



October 6, 2022

Welcome to this month's issue of ***Solar Newsbriefs***, brought to you by the Washington State University Energy Program. Please feel free to forward this issue to those of your colleagues interested in solar energy. For archives of past *Solar Newsbriefs*, visit

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Oregon News

Residents in Hood River County can Go Solar, Together

Solarize Hood River County launches September 6, providing access to clean and resilient renewable energy. Home and business owners in Hood River County, Oregon will have a unique opportunity between September 6 and October 31 to gain the benefits of solar energy and battery storage through a campaign called Solarize Hood River County. Solarize Hood River County is being led by a coalition of organizations including The Next Door, Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD), Solar Oregon, the Hood River County Energy Council, and Energy Trust of Oregon—Visit Hood River Oregon, [Press Release], September 7, 2022: <https://visithoodriver.com/press-releases/residents-in-hood-river-county-can-go-solar-together/>

Increase in Homes Switching to Solar in Douglas County

With climate change concerns and the ever-increasing cost of living, local homeowners and businesses are looking to solar power as a way to negate some of the rising prices of commodities and utilities. With tax credits and discounted electricity bills as benefits, a growing segment of the population is making a change, this includes Douglas County—Sam Temple, *The News-Review*, September 8, 2022: https://www.nrtoday.com/news/local/roseburg/increase-in-homes-switching-to-solar-in-douglas-county/article_d75f9641-7159-5538-b960-2db85e1a461e.html

Eugene Community Buildings Getting New Solar Panels

New solar panels are helping lower electricity costs at two organizations in Eugene dedicated to helping others. The Eugene-Springfield chapter of the NAACP is renovating the Mims House in the 300 block of Eugene's High Street. The Eugene Mission in the 1400 block of west First Avenue was also awarded \$50,000 through EWEB's 2021 Greenpower Grant, and had a system installed this spring. The Eugene Mission is one of the largest homeless rescue shelters in Oregon—Robert Desaulniers, KEZI-TV,

September 15, 2022: https://www.kezi.com/news/eugene-community-buildings-getting-new-solar-panels/article_e1cc42-354d-11ed-8716-2b3cfc918f7e.html

Oregon Town Hosts First Wind-Solar-Battery “Hybrid” Plant

A renewable energy plant in Oregon that combines solar power, wind power and massive batteries to store the energy generated there officially opened Wednesday as the first utility-scale plant of its kind in North America—Gillian Flaccus, *AP News*, September 28, 2022: <https://apnews.com/article/oregon-portland-wind-power-north-america-b3a243b5484b9c4ba83d399ac59fe42b>

New ODOE Study Outlines Potential for Small-Scale and Community-Based Renewable Energy Projects

The Oregon Department of Energy [published a new study](#) today that provides a foundation for understanding how small-scale and community-based renewable energy projects could support Oregon communities. In the 2021 legislative session, the Oregon Legislature directed ODOE to convene a diverse workgroup of stakeholders to examine opportunities and address barriers to developing small-scale and community-based renewable energy projects—Oregon Department of Energy, Blog, September 30, 2022: <https://energyinfo.oregon.gov/blog/2022/9/30/new-odoe-study-outlines-potential-for-small-scale-and-community-based-renewable-energy-projects>

Washington News

Inflation Reduction Act Unleashes Billions in Capital for Community Solar Projects Nationwide

Community solar, the energy choice that provides Americans with equal access to local, affordable, and reliable electric power, is on track for explosive growth, accelerated by the historic Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA). The new law provides \$7 billion in federal funds, available as competitive grants, for eligible recipients to leverage toward the deployment of community solar facilities and other zero-emissions technologies, including a 20 percent bonus credit for projects serving or located in qualified low-to-moderate income communities—Coalition for Community Solar Access, August 30, 2022: <https://www.communitysolaraccess.org/inflation-reduction-act-unleashes-billions-in-capital-for-community-solar-projects-nationwide/>

