized proponent of environmentally appropriate and sustainable actions, Mr. Titmus brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the issue of living in a desert setting. While many battle the desert environment with inappropriate resource utilization, Mr. Titmus brings strategies and actions which optimize desert resources and provide sustainable habitats. A resident of the Valley of the Sun, Mr. Titmus' own residence is an evolution from a resource inefficient building and site into an environmentally responsive, desert appropriate, sustainable habitat. Benefit from his expertise and learn about Permaculture Design.

Thursday Evening May 18, 7 to 9 p.m. Free. City of Scottsdale Urban Design Studio located at the northeast corner of Indian School Road and 75th St.

Questions - daniel peter aiello
arizona solar energy association/arizona solar center -
e-mail j2envarch@aol.com
phone - 602-952-8192

JUNE LECTURE TOPIC
THE OASIS MYTH - Building Design Strategies for the Desert
Learning from the Natural Environment
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The Phoenix Metro Area had a very successful Spring Solar Tour of Homes on the weekend of April 29th & 30th. Thanks to all who showed their homes, volunteered, and attended the event. Photos etc. will be posted on the solar center website soon.

5. Miscellaneous

Global Warming Movies: (from Union of Concerned Scientists' e-newsletter)

It's official: global warming has gone mainstream. On TV, in the

theaters, and on the web--global warming is everywhere. Following are a few of the latest films that can help all of us working on the issue to communicate the urgency of transforming our energy system to our friends, families, and colleagues.

An Inconvenient Truth <<http://www.climatecrisis.net/>> – Opening in theaters on May 24, this documentary tells the story of former Vice President Al Gore’s efforts to educate the public on the urgency of global warming and our moral obligation to address it. Bring some friends to opening weekend.

An Inconvenient Truth in AZ:

9-Jun AZ Scottsdale Camelview 5

23-Jun AZ Tucson Catalina

23-Jun AZ Tucson El Con

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Too Hot Not to Handle

<http://www.hbo.com/docs/programs/toohot/index.html> - This HBO documentary looks at the impact of global warming on the United States and what steps we can take to reduce the threat. Watch for David Friedman, research director of the UCS Clean Vehicles Program. Click here

http://www.hbo.com/apps/schedule/ScheduleServlet?ACTION_DETAIL=DETAIL&FOCUS_ID=619118 to see when it's playing in your area and host a house party. Showing on HBO in May.

"When 85% of public thinks global warming is a problem and Time Magazine warns us to "Be VERY Worried," it's time for action." - Environmental Defense.

That’s all for now. Stayed tuned for more next month. Remember, past issues of our e-newsletters can be found online at: <http://www.azsolarcenter.com/solarorg/asea2.html>.

Peas, pizza, and peace!

Ben
ASEA Chair