



Solar Washington Newsletter

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Grid gets 1,200-volt jolt

A cottonwood tree fell near Clallam Bay and shorted a major distribution line across the community's power lines, delivering 1,200 volts to local homes. The jolt fried appliances throughout the community. (*Peninsula Daily News*)

Public housing goes solar

The King County Housing Authority installed a 2-kilowatt solar array on a low-income housing complex in White Center in early January. The panels are part of a Seattle City Light demonstration project. (*Seattle P-I*)

Petroleum geologists see no global warming

Six former heads of the EPA assailed the Bush Administration's see-no-evil approach to global warming, and a new study in *Science* finds that Greenland glaciers, which account for one-sixth of the annual rise in sea level, have doubled their rate of flow. Meanwhile, the American Assn. of Petroleum Geologists gave Michael Crichton its annual journalism award for his novel *State of Fear*, which discounts global warming.

RE initiative inching toward Nov. 7 ballot

Activists are fanning out across the state to gather the 235,000 valid signatures needed to get a green-power voter initiative on the November 7 ballot. If successful, I-937 would require large utilities to get at least 15 percent of their power from non-hydro green sources by 2020. Opposition is waiting in the wings. We tell you how to get involved. See

[\[http://www.solarwashington.org/newsletters/0603/1.I-937.pdf\]](http://www.solarwashington.org/newsletters/0603/1.I-937.pdf)



1979 courthouse solar: oldie but a goody

Back in the days of bell bottoms, inflation and serious concerns about a shortage of fossil fuels, Clallam County built an innovative and controversial new courthouse with 126 solar hot-water panels. The panels were supposed to heat the building and provide hot water for the jail. So how did



the system turn out? Uh, no one at the courthouse had a clue. So Solar Washington did some sleuthing. Turns out, these panels, which cost \$100,000 some 27 years ago, are saving taxpayers \$30,000 every year. See

[\[http://www.solarwashington.org/newsletters/0603/2.Courthouse.pdf\]](http://www.solarwashington.org/newsletters/0603/2.Courthouse.pdf)

EVs and other mania in Port Townsend



Port Townsend is pretty small and really, really progressive, a combination that turns out to be great for electric bikes, cars, scooters and other such. Some of these rigs are even powered by nothing but a solar panel. We'll give you the full skinny. And, oh yeah, there's this retired physicist who is going "maniacal"

developing a 1 liter vehicle – that's a vehicle that gets at least 235 miles per gallon. Wow! This is an interesting little town.

See

[\[http://www.solarwashington.org/newsletters/0603/3.EVstory.pdf\]](http://www.solarwashington.org/newsletters/0603/3.EVstory.pdf)



Recycle that can

Recycling a single aluminum can saves enough energy to run the typical television for three hours or light a 100-watt bulb for nearly four hours. (The Aluminum Assn.)

The power of sun

More energy from sunlight strikes the earth in one hour than all of the energy consumed by humans in an entire year. (U.S. Dept. of Energy)

U.S. gas production falls

In the past three years, the number of drill rigs at work in the West has risen 63 percent, but natural gas production is down 2 percent. (Questar Corp.)

World wind production has another record year

The global wind-energy sector set another record in 2005. Nearly 11.8 gigawatts were installed, up from 8.2 gigawatts in 2004.

The total value of the new generating equipment installed was \$14 billion. Total installed wind power capacity worldwide now stands at 59.3 GW. (Global Wind Energy Council)

We're Solar Washington

Solar Washington is a chapter of the American Solar Energy Society. We're a private, not-for-profit association for people and organizations interested in solar power, energy efficiency and renewable energy.

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Next meeting: Please watch our website for the next meeting. We hope to see you then.

Our president's column

Board elections, incentives and more

It's time to elect a new board. Plus, SW has kicked off a two-fer membership drive. Pam also clues us in about new solar subsidies, legislation and a promising national solar conference this summer in Denver.

See [<http://www.solarwashington.org/newsletters/0603/4.Prez.pdf>]

8 kw and a killer view on Camano Island

Tim Nelson tells us about an 8-kilowatt solar system that he designed for a Camano Island home. Even on cloudy days, the PUD meter spins backward. And then there's this awesome view of Mt. Baker.

See [<http://www.solarwashington.org/newsletters/0603/5.camano.pdf>]

SW's website has new message board

Webmaster George Meyer has built a new message board for SW's website. Some discussions have already started, so check it out. George has also put some videos of recent meetings on the website. See

[<http://www.solarwashington.org/newsletters/0603/6.Webmaster.pdf>]

Salmon and solar are a perfect match



Salmon activists are trying hard to save an icon of the Northwest and the keystone species of the region's ecosystem. It ain't easy. Big utilities keep trying to mitigate the loss of river habitat with hatchery fish, but those efforts are making the situation worse.

What we need is more solar and fewer dams and hatcheries. See [<http://www.solarwashington.org/newsletters/0603/7.Salmon.pdf>]

The last word

Sometimes the solution is just too obvious, or maybe we get too set in our ways. The Clallam County Courthouse was built in 1979 with an array of 126 solar panels. The panels cost \$100,000 and are saving the county \$30,000 a year. Lesson learned, right? Nope. The city built its city hall eight years later just across the street, but the building has the typical dead roof. Didn't the city want to save taxpayer money or conserve precious energy? Actually, no one was paying any attention. Meanwhile, people entering the courthouse have to all but duck to keep from bumping their heads on the solution.

As always, if you want to make your voice heard in this newsletter, contact us at newsletter@solarwashington.org.

– Josey Paul, editor