University of Washington and Gonzaga open Spokane Medical Building

UW and GU Health Partnership is celebrating the completion of a 90,000-square-foot building at 840 E. Spokane Falls Blvd. in Spokane's University District. The building is ultra-efficient and utilizes an open-loop ground source heat pump system that extracts water from the Spokane aquifer to provide a constant water temperature that the building's mechanical systems use for heating and cooling. There is also on-site solar and back-up power systems—*Daily Journal of Commerce*, Sept. 26, 2022: <https://www.djc.com/news/co/12151218.html>

Solar Panels Coming to More Schools, Public Buildings Statewide with Latest Round of Commerce Grants

The Washington State Department of Commerce today announced \$1.4 million in grants to state and local government agencies to install solar panels at public buildings in communities throughout the state. The 14 projects awarded funding in this round will support community efforts to move toward sustainable energy sources and result in long-term energy cost savings that can be reallocated to other

needs—Washington State Department of Commerce, [Press Release], September 13, 2022: https://www.commerce.wa.gov/news/solar-panels-coming-to-more-schools-public-buildings-statewide-with-latest-round-of-commerce-grants/?utm_medium=email

Medical Lake Receives Grant for Solar Panels

The city will receive a grant from the state Department of Commerce to install solar panels. According to Commerce officials, the city will receive one of 14 grants award to install the panels in public buildings statewide. The \$210,867 grant will help cover the cost to install a 104 kilowatt solar panel generation system at the city's wastewater treatment plant, officials said—*Cheney Free Press*, September 15, 2022: <https://www.cheneyfreepress.com/story/2022/09/15/news/medical-lake-receives-grant-for-solar-panels/29991.html>

State Awards Grant for Solar Panels at Kent Senior Center

Kent will get its first solar installation at a city facility after the state Department of Commerce awarded a \$84,760 grant to fund the project at the city's Kent Senior Activity Center—Steve Hunter, *Kent Reporter*, September 14, 2022: <https://www.kentreporter.com/news/state-awards-grant-for-solar-panels-at-kent-senior-center/>

PUD Holding Open House Saturday on South Everett Solar Project

The [Snohomish County] PUD is partnering with the City of Everett on a solar project that is planned to be built in south Everett and will generate funds to assist the PUD's Project PRIDE program, which assists income-qualified PUD customers. The planned solar array will have a capacity of 375 kilowatts, generating enough electricity to power approximately 40 homes—*My Everett News*, September 16, 2022: <https://myeverettnews.com/2022/09/16/pud-holding-open-house-saturday-on-south-everett-solar-project/>

Olympia Receives Award for Solar Campaign

Olympia received a "[SolSmart Gold](#)" designation from the national [SolSmart](#) program for making it faster, more accessible, and affordable for homes and businesses to go solar. The SolSmart program, which started in 2016, is funded by the U.S. Department of Energy. According to Braff, the SolSmart program recognizes cities, counties, and regional organizations for addressing and reducing the barriers for the community to have easier and faster access to solar energy—Lorilyn C. Lirio, *The Jolt News*, September 21, 2022: <https://www.thejoltnews.com/stories/olympia-receives-award-for-solar-campaign,7283>

Sedro-Woolley Homes to be Part of National Solar Tour

Two newly constructed homes in Sedro-Woolley are going to be a part of the National Solar Tour on Oct. 1. Martha Rose, president of Martha Rose Construction, built the two single-family homes with the intent of them being net-zero in terms of energy. This means that they use less energy than they produce. Homes are rated using the Home Energy Rating System. While average homes have ratings between 50 and 100, the two homes that are part of the tour have a rating of minus-20, meaning they produce more energy than they use—Racquel Muncy, *goskagit*, September 23, 2022: https://www.goskagit.com/townnews/commerce/sedro-woolley-homes-to-be-part-of-national-solar-tour/article_43c7938a-3850-11ed-803b-1f605f0932e9.html

Critical Step Ahead for Planned Yakima County Solar Projects

Within the next month, the public will have a chance to weigh in on an environmental review of two proposed solar energy projects in eastern Yakima County. Plans for what should be included in the study of the High Top and Ostrea solar projects proposed along state Route 24 on the county's eastern border were discussed in a meeting Tuesday by the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council. The two 80-megawatt solar farms – separate projects because they would be served by different power lines in the area – are proposed by Cypress Creek Renewables, a solar energy and storage company based in Santa Monica, California—Joel Donofio, *The Spokesman-Review*, September 22, 2022:

