

Watt's Happening? #241

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A call to ACTION



The small northern community of Hudson's Hope, BC has taken a leadership role in beating climate change (and high electricity costs!) with some 1/2 million watts of solar on nine of their municipal facilities, saving to date over \$200,000 in electrical expenses. You don't have to be big to be green!

Ten years ago, we thought we had lots of time to deal with our changing climate. Back then, no big unstoppable changes had been triggered.

But now evidence is increasing that we are rapidly moving away from the stable climate that has made human life on Earth quite comfortable for the last 10,000 years. Irreversible destabilization is looming. Time to sound the alarm.

We have now had ten years of record breaking climate extremes: fires blazing in Australia, Siberia, California and the Amazon; floods in China, Bangladesh and India; heat waves across the entire northern hemisphere (a ten year drought in our beloved Peace

River Region); we are only a few decades away from an Arctic without sea ice in the summer; permafrost is thawing at alarming rates.... the list is long and frightening.

For the first time, we are now forced to realize the risk of destabilizing the entire planet. Over the next tens years we must see the most profound transformation the world has ever known. The world that we know, our economies, our food supplies, our water, our everything, depend 100% on a stable climate and a wide diversity of species, all working together to support and sustain us.

So this is our mission: energy systems must

move quickly to very low and then zero carbon emissions, and the number of species extinctions must begin to decline rapidly. We can start there.

Over the next tens years, our actions (or inactions) will determine the state of the planet that we hand over to our children. They have every reason to be alarmed.

But if you are a regular reader of this column, you know that many people around the world and here at home are listening, sharing these concerns, and taking action.

HUDSON'S HOPE: the most solarized municipality in BC!

You don't have to be big to be green.

With a population of just 1,100 people, the District of Hudson's Hope in NE BC has gone solar, big time. It is probably, per capita, the most solarized community in the province.

With the help of a Federal Gas Tax grant, Hudson's Hope placed more than 500 kilowatts of solar (some 1500 solar panels!) on nine of their municipal buildings and facilities. For comparison, a modern home can run on about 10 kilowatts of solar.

Our local Peace Energy Cooperative in Dawson Creek in a joint venture with Moch Electric Ltd. designed, supplied and installed the grid-tied solar power systems and powered them up in 2018. Since then, the District has saved over \$200,000 in electrical expenses. Not bad for a small northern community, hey?

SAINT JOHN N.B. dips into wind

Saint John, New Brunswick, will soon be powered in part by wind energy. The first of ten turbines in the Burchill Wind Project recently began to spin, feeding power into the local grid.

Nearby Saint John Energy is buying the wind power under a power purchase agreement, securing

good electricity prices for residents of Saint John for the next 25 years. Burchill should provide about 15% of Saint John's electricity.

Natural Forces, an independent power producer, is a partial owner of the wind farm. Nequotkuk First Nation, formerly known as Tobique First Nation, is the majority owner.

EV SALES TOP \$1 TRILLION

Global spending on electric vehicles (EVs) is going crazy.

A new report from Bloomberg shows that annual spending on passenger EVs hit \$388 billion in 2022, up 53% from 2021. Add that to global sales to date and you get \$1 trillion now spent worldwide on passenger EVs!

Although still small compared to overall global auto sales of \$2.5 trillion per year, it's growth that counts, and in this case very rapid growth. Those manufacturers early into the game are set to prosper the most, while latecomers, like Toyota

and Honda, are bracing for a scramble to catch up.

AND MUCH, MUCH MORE

In this issue of Watt's Happening, I have sounded the climate alarm again, and then picked three examples of real actions taken by real people, both here and around the world, that are making a genuine difference. There are literally thousands and thousands more.

We are not trying to save the planet. We are trying to provide a good future for all people and all living things. And hey, the good news is that we can do this. We have the knowledge, the know-how and the technology. We know it makes social and economic sense.

Yes. We know what to do, and we are beginning to do it.

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