

Watt's Happening

Peace Energy Cooperative Newsletter
Summer/Fall, 2016
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Message from the President



Greetings members

It has been six years since I was last President of Peace Energy Cooperative and writing an update to our valued members. I am very pleased to have this opportunity to bring you up to date on our progress since our AGM in April.

At that time, our prospects looked promising but our financial situation was challenging. We have reduced our administrative costs, relied greatly on volunteer time from directors, and completed a number of sales and consultation contractual arrangements so that we have turned that corner and feel much more confident in our future. We have not filled the vacant Executive Director position due to the salary commitment that involves. Instead, the directors are dividing and sharing those responsibilities among themselves, along with timely assistance from our office administrator, Wendie Demyen.

Long-standing member Greg Dueck has taken on the responsibilities of being our solar sales, design, and project management

specialist, and has completed several PV design and installation projects this summer, as well as produced a number of PV reports and continues with consultation services. Through Greg we have the expertise to design, supply, and install the most appropriate solar power system for a client's particular circumstances and needs.

With our assistance, Hudson's Hope was successful in securing a \$1.35 million infrastructure grant through the Union of BC Municipalities to put solar PV arrays on their public buildings to reduce the District's electrical bills. Urban Systems has been awarded the contract to manage this project, and PEC has been engaged by Urban Systems as a subcontractor to design and place some 300 kW of solar for Hudson's Hope. Don Pettit and Greg Dueck are taking the lead on this world-class solar project for PEC.

Electric scooter and bike sales have gone well this summer. We have sold all of our scooter inventory and nearly



Steve Rison, President

all of our bikes, as well as ordered more for committed buyers.

We have had a very busy and exciting summer, and are in a much stronger financial position going forward. Interest in all aspects of renewable energy is increasing and we are poised and prepared to address and serve that interest. Thank you for supporting your cooperative.

"You must be the change you wish to see in the world."

Mahatma Gandhi



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Watt's Been Happening

Fall 2016 sales update

I volunteered in April 2016 to assist with solar sales for the time being and I have been kept busy this year on a number of fronts. We have been educating and answering many questions about solar from walk-in, email and phone enquiries at the office on a regular basis.

I have taken our solar display to several public events such as the Dawson Creek Home and Garden Show, PEC AGM open house at the office, the City of Dawson Creek Solar Days and Rivers Day in Kin Park which generated some great discussions about the benefits and process of going solar.

Solar Assessments available for home or business

We are now using professional solar design software to assess the solar potential of a home or business which creates a report for a specific property. Most reports have been for simple grid tie residential designs although we have also worked on some more complex off-grid requests.

To date we have completed a large number of basic and advanced solar assessments which have led to two solar system sales and a lot of potential sales in the works. These reports generate some income to pay for PEC office operations and give our clients the information needed to make a decision about investing in a solar system for their home or business. As a benefit of being a PEC member, if you purchase a solar report and subsequently order a system, you receive a credit on your solar order. Check out the options at <http://peaceenergy.ca/solar-what-does-it-cost/>

Although BC does not provide any assistance for going solar at this time there may be some opportunity for the following groups:

- There are federal tax breaks available for some businesses that install renewable energy;
- There may be an opportunity for First Nations, local community halls and non-profit groups to access funding to install a solar system and reduce their operating costs;
- In Alberta there is an incentive/grant program in place for farms and ranches that install renewables and to reduce energy usage.

Winter is a good time to have a solar assessment completed so we'll be ready to install your solar next spring for a full spring, summer and fall of high energy production. Please call me at the PEC office (250-782-3882) in Dawson Creek for information or to set up an appointment to have a solar assessment completed for your property.



Greg Dueck, PEC solar consultant



Greg and Joanne Dueck were there to help with the solar install at the Demmitt Hall in Alberta this summer.

Peace Energy Cooperative has focused on designing and supplying as many solar power systems as possible over the summer and fall, and we have been having good success. Here are a few of the solar arrays we have installed for our customers, all feeding green electrons into the B.C. and Alberta grids.

Demmitt Hall goes solar

This was Peace Energy Co-op's first solar installation in Alberta. The paperwork to grid-tie was found to be more complex and time-consuming than the B.C. system, but eventually everything fell into place and installation went ahead quickly and efficiently.

Northgate Electric Ltd. from Beaverlodge Alberta was subcontracted by PEC for the installation and wiring. Members of their team took the solar course for electricians held by PEC at Northern Lights College in Dawson Creek, so they were fully qualified to install solar in Alberta. Because of the very high and steep roof, Northgate used a lift for the installation as shown in these photos.

The 6.2 kW array features SolarEdge optimizers on each panel. Optimizers insure maximum output regardless of shading, provide automatic safety shutdown on each panel, and include free on-line monitoring of the system.



Northgate Electric Ltd. from Beaverlodge, Alberta installed and wired Peace Energy Co-op's first solar installation in Alberta. The 6.2 kW grid-tied array will supply most of Demmitt Hall's electricity for the next 30-40 years or more, and can be easily expanded at any time.



The Demmitt Hall was designed to last generations while keeping its environmental footprint as small as possible. It was built with pine beetle killed timber from a nearby forest, insulated with straw bales from the community, and utilizes composting toilets.

The slope of the south facing roof is at the ideal angle for solar panels so naturally installing a PV system was the next step to further reduce the footprint of the Demmitt Hall. Members of the community and friends of the hall worked a casino to raise the funds required to install a grid-tied PV system. The system offsets over 80% of the power used at the hall and is designed so it can easily be expanded in the future.

Using the power of the sun to offset the energy consumed adds to the legacy of the Demmitt Hall and the principles on which it was constructed.

Donovan Kit, president of Demmitt Cultural Society



Fort St. John solar: *Barbara and Brian Daley install 6.8 kW grid-tie*

Co-op members Barbara and Brian Daley have installed a Peace Energy - designed and supplied solar array on the roof of their residence near the Fort St. John airport (photo at left). The 6.8 kW grid-tied array features SolarEdge power optimizers and free remote internet monitoring.

Perry McFie of Haab Homes in Fort St. John was the electrician in charge of the PV installation. Perry was sponsored by Peace Energy Co-op to take the solar PV course for electricians run last fall at Northern Lights College and was excited to do his first (of many!) solar installations in the Fort St. John area.

Solar Training now

Running PV training courses is a critical component of Peace Energy's vision for the solar future of the Peace Region. "No matter how much interest there might be in solar power, without talented and experienced local installers we cannot meet the demand," explains Don Pettit, PEC board member. "Thanks to PV courses at Northern Lights College and hands-on experience provided by PEC installations, we now have qualified solar electricians in Dawson Creek, Beaverlodge and Fort St. John, with more to come."

Another solar course is being held this November at Northern Lights College in Dawson Creek (see poster at left). "We especially encourage electricians to take this solar course, and then register with Peace Energy to get on our qualified solar installers list."

NORTHERN LIGHTS COLLEGE
B.C.'s Energy College

Solar Photovoltaic INTRODUCTION TRAINING

DAWSON CREEK CAMPUS, RM 2120

Nov. 12-13
8:30 am to 5 pm
\$825

- **General Solar Photovoltaic System Basics**
- **Grid-Tie and Off-Grid Solar Electric System Design**
- **Electric Fundamentals**

NLC and PEC are excited to offer Solar Photovoltaic Introduction training for individuals interested in learning about Solar Photovoltaic Systems.

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For information contact Bev Litster at 250-784-7576 or email blitster@nlc.bc.ca
For registration please contact Student Services at 250-782-5251, ext 1001 or email dccampuservices@nlc.bc.ca

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