

# WEST ENERGY NEWS December 2009

www.westmichiganenergy.org "To educate and advocate for a clean, sustainable energy future for the Macatawa area."

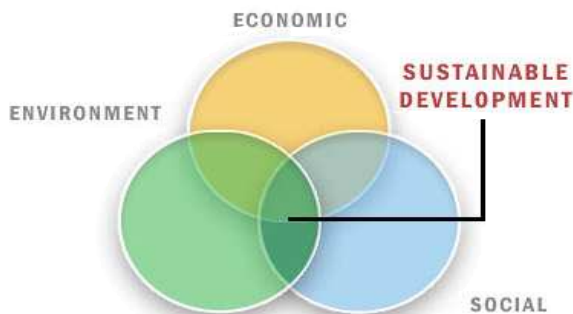
## Is Holland's Energy & Water Use Sustainable? City committee seeks public insight

Holland City Council agreed on Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup> to fund a series of community meetings organized by the Holland Sustainability Committee aimed at gathering ideas about whether Holland's water and energy uses are 'sustainable'-- and what a 'sustainable Holland' might look like by 2050.

Envisioning a 'sustainable' future asks citizens to grasp the connections between the community's economic, environmental and equity concerns. For example, do we understand the impact of our energy and water use on our air, lands and water -- and how those effects impact human health? Are our water and energy equitably distributed?

Prior to meetings, the city committee will distribute fact sheets about energy and water usage in the Holland area. Holland City Council approved \$7,320 to hire a facilitator to assist with the process.

The Sustainability Committee meetings are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month, 5 p.m., at City Hall. Find agendas & minutes at [www.cityofholland.com](http://www.cityofholland.com).



## Hunter Energy Shows Solar at Work



These solar panels next to a home will earn \$25,000 from Consumers Energy (CE) over the next 12 years, says Russ Packard, system architect for Hunter

Energy. After 6 years, the system will have paid for itself. (Photo: Kris Hunter, Russ Packard at solar site)

Then it's pure profit in the homeowners contract with CE's experimental program that pays 65 cents per kilowatt hour of energy produced. The photovoltaic system has a 20 year lifetime and will continue producing energy even after the CE contract expires.

At a second home site, Hunter Energy used flexible lightweight Uni-Solar panels made in Greenville, says Kris Hunter, owner and renewable energy expert at Hunter Energy. These convert more of the light spectrum into electricity; with adhesive, they easily attach to metal roofs.

Both solar sites are located off Van Buren St. in West Olive. Reach Hunter Energy at 616-836-5257 or [hunterenergy@sbcglobal.net](mailto:hunterenergy@sbcglobal.net).

## TUESDAY DECEMBER 8 7 - 8:30 p.m

Come hear Richard Orawiec of BTF Solar in Fennville describe how SOLAR HOT WATER works in West Michigan

- \* REDUCE YOUR CO2 FOOTPRINT
- \* CUT YOUR ELECTRIC/GAS BILLS
- \* EARN TAX CREDITS



## Dec. 14, 7 pm. Film "Coal County"

At First United Methodist Church, 57 W. Tenth St., Holland -- free with refreshments  
Info: Jill Henke 786-0085 & [rhetcomm@yahoo.com](mailto:rhetcomm@yahoo.com)

Degraaf Nature Center  
600 Graafschap Rd. Holland MI 49423  
Sponsored by WEST, Holland's energy group

## HELP WEST MAP GREEN ENERGY!!!

WEST wants to make visible just how much green energy work is happening in the Macatawa area. For example:

- \* City Flats, the green hotel;
- \* Viability, a business assessing carbon-credit potential for cities and businesses as well as writing grant applications for green energy work;
- \* GMB, a major geo-thermal installation firm;
- \* Tiara Wind, manufacturer of turbines;
- \* JCI, manufacturing batteries for electric cars;
- \* Solar, geothermal and wind energy sites in Zeeland
- \* Businesses converting to CFL & LED lighting
- \* Energy efficient homes willing to be on a map

WEST envisions 'green energy tours', advertising of the area's green energy skills and more.

But we *need your additions to our starting list* for a Green Energy Map. Send info on green energy sites to Don Triezenberg at [don.triezenberg@gmail.com](mailto:don.triezenberg@gmail.com).

## Kuipers, Birkholz on Energy Economy

West Michigan is seeing high interest from electric car battery makers and four factors are involved, says state Senator Wayne Kuipers of the Holland area. "First is our reputation for good workers; second is access to reasonably priced electric power; third is the entrepreneurial mind-set of people; and last is non-unionized workers," Kuipers summarized in Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> remarks at the League of Women Voters legislative brunch.

"Clean coal is an oxymoron," remarked Sen. Patti Birkholz, "but it has big money behind it." Windmills way out in Lake Michigan have her support, she said. Nuclear energy is one alternative to coal, "but it takes 20 years to go through the permitting and construction process."

## Michigan's Future: Energy, Economy & Environment

Up North in Crystal City last month, 40 speakers addressed issues related to sustainable and resilient energy, transport use, food systems, business and communities--amid the overarching impacts of climate change

Those who didn't make the conference can catch up. Full audio recordings and presentation visuals are available for free online by visiting <http://futuremichigan.org/> and clicking on the 'Download Audio Recordings & Visual' link. Thanks to West members Jane Packard & Kris Hunter for the news.

## WEST Says YES to

ideas for energy efficiency, conservation, sustainability, and significant lowering of energy production, making a difference locally with 7 future generations in mind.

WEST holds public meetings with speakers

on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month from 7-8:30 pm.

Planning meetings

Are held at Herrick Library  
4:30 pm on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday.

Co-chairs:

Don Triezenberg and Sara Leeland

Treasurer: Russ Packard

Founders: Marty Dugan & John Fulenwider

[www.westmichigan.energy.org](http://www.westmichigan.energy.org)



## New Resource: "Coal's Assault on Human Health"

A November 2009 report from Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) reports studies on the impacts of coal-burning on the human heart, lungs and brain. Tables in the report show research on the health impacts of climate change.

PSR makes strong recommendations: dramatic reduction of coal-burning emissions and stronger national standards for mercury and other air pollutants. They recommend no new coal plants until new emissions standards are in place. The report is online at:

[www.psr.org](http://www.psr.org)

