

Watt's Happening?

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Days of change. Days of opportunity.



Thousands of wind turbines like these are being installed around the world each year to harvest one of our most plentiful and pollution-free energy sources.

Over one million people now get their paychecks from the wind industry, a number that is roughly doubling every four years.

It is so cool to be around at this moment in history. The “power shift” to a clean energy world is actually happening.

Industry, governments and individuals are seeing the necessity to move to clean energy and energy efficiency, not so much as a problem but more an opportunity – an opportunity for competitive advantage, for jobs in exciting new careers, an opportunity to reduce health care costs and deal with pollution and environmental destruction at it’s source . . . and so much more.

Changes are happening so quickly now it seems

hard to keep up, so this week we’ll take a quick sample from around the world.

GREEN POPE SPEAKS OUT

Pope Francis has made history by declaring that climate change is a critical moral and ethical issue, specifically for the world’s one billion Catholics.

He has clearly called for global action to stop “the unprecedented destruction of earth’s ecosystems,” and that all nations must now come together to halt the carnage with real action, not words and promises.

Yes, God's creation could use some serious help right now. Thank you Pope Francis.

ALBERTA ELECTION RAISES NEW HOPE

For the first time in over four decades, Alberta elected a new government this May bringing to power the NDP, a first in their history. The NDP platform promised "to phase out coal-fired electricity generation to reduce smog and greenhouse gas emissions and expand cleaner, greener sources, including wind and solar . . ."

A poll taken after the election showed a large majority (67%) would like to see the government expand "the development of renewable energy projects in the province."

Montreal-based Dunsky Energy Consulting has calculated that just \$24 per person would buy Alberta an energy efficiency program that would slash carbon emissions, create thousands of jobs and save consumers \$460 million per year in energy costs.

Hey, if it can happen in Alberta, it can happen anywhere.

NORDICS, IKEA RACE TO THE LEAD

Sweden and Norway are both set to exceed their renewable energy targets of 28.4 terawatt-hours by 2020. Between them they are developing over 200 wind farms.

Meanwhile, the corporate giant Ikea has announced it's \$1.4 billion plan to fight climate disruption. Some 60 percent will add to its investment in renewable energy, while the balance will help developing countries adapt.

HAWAII GOES GREEN

Hawaii has passed legislation that sets a goal of 100 percent energy self-sufficiency with renewables in 30 years. The islands presently burn USD \$5 billion (yes, that's a "b") worth of fossil fuels per year. Ya, room for some improvement there.

B.C.'s CLIMATE ACTION TEAM

BC has announced the members of its new Climate Leadership Team that will recommend next-generation policies on climate action for the province.

"I'm confident the work of the team will stimulate a real debate about B.C.'s future climate change direction, and the best way for us to define a low-carbon future," said the Team chair, Mike Bernier, who is Peace River South's MLA and Parliamentary Secretary for Energy Literacy and the Environment for the Minister of Environment.

The Team has a tricky road ahead if it is going to keep everybody happy.

CLEAN ENERGY JOBS BALLOON

The number of people around the world earning their livings in renewable energy grew by 18 percent last year to a total of roughly 7.7 million people, the equivalent of doubling every 3.9 years. Solar photovoltaics led with 2.5 million on the payroll, with China accounting for two-thirds of the PV employment and half of the hydro jobs. A million people now get their paychecks from the wind power industry.

LITHIUM ION BATTERIES CHALLENGED

Hydro-Quebec said it is working on a metallic lithium battery that will carry electric vehicles 350 kilometers on a charge. The battery is solid state, non-flammable and will give lithium ion batteries (currently the vehicle standard and featured in Tesla's new Power Wall) a run for their money.

Meanwhile, a South Korean scientist has shown how electric vehicles can be charged in four minutes using atom-thick graphene as a supercapacitor. Scaling up and commercialization are next.

Ok, ok. So much is happening so quickly. Stay tuned to future *Watt's Happenings* and I'll do my best to keep you up to speed.

Exciting times! Amazing opportunities . . .