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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

<http://www.energy.wsu.edu/solarnewsbriefs.aspx>

Oregon News

Largest Solar Facility in the Pacific Northwest Approved by Energy Facility Siting Council

At its April 24 meeting, the Energy Facility Siting Council officially approved the Bakeoven Solar Project for a site certificate. With that approval, Bakeoven is the largest approved solar PV project in Oregon – and in the Pacific Northwest – Oregon Dept. of Energy *Newsletter*, April 30, 2020:

<https://www.oregon.gov/energy/facilities-safety/facilities/Pages/BSP.aspx>

\$1.5 Million in Solar + Storage Rebate Program Dollars Reserved for Oregon Solar Projects

On April 15 at 8:00 a.m., the Oregon Department of Energy [released its second bucket](#) of funding, totaling \$375,000, for residential Solar + Storage Rebate Program projects. Every dollar was requested by Oregon solar contractors within 25 minutes. A week later, the remaining dollars that were reserved specifically for low- and moderate-income residential customers and low-income service providers were also fully requested, so the program is no longer accepting rebate requests Oregon Dept. of Energy *Newsletter*, April 30, 2020: <https://www.oregon.gov/energy/Incentives/Pages/Solar-Storage-Rebate-Program.aspx>

Solar Modules Installed at Bend's Water Filtration Facility

The city of Bend has advanced its goal of reducing fossil fuel consumption at its facilities with the installation of hundreds of solar modules at its Water Filtration Facility, located west of the city, according to a press release. The 324 base-mounted modules will generate an estimated 190 megawatt-hours of energy annually, saving the city approximately \$12,000 per year in energy costs – Michael Kohn, *Bend Bulletin*, April 21, 2020: https://www.bendbulletin.com/localstate/solar-modules-installed-at-bends-water-filtration-facility/article_424f5ec6-83f7-11ea-8a69-3b9dd1289fd7.html

SPI Energy Acquires Cork Solar Project

SPI Energy Co. Ltd., a global provider of green energy solutions for business, residential, government and utility customers and investors, has acquired the Cork solar project from the previously announced framework agreement to acquire up to eight solar projects in Oregon. The project ground-mounted, located in Clackamas County, Ore., will produce a total of approximately 1.89 MW. The project will participate in the newly formed Oregon Community Solar Program – Posted by Matthew Mercure, *Solar Industry*, April 22, 2020: <https://solarindustrymag.com/spi-energy-acquires-cork-solar-project>

Solarize Corvallis Moves to Old Mill Project

Solarize Corvallis is a grassroots initiative aiming to install solar panels at as many community buildings as possible by the year 2025. Led by the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition, in partnership with the Oregon Clean Power Cooperative, the initiative's goals are to save energy, provide backup power sources, reduce the community's carbon footprint. Working together with the Corvallis School District, the initiative has just completed its first project: the installation of a large solar array, visible from 35th Street, adjacent to the District's central office – JD Brookbank, *The Corvallis Advocate*, April 22, 2020: <https://www.corvallisadvocate.com/2020/solarize-corvallis-moves-to-old-mill-project/>

Washington News

La Casa Hogar Awarded Pacific Power Grant to Develop Solar on their Building in Yakima

La Casa Hogar, a community-based nonprofit organization in Yakima, offers education, pre-school and citizenship legal services to Latina immigrant families throughout the region. This spring, La Casa was readying to break ground on a new solar powered pre-school. While COVID-19 has paused the project for now, La Casa's team of staff, board members and families continue to develop plans and increase their own education about solar energy. Many families at La Casa do not access solar-powered facilities or homes, leaving few opportunities to learn about solar energy. La Casa Hogar, in partnership with the parent committee involved in the project, specifically chose to work with Dynamic Solar, a minority-owned and Spanish-speaking solar partner, to be able to incorporate education in Spanish and English throughout the whole process. The group continues to learn about solar energy and incorporates it into STEM-based home-activities for the preschool children who will attend. Front & Centered, Spark Northwest, and Pacific Power Blue Sky, are also partners in this project. Submitted by Sameer Ranade (Front and Centered).

Investors Donate Solar Panels to Jefferson County Airport

The Jefferson Solar Group has donated its array of solar panels to the Port of Port Townsend and the Jefferson County International airport, allowing the facility to have another 10 years of free power. Ten years ago a unique partnership was formed between the Port of Port Townsend and the group of private solar power investors, with the end result being that a 4,000 square-foot array of solar panels has been powering the airport lights and navigation systems at no-cost to the port or taxpayers – Ken Park, *Peninsula Daily News*, April 27, 2020: <https://www.peninsuladailynews.com/news/investors-donate-solar-panels-to-jefferson-county-airport/>

Washington State to Create Task Force to Study Solar Panel Recycling Guidelines

April 2, 2020 update: Governor Inslee signed HB 2645, but vetoed part of it. In his veto message, Inslee wrote: "Section 2 of the bill requires the Washington State University Extension Energy Program to

convene a work group of stakeholders and submit a report to the Legislature on methodologies for the management of the end-of-life photovoltaic modules. This section was made subject to an appropriation. Although recycling of photovoltaic modules is a worthwhile goal, the report on methodologies for the management of the end-of-life photovoltaic modules can be delayed in light of the rapidly changing budget outlook due to the COVID-19 pandemic.”

<https://www.solarpowerworldonline.com/2020/03/washington-state-to-create-task-force-to-study-solar-panel-recycling-guidelines/>

Dual Land Use: Co-Location of Solar and Farm Land

A New Vision for Farming: Chickens, Sheep, and ... Solar Panels

Agriculture and the solar power industry have at times been at odds, competing for the landscape. But some farmers and developers are finding that the two can be complementary – By Lynn Freehill-Maye, *Christian Science Monitor*, April 23, 2020: <https://www.csmonitor.com/Environment/2020/0423/A-new-vision-for-farming-Chickens-sheep-and-solar-panels>

Industry Innovations and News

Application of Prevention through Design (PtD) to Improve the Safety of Solar Installations on Small Buildings

Stress reduction and improved solar electricity could someday come together in an unexpected package, and a University of Oregon study suggests that a new design of eye-pleasing, fractal-patterned rooftop solar panels could deliver the goods. In an open-access study published in the journal PLOS ONE, an eight-member team led by UO physicist Richard Taylor and UO psychologist Margaret Sereno combined the psychology of aesthetics – in this case, the appreciation of beauty seen in nature – and the electrical engineering of solar panel designs – *Around the O*, April 2020:

<https://around.uoregon.edu/content/research-shows-fractals-could-be-pleasing-solar-panels>

Solar Researchers Across Country Join Forces with Industry to Boost U.S. Solar Manufacturing

Working together with leading domestic solar companies, the University of Washington and its Washington Clean Energy Testbeds, the U.S. Department of Energy’s National Renewable Energy Laboratory, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of Toledo have formed the U.S. Manufacturing of Advanced Perovskites Consortium, or US-MAP. This research and development coalition aims to accelerate the domestic commercialization of perovskite technologies – Suzanne Offen, *UW News*, April 29, 2020:

<https://www.washington.edu/news/2020/04/29/us-map-announcement/>

On the Road to High-Value Recycling, Storage is Ahead of Solar

The Covid-19 pandemic has stakeholders across the renewable energy sector thinking about supply chains and how to maintain them – which makes it an opportune moment to also talk about recycling. The idea of circularity – that is, creating a closed-loop supply chain – has recently gained traction in the solar and energy storage industries, both of which face daunting recycling problems. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA) and International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), by 2030, an estimated 1.7 million metric tons of solar panels per year will need to be disposed of in the U.S. alone; by 2050, that figure could balloon to 60 million to 78 million metric tons – K. Kaufmann, *PV Magazine*,

April 16, 2020: <https://pv-magazine-usa.com/2020/04/16/on-the-road-to-high-value-recycling-storage-is-ahead-of-solar/>

Coronavirus Impact on Solar Industry

Residential Solar Is Hurting Under Coronavirus. Community Solar May Be More Resilient

Netflix and a few other "stay-at-home" stocks are riding high as markets have slumped in response to the coronavirus pandemic. In the U.S. solar industry, interest in subscription services may provide a much-needed anchor as well – Emma Foehringer Merchange, *Utility Drive*, April 15, 2020:

<https://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/how-community-solar-is-staying-afloat-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic>

Solar, Wind Energy Struggle as Coronavirus Takes Toll

The U.S. renewable energy industry is reeling from the new coronavirus pandemic, which has delayed construction, put thousands of skilled laborers out of work and sowed doubts about solar and wind projects on the drawing board – Cathy Bussewitz, John Flesher and Patrick Whittle, *AP News*, May 2, 2020: <https://apnews.com/e3ea11613c2ad83f05bc85f75a26181a>

What Permitting Volume Tells Us about Solar Deployment during the Pandemic

Ohm Analytics, which manages a real-time solar market data platform, has released a Weekly Solar Activity Tracker to measure the impact of COVID-19 on the solar industry. The tracker aggregates a sampling of solar building and electrical permits, and other project records from major metro areas across the United States. Ohm has opened this data tool to the public as it believes it may help solar companies navigate the uncertainty, including inventory, staffing and geographic resource planning. Read more and check out tracker – Chris Collins, *SEIA website*, April 20, 2020:

<https://www.seia.org/blog/what-permitting-volume-tells-us-about-solar-deployment-during-pandemic>

Reports

Report: Designing Community Solar Programs that Promote Racial and Economic Equity

This white paper provides guidance for creating community solar programs that promote racial and economic equity. It defines what makes a community solar program equitable, and states objectives that community solar programs striving to be equitable can pursue related to program structure, consumer participation, compensation, and other policy areas. – Daryl Farell and Maria McCoy, *Institute for Local Self-Reliance*, February 27, 2020: <https://ilsr.org/report-designing-community-solar-programs-that-promote-racial-and-economic-equity/>

Upcoming Conferences, Webinars

"What's a Perovskite Solar Cell and Why Should I Care?" June 4, 2020

UW Chemistry Professor and Clean Energy Institute (CEI) Chief Scientist David Ginger will present a webinar on **Thursday, June 4 at 1:00 pm** on opportunities for emerging perovskite-based PV. Perovskite solar cells seem to be in the news practically every week. In this talk, David will introduce perovskite solar cells and talk about some of the potential advantages – and remaining challenges – to the widespread adoption of this emerging photovoltaic technology. Presented by Solar Washington and hosted by SW Board Member Sarah Vorpahl. Sarah Vorpahl is a Senior Energy Policy Specialist

specializing in distributed energy resources at the Washington State Department of Commerce based in Olympia. For more information and to register:

https://www.solarwa.org/webinar_opportunities_for_emerging_perovskite_based_pv

SOLAR 20/20: Renewable Energy Vision Goes Virtual: June 24-25, 2020

The ASES SOLAR 20/20 National Organizing Committee (NOC) has been monitoring the COVID-19 situation closely. After much deliberation, the NOC has ultimately decided to convert the live event in Washington D.C. into a virtual event to ensure the safety and health of our attendees and speakers. We have found an interactive platform where important discussions, networking, and community building can take place. For more information and to register: <https://www.ases.org/conference/>

Want to Contribute? If you have information on events, publications or other solar topics that you would like mentioned in an upcoming issue of Solar Newsbriefs, please contact Anne Whitney at whitneya@energy.wsu.edu

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