



CERTs News

HELLO CERT PARTNERS AND FRIENDS AND WELCOME TO THE MARCH 2007 ISSUE OF our Monthly Update!

Lissa, Netty & Joel

Regional Highlights/Experiences

CENTRAL REGION

* Sixty three people attended the Central Region CERT meeting at the Hunt Utility Group (HUG) Research Campus in Pine River. To view pictures, please visit http://www.hugllc.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2191&Itemid=15.

Attendees learned about the 60 acre research campus (The main building, the RREAL research trailer, the cabin and the new manufacturing building). The RREAL trailer is currently testing nine prototype solar thermal units and they hope to test twenty before they begin manufacturing in September, 2007 <http://www.solar-rating.org/>. The main building is built of cob (hay bales and a mud plaster) and takes advantage of passive solar with a geothermal back-up system, monitoring and measuring the heat flow all the way http://www.hugllc.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2127&Itemid=57. The new manufacturing/green house building is 16,000 square feet and has ten miles of tubing (!) six feet down criss-crossing back and forth.

They have recently welcomed organic clothing company Round Belly Clothing <http://www.roundbelly.com/> to their "Green" business incubation; this is also where they will fabricate new equipment, tools and materials their "invention" laboratory. It will have a living roof with ½ million tons of dirt on top (eight inches of soil atop six other layers to absorb runoff). At the cabin, they are blending technology

and materials so that the buildings can heat themselves (or use as little fossil fuels as possible). They are using structurally insulated panels (SIPs) for the roof, and will also have a greenhouse to grow food and supply passive heat. Eventually HUG would like to fabricate houses that can be shipped and installed.

NORTHEAST REGION

* Congratulations to the 17th Annual Energy Design Conference and Expo, held in Duluth on February 27th & 28th. They had record attendance (1332, up 20% from 2006), both for the general registration and also for the exhibitors, and many rooms were filled beyond capacity. Mark your calendars for next year's Design Conference on February 26 & 27, 2008 and come and learn about the latest innovations in energy technologies, efficient and high performance building concepts, renewable energy, green building design, and sustainable development.

SOUTHEAST REGION

* On March 7th Over 40 attendees came out to the Plainview American Legion Club Room to identify energy efficiency goals that they could implement in their own homes, businesses and farms. The workshop is the first of four planned by the Plainview First National Bank Energy Bank www.fnbenenergy-bank.com on ways to assist the community on becoming more sustainable. Attendees stayed over

an hour than the time allotted to focus on energy efficiency technologies available, how practical they are, as well as the real world economics for the renewable energy options. Questions varied from when to change out the refrigerator, to using the Bank's Kill-a-Watt meter, to how big a wind generator is practical for a farm. A discussion was held on whether to individually install solar and wind vs. how to get the community to plan a community based energy production system. The discussion was led by Rich Huelskamp (651-301-3271; rich@sunswarmth.com;www.sunswarmth.com) whose business mission is to help home and business owners through the process of becoming more energy efficient, sustainable, healthy, by using solar, wind, and/or biomass for heating and electricity. Plainview First National Energy Bank contacts include Kent Harrington Kent.Harrington@fnbplainview.com and Cassie Harrington Cassie.Harrington@fnbplainview.com.

* A post-secondary teacher in Rochester is interested in how Cuba dealt with their Peak Oil problem when the former Soviet Union stopped supplying them with fuel back in the 90s. She is considering arranging a tour to Cuba to see first hand the changes that were made as adaptations to a low fossil-fuel environment, and is seeking other people with a similar interest who might join a Cuba tour. Contact: Jodeen Wink at jodeen.wink@roch.edu

SOUTHWEST REGION

* SW CERT staff Annette Bair is looking into the disposal options for CFLs and other fluorescents in southwestern

Minnesota. Netty has found that as an Xcel energy customer, she's able to get \$0.50 off each CFL she buys, but when she goes to the list of retailers accepting used bulbs (<http://www.xcelenergy.com/docs/BulbRecyclingRetailers.pdf>), the closest she can find are located in New Ulm, Springfield and Granite Falls. The list of County Recycling Centers that participate also doesn't really help (http://www.xcelenergy.com/docs/retail/conmrkts/BulbRecyclingCountyRecyclingCenters0203_2.pdf). Then she started wondering about all of the other utilities serving her region. There's a great website <http://www.earth911.org/master.asp> where one can enter in his/her zip code to find disposal sites, but still none in Murray County... what's a responsible CFL user to do? Netty has contacted the PCA to discuss this issue, and it seems this is right up PCA's alley. There's nothing concrete to report quite yet, but if you have ideas you'd like to share, or thoughts on other effective and safe disposal sites, let us know!

WEST CENTRAL REGION

* Starbuck, Minnesota is now the home of Solar Skies <http://solarskies.com/>, a new solar thermal manufacturer! They currently have 13 employees and a capacity to produce 1,000 SRCC certified panels per month. Now let's dream for a moment. With Solar Skies up and running, and the Rural Renewable Energy Alliance in the Central Region planning to begin manufacturing in the fall in Pine River. Is Minnesota soon to become a national leader in solar thermal manufacturing?

Link of the Month: Department of Energy Study

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY'S STUDY ON POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF DISTRIBUTED GENERATION

<http://www.oe.energy.gov/651.htm>

OK, you wonky CERTs members, here is a meaty 188-page document for you to sink your teeth into (and comment on by April 2nd). Section 1817 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPAct 2005) required DOE to conduct a study in consultation with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) of the potential benefits of cogeneration and small power production, or distributed generation (DG). This study encompasses various forms of distributed energy technologies, ranging from those that produce only electricity to those that produce a combination of heat and power (CHP), installed at or near the point of use.

Upcoming Events

CENTRAL REGION

* Central CERT: June 14th, 5:30-7:30 PM at the Water Foundation's Living Art Center located a few miles outside of Brainerd.
http://www.hopshop.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=section&id=7&Itemid=94 (once at this site, go to "Projects" on the lower left side and click on "campus tour" to see the clean energy technologies available at the site). David Winkelman will be our host. He helped install the Jacobs 31-20 turbine at HUG, and will be able to show the Central CERT team wind, solar, geothermal, veggie oil and other technologies.

NORTHWEST REGION

* Northwest CERT: April 25th, all day Cellulosic Fuel & Product Industry Forum (location and exact times to be determined by steering committee).

SOUTHEAST REGION

* "An Inconvenient Truth" will be shown at the Rochester Public Library at 6:00PM on April 18th.

OTHER

* Energy Seminar Series - "Advances in the Thermochemical Production of Solar Fuels" (Dr. Aldo Steinfeld) April 11th. For more information, please visit:

www.me.umn.edu/events/seminars.shtml

* Carbon Sequestration: Looking to the Land For Climate Change Solutions. Friday, April 20th, 8:00-11:45 AM University Club, Saint Paul. <http://www.mn-ei.org/policy/events.html>.

* "The Road to Renewable Energy: Careers for Everyone" April 20th. Speakers from the renewable energy business/industry will present information to students about renewable energy careers. Topics will include types of renewable energy careers, skills/knowledge sets these careers require, and how students can go about preparing for these careers. More information coming soon, or check for updates at <http://www1.umn.edu/iree/events.html>

* Elk River First Annual Energy City Energy Expo, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, April 21, 2007 at the new Twin Lakes

Elementary School, 10050 -191st St. Free. The goal of the Energy Expo is to increase public awareness of global climate changes, and to inform people about practical actions they can take to have a positive impact on global warming. Paul Douglas, the Chief Meteorologist from WCCO-TV, will be the keynote speaker. Contact www.elkriverenergycity.org, or 763-635-1073.

* The "Architecture 2030 Challenge," Monday, April 23, 2007, U of M Coffman Memorial Union, 300 Washington Ave SE, Minneapolis. For map and directions - <http://www.coffman.umn.edu/about/directions.php> Free. Register online at www.aia-mn.org/continuing_ed/opportunities.cfm. The Architecture 2030 Challenge, recently adopted by the American Institute of Architects and the U.S. Conference of Mayors, provides a roadmap to move toward zero emission/zero energy design by the year 2030. Architecture 2030 has shown that buildings are responsible for almost half of all energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions annually; globally, the percentage is even greater. Who should attend: architects, designers, builders, and anyone interested in the contribution of buildings to global warming. For more information, contact: Deanna Christiansen, christiansen@aia-mn.org, 612-338-6763.

* BioEnergy Business 2007 - US-German Opportunities for Cooperation in Biofuels and Biomass April 25th. The primary objective of the conference (presented by the German American Chamber of Commerce) is to open a dialogue for partnership between two of the world's leading countries in developing and implementing new BioEnergy technologies. Registration will be capped at the first 120 participants. For more information and to register, please visit: <http://www.gaccomm.org/consulting/bioenergybusiness.html>

* Corrie Zoll corrie@mngreenroofs.org; 612-423-2048 with the Minnesota Green Roofs Council www.mngreenroofs.org is extending an offer of \$100 off the registration price for the upcoming Green Roofs Conference in Minneapolis April 29th, 30th and May 1st. This will be the largest gathering of green roof professionals and advocates ever held in North America. Details at <http://greenroofs.org/minneapolis/>.

* The Minnesota State Energy Conference, sponsored by the Minnesota Weatherization Advisory Group, will be at Cragun's Resort and Conference Center in Brainerd,

Upcoming Events continued...

Minnesota, on May 2nd, 3rd, and 4th. The sessions have been arranged so that a non-weatherization auditor can travel to the conference and pick up all the technical content with just one overnight stay. This will be a great opportunity for both those practicing and interested in the field of residential energy auditing to learn about the latest energy auditing techniques and to meet with experienced weatherization auditors. For more information, please contact Mark McLaughlin, 651-284-3267; mark.mclaughlin@state.mn.us

* Green By Design presented by Minnesota Green Communities, May 16th & 17th, The Depot in Minneapolis. <http://www.greencommunitiesonline.org/minnesota/>. Keynote Speaker Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

* 2007 Solar Boat Regatta, Saturday, May 27th, 2007 The Minnesota Renewable Energy Society (MRES) invites student-teacher teams, families, and interested individuals to take part in the annual Solar Boat Regatta. To learn more, visit <http://www.mnrenewables.org/events/solarregatta/index.php> or contact Doug Shoemaker at 952-431-2653; Dougs@Charter.net

* EECO, June 19-20th, 2007. The premier biennial conference

and exposition focused on environment and energy issues in the Great Lakes Region of Canada and the United States.

More information on www.eeco2005.com,
<http://www.eeco2005.com>.

Questions?

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