<https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2022/sep/22/critical-step-ahead-for-planned-yakima-county-sola/>

Yakima County Commissioners set October Public Hearing on Solar Farm Moratorium

Residents will have a chance to weigh in on a moratorium on solar farms in unincorporated areas of Yakima County during a public hearing next month. The 10:00 a.m. public hearing will be October 4 in Room 33B in the basement of the Yakima County Courthouse at 128 N. Second St. in Yakima. [Online access: Yakima county Commissioners website]. Check article for more information and to download agenda—Phil Ferolito, *Yakima Herald-Republic*, September 22, 2022:

https://www.yakimaherald.com/news/local/yakima-county-commissioners-set-october-public-hearing-on-solar-farm-moratorium/article_fb925a18-35e4-11ed-920a-9f9569e493f8.html

National News

How the Inflation Reduction Act Makes it Easier to Go Solar – and where it falls short

Of the \$369 billion the Inflation Reduction Act sets aside for climate and energy initiatives, incentives for energy efficiency upgrades, electric vehicles, and clean energy manufacturing are getting many of the headlines. Equally important is the new law's substantial support for local solar deployment, such as rooftop solar panels and shared community solar farms. As the government implements the Inflation Reduction Act, directing available funding to equitable local solar projects will help maximize the law's benefits for households and put power back in the hands of people, instead of monopoly energy utilities—Katie Kienbaum, *Institute for Local Self-Reliance*, September 5, 2022: <https://ilsr.org/how-the-inflation-reduction-act-makes-it-easier-to-go-solar-and-where-it-falls-short/>

Community Solar Developers See Sunny Opportunity in Tax Credits

Low-income areas and communities of color have felt left on the sidelines as homeowners reaped the benefits of rooftop solar panels and electric vehicles helped along by federal and state tax credits. But community solar project developers say more generous tax credits under the new climate law will help them make a big push into those communities, using tax credits that can run as high as 50 percent for renewable energy installations—Dean Scott, *Bloomberg Law*, September 8, 2022:

<https://news.bloomberglaw.com/environment-and-energy/community-solar-developers-see-sunny-opportunity-in-tax-credits>

Who Qualifies for Direct Pay for the Solar ITC?

The [Inflation Reduction Act](#) includes a provision allowing tax-exempt entities to receive the solar investment tax credit as a direct payment. In the past, to make nonprofit solar projects financially viable, most organizations had to partner with developers or banks that could take advantage of the tax

benefits—Kelsey Misbrener, *Solar Power World*, September 12, 2022:

<https://www.solarpowerworldonline.com/2022/09/who-qualifies-for-direct-pay-for-the-solar-itc/>

Report finds one in ten of all K-12 Schools Have Gone Solar

Schools across the country are rapidly switching to solar power to meet their energy needs while gaining significant cost-savings, STEM learning and climate resiliency benefits, according to a [new report](#) from clean energy nonprofit Generation180. Since the start of 2015, the amount of solar installed by U.S. K-12 schools has tripled—Kelsey Misbrener, *Solar Power World*, September 15, 2022:

<https://www.solarpowerworldonline.com/2022/09/report-finds-1-in-10-k-12-schools-have-gone-solar/>

Agrivoltaics

From Parking Lot to Paradise: Our Future in Agrivoltaics

It is a dilemma of global proportions. People everywhere dread the worsening effects of climate change and yet feel helpless to mitigate them. If they understood the true potential of green roofs and agrivoltaic technology, their moods would improve.—Mona Das [Representative of the 47th District in the Washington State Senate], *Living Architecture Monitor*, Fall 2022:

<https://livingarchitecturemonitor.com/articles/parking-lot-to-paradise-future-in-agrivoltaics-mona-das-fa22>

Agrivoltaics: Co-Locating Solar and Agriculture Yields Mutual Benefits

National labs and universities are exploring the synergies of co-locating solar with cattle or sheep, crops, pollinator-friendly native plants, soil rehabilitation and other ecosystem services—Ryan Kennedy, *pV magazine*, September 8, 2022: <https://pv-magazine-usa.com/2022/09/08/agrivoltaics-co-locating-solar-and-agriculture-yields-mutual-benefits/>

Recycling

With More Solar Panels Entering the U.S. Waste Streams, EPR Policy and Standards Emerge

As more solar panels are expected to enter the waste stream, experts at a recent Northeast Recycling Council webinar said policy and recycling markets are working hard to catch up. Speakers discussed the rollout of the country's first solar panel extended producer responsibility program in Washington state, anticipated recycling standards that could shape how recyclers manage the materials, and examples of how manufacturers can incorporate recycling into manufacturing processes. Here are some key takeaways from the discussion—Megan Quinn, *Waste Dive*, September 27, 2022:

<https://www.wastedive.com/news/solar-pv-panel-epr-recycling-washington-nerc/632719/>

Utility-Scale Developer to Recycle 95 percent of Value of End-of-Life Solar Panels with SolarCycle

Silicon Ranch Corporation, developer of solar and energy storage and independent power producer, announced it entered an agreement with SolarCycle to recycle end of life solar modules for re-entry into the supply chain. SolarCycle said it recovers roughly 95 percent of the value of a panel in its process—Ryan Kennedy, *pV magazine*, September 29, 2022: <https://pv-magazine-usa.com/2022/09/29/utility-scale-developer-to-recycle-95-of-value-of-end-of-life-solar-panels-with-solarcycle/>

This Startup is Partnering with Sunrun to Recycle and Re-Use Millions of Outdated Solar Panels

Solar panels may be the epitome of green hardware, but as the technology advances and more powerful panels take over the market, older panels are turning into harmful waste. Now one California-based startup, SolarCycle, is taking advantage of that waste by recycling components of the panels and selling them off for profit. SolarCycle claims it can inexpensively extract about 95 percent of the high-value materials in solar panels, like silver, silicon, copper and aluminum. Those can then be repurposed or returned to the supply chain, creating a circular solar economy—Diana Olick, CNBC, October 3, 2022: <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/10/03/solarcycle-partners-with-sunrun-to-recycle-and-re-use-old-solar-panels.html>

Conferences and Events

Go Clean Energy Conference [hybrid event] – Central Oregon Community College, Bend, OR, October 6, 2022

Thirty plus speakers help you build your project in efficiency, clean energy, EV Charging and more. Individuals, businesses, and government discover opportunities in clean energy, efficiency, sustainability, electric mobility, and green jobs—For more information and to register <https://gocleanenergy.org/>

Washington State Solar Summit: Connecting to our Clean Energy Future [hybrid event] Centilia Cultural Center, Seattle, WA, October 14, 2022

Hosted by Solar Washington since 2015, the Washington State Solar Summit is an important annual information gathering and networking event for anyone working in the solar industry or interested in solar, including manufacturers, installers, utilities, municipalities and tribes, legislators/policy makers, educators, students, advocacy organizations/nonprofits, distributors, engineers, financial lenders, consultants and more. For more information and to register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2022-solar-washington-summit-connecting-to-our-clean-energy-future-tickets-354707689247?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>

Oregon Solar + Storage Conference: Portland, OR, November 1-3, 2022

OSSIA is currently accepting sponsors, speakers and exhibitors, as we look forward to over 500 attendees with a diverse mix of solar and industry leaders. Please contact angela@oseia.org or erin@oseia.org for more information. To register and to view conference agenda see: <https://www.orssia.org/osec>

Innovative Avenues to Public Participation in Clean Energy Development, Featuring Connecticut and Washington: [Clean Energy States Alliance Webinar] November 9, 2022 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. PST

This webinar will highlight two impressive and impactful state programs that are accelerating the development of clean energy while increasing public participation in the process. In this webinar, representatives from the CT Green Bank and the Washington Department of Commerce will present their programs and answer questions from the audience. For more information and to register see: <https://www.cesa.org/event/innovative-avenues-to-public-participation-in-clean-energy-development-featuring-connecticut-and-washington/>

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