



Greetings Everybody!

Reserve the Date: Our next Open Meeting will be held on **Friday, March 6th, 2009 at 8:00 am** in the Lecture Room at Queen's Innovation Park. SWITCH member **Burt's Greenhouses**, will be speaking about Biochar, and showing a film made by Alec Ross about the biomass heating system they use for their greenhouses.

The new procedure for entering the building will be finalized very soon. Stay tuned!

1. A big welcome to our new members **Cruickshank Construction, Queen's Institute for Energy and Environmental Policy (QIEEP)**, and **Gerardo Benavides**.
2. **The Green Energy Act for Ontario** was announced yesterday by George Smitherman at Queen's Park. Please go to the following links to read more http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills_detail.do?locale=en&BillID=2145 and <http://www.greenenergyact.ca/>. For a more detailed look at the Act, please go to http://www.mei.gov.on.ca/english/pdf/Green_Energy_and_Economy_Act_Compendium.pdf
3. **Help us advertise *The Renewable Energy "How To" Workshop Series for Homeowners*** developed by a group of SWITCH members (**Al Gibson, Ben Kenney, Bardi Vorster, Joshua Pearce, Pierre Nadeau**, Karina McInnis and Ed Thomas (**Queen's University**)) and to be held at SWITCH member **St. Lawrence College**. A poster is attached to this email that you can forward to friends and neighbours who might be interested. Please go to <http://www.switchkingston.ca/workshop/> for more information and to register. There will have a kick-off and introductory session at **St. Lawrence College** on March 3rd. Kingston City Councillor Dorothy Hector will be the keynote speaker.
4. **SWITCH staff is helping members** submit comments on the City of Kingston draft Official Plan. The draft Official Plan contains a long section on Energy and Environment and can potentially impact the activities of a number of SWITCH members. The deadline for submitting comments is February 27th. You can email your comments by going to opzb_update@cityofkingston.ca.
5. **SWITCH Membership Benefit: Wintergreen Studios** is a new off-grid education and retreat centre located in the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve, less than an hour's drive from Kingston. The lodge is solar-powered and features straw bale and green roof construction. **Meeting and retreat facilities, as well as one-day and two-day workshops, are offered at a 10% discount to SWITCH members.** The 2009 program list and rates can be found at <http://www.wintergreenstudios.com> . Please advise them that you are a SWITCH member when registering in order to receive the discount. **Ian Kilborn from Quantum Renewable Energy will be teaching a "Living Off the Grid" course on July 16th.**
6. A new position in Kingston, Organizer and Educator for Energy Conservation and Poverty Issues, has been funded in the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation office of the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul. Bridget Doherty will be taking on the job of promoting energy conservation through a social justice lens. We wish her success in her new role and look forward to opportunities to work together.
7. **SWITCH in the News:** SWITCH made a submission to the *Kingston Whig Standard* for "Project Energy", which is scheduled for publication on February 27th or 28th.

8. SWITCH, and a number of its members, were interviewed for a *Globe and Mail* insert called "Perspectives Kingston 2009". The insert is scheduled for delivery on March 3rd. Check your mailboxes!
9. **GreenUP! 2009** is looking for help with fundraising, communications, site logistics, programming/workshops, entertainment, food and more. There are big plans for the event this year; a partnership is forming with the City of Kingston and the Whig Standard, with the intent of increasing our exhibitor turnout and encouraging involvement with the city's sustainability initiatives. The festival will be taking place Sunday, April 19th, at the K-Rock Center (KRC). The first volunteer meeting is Tuesday, February 24th, at 7pm, The Community Foundation of Greater Kingston, 165 Ontario St. Please check out the GreenUP! website, at www.greenupfestival.ca, for more information.
10. SWITCH member Hearthmakers is still looking for members of its Board of Directors. Please see <http://www.switchkingston.ca/classifieds.php> for more details.
11. SWITCH members **Tackaberry Heating and Refrigeration, Quantum Renewable Energy, Hearthmakers, and Renewable Energy of Plum Hollow** are speaking on the Saturday Feb 28th, Seminar Day, at the Kingston Homebuilder's Association Home and Trade Show, Cataraqui Town Centre.
12. SWITCH has a copy of The 2009 winter edition of the Ontario Power Authority's *Electricity Conservation on Ontario Farms* available for anyone who would like to read it.
13. The 64.5 MW Bryan Wind Project (SkyPower Corp.), in Prince Edward County has been awarded a long-term contract with the OPA.
14. **New Website:** <http://www.SustainWellBeing.net>. Thank you to Louise Cooper and Caitlin Newey for sending the link.
15. SWITCH has a copy of *The Ontario Smart Grid Forum* available for anyone who is interested in reading it. Thank you to Rob Miller, Axio Power, for sending the handbook.
16. The Ontario Power Generation has issued a call to potential suppliers of biomass fuel and transportation services. It applies to both sustainable forest-based and non-food agricultural products and by-products. The call is in aid of a development program set-up to determine the commercial viability of replacing coal with biomass at existing coal-fuelled generating stations.
17. The Ministry of Natural Resources has issued a request for expressions of interest to turn available wood from Ontario's Crown forests into new investment and jobs. For more information please go to <http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/Forests/>.
18. Energy Conservation Week is May 17th to 23rd.
19. **Workshop Series:** ELORIN is running a series of Spring Training Workshops for Entrepreneurs. The workshops were developed with the support of PARTEQ Innovations, KEDCