Campbell River: A Solar Community

Solar BC Quarterly Report – July 9,2010

I. Accomplishments:

The following bullets provide highlights of key accomplishments to date:

- **Solar Days Events 2010 – Solar Home Tour and Solar Hot Water Community Workshop** (over 70 participants); extensive radio/print media promotion

- **Solar Kids Contest –** Solar Car give away and other prizes to an 8 year old for her creative entry describing how energy from the sun could be used in the future in Campbell River

- **Solar Installations to Date** – 12 solar powered cross-walks and 2 solar radar recorders

- **Solar Hot Water Installations Underway –** RCMP Station, Sportsplex, and City Hall

- **Developing Educational Kiosks –** permanent displays for solar hot water installations and a mobile educational unit on solar

- **Partnership with the School District #72 Ecoschools Program –** pursuing solar hot water installations at Carihi and Timberline Secondary Schools

- **Fundraiser for Solar Hot Water Installation at Timberline Secondary School** (Earth Week Events – April 2010); close to $400 fundraised

- **Presentations/Displays on Solar Opportunities -** North Island Engineers Annual Dinner; Strathcona Regional District re: Strathcona Gardens Aquatic Facility; Environmental Advisory Commission; Development Advisory Commission; Solar Days Workshop; Canada Day

- **Green City Currents –** Sustainability Manager Amber Zirnhelt wrote one of her Green City Currents columns for the local paper on solar to coincide with solar days. See Appendix 1.

- **Solar Web Promotion –** Dedicated space for promotion of solar energy initiatives on the City's website (www.campbellriver.ca)

- **Community Energy and Emissions Plan underway as part of Sustainable Official Community Plan–** Solar roofs target for non-municipal buildings and planning underway

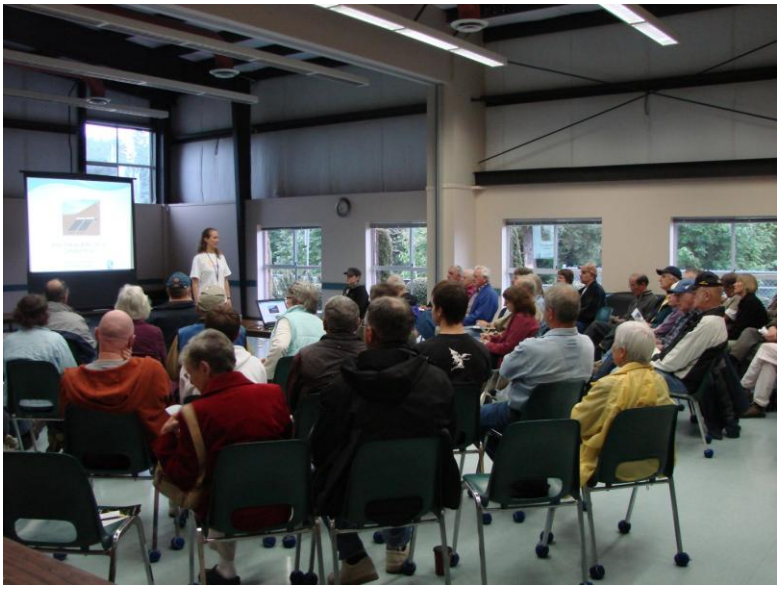
- **Member of the Pembina Institute Green Building Leader's Project –** exploring potential for renewable energy policies

- **Opting in to the Province's Solar Ready Regulation –** Council Resolution passed and letter sent to the Province; consultation with Development Advisory Commission and the Environmental Advisory Commission

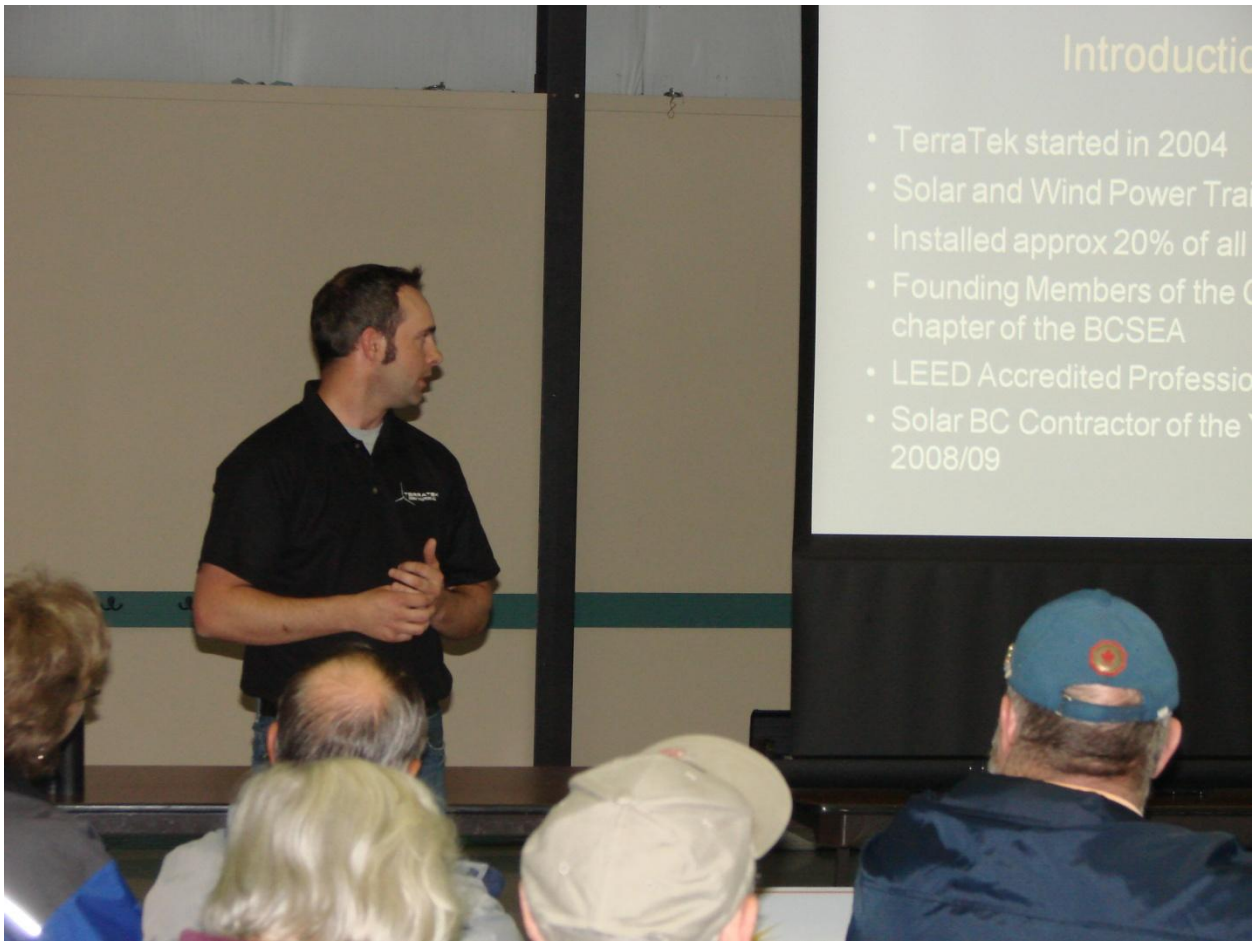
II. Campbell River Solar Workshop and Home Tour

In celebration of Solar Days, Campbell River held a solar home tour and workshop for the public on May 31st. Sixty-seven people attended the workshop, and over forty attended the home tour. The events were promoted in the newspapers and on the radio, and attendees were asked to register in advance.

Local resident Mark Johnson provided a tour of his solar hot water installation, enabling community members to see a solar hot water system in place. Johnson answered questions about his system, the installation process, and the air-to-water heat pump which allows Johnson to incorporate solar hot water with a forced air home heating system. Following the home tour, the solar home workshop was held at the community Sportsplex. The workshop began with a presentation by the City's Sustainability Manager Amber Zirnhelt on Campbell River's solar power and sustainability initiatives, community outreach efforts, and announcement of Campbell River's new status as a Solar Community. The remainder of the solar workshop was facilitated by Terratek Energy Solutions, who described different kinds of solar hot water systems, the variables affecting the effectiveness of solar hot water heating, and the costs and benefits involved.



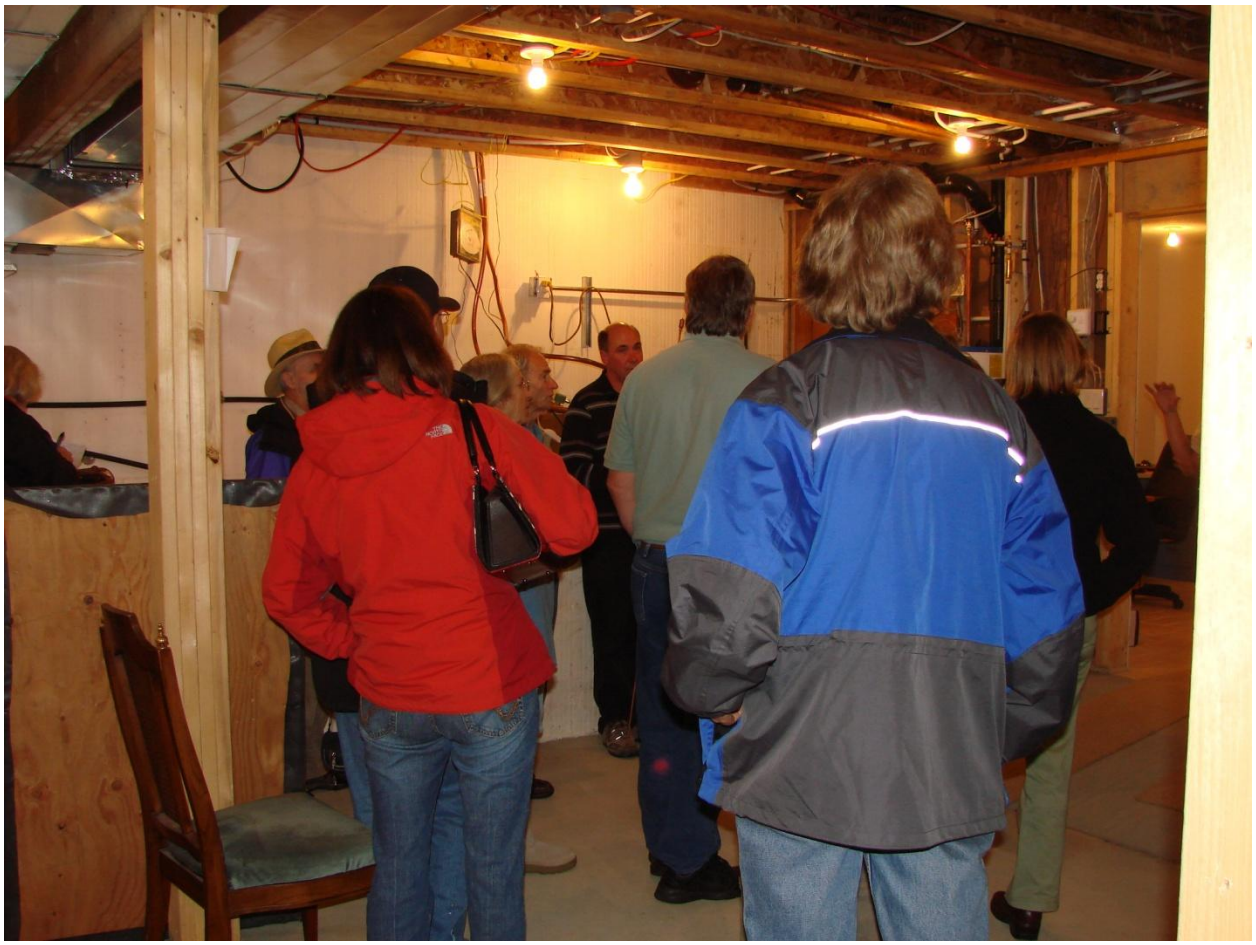
Amber Zirnhelt, the City of Campbell River's Sustainability Manager, presents to local residents during the City's Solar Days workshop.



Scott Flenor of Terratek Energy Solutions provides citizens in Campbell River with an overview of solar thermal.

“We were very encouraged to have such a great turn out and interest from the community in solar hot water. It’s a great reflection of the community support for our movement forward as one of BC’s newest Solar Communities,” said Amber Zirnhelt, Sustainability Manager for the City of Campbell River.

The City of Campbell River also hosted a Solar Kids Contest as part of the Solar Days activities. Kids are asked to write into the City of Campbell River to answer the question, “In the future, how do you think Campbell River could use the sun’s energy?” Contest winners received a free toy solar car and a Solar BC t-shirt and sunflower pen.



Residents take a look at the solar thermal installation at local resident, Mark Johnson's home.

III. Next Steps

The City is currently working on our Community Energy and Emissions Plan which will incorporate solar into the plan. Campbell River is working on installations, solar hot water displays and the development of solar hot water workshops for the business community, local builders and developers.

For more information on this report contact:

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Appendix 1: Green City Currents Column

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Green City Currents

By Amber Zirnhelt, Sustainability Manager

Solar Days festivities showcase solar opportunities for home

With the approach of summer and more sunshine on the minds of many people world-wide, the end of May marked International Solar Days – a celebration of solar as a renewable energy source. As part of the festivities, May 28-31st had Campbell River and communities across BC participating in solar events.

The City of Campbell River offered a free solar home tour of a local residence, and a solar hot water workshop for interested community members. The City is also offering a Solar Kids Contest where children are encouraged to share their ideas answering, “In the future, how do you think Campbell River could use the sun’s energy?”. Contestants have the opportunity to win a futuristic toy solar car. The contest closes June 11th and entries must include a name, age and phone number. Entries should be dropped off at City Hall with ‘Solar Kids Contest’ on the entry.

As part of Campbell River’s Green City Strategy, the City is one working with Solar BC to actively promote solar energy opportunities at City facilities and for local homes and businesses. To date, the City has installed 12 solar powered crosswalk lights and two solar radar recorders, and is assessing the viability of solar hot water for municipal facilities.

Despite, the common belief that solar energy is only viable in very sunny, hot climates, solar energy works in all climates, including those on Vancouver Island. In fact, Campbell River has an average of 1800 hours of sunshine per year, above the 1700 hours of sunshine that is the average in Germany, a current global leader in solar. Since the supply of solar energy comes from light generated by the sun, rather than from direct sunlight, even cloudy days can provide enough energy for up to 60 percent of domestic hot water needs.

As a homeowner, if you are interested in determining if solar hot water would work on your home, the first place to start is by determining if your roof has at least 6 square metres of south-facing roof space that experiences little or no shade from 10am to 4 pm. If so, as a next step, you can take the free online solar assessment available through Solar BC (www.solarbc.ca). When you enter your address/postal code, your home will be given a color-coded rating that provides you information on how solar technology might be used to reduce your family’s energy costs.

Solar BC also provides incentives for home owners. You can choose the option of an interest free loan or to receive up to $2,000 from Solar BC and another $1,375 through the ecoEnergy and Live Smart BC programs.

Installation for solar hot water systems can be completed by registered Solar BC installers, who have had training verified and accredited to provincial standards. A complete list of certified installers is available on the Solar BC website (www.solarbc.ca).

Green Tip of the Month: Solar energy is a renewable energy source that works especially well for hot water heating. Reduce your energy bill and invest in the environment by switching to solar. For more information see www.solarbc.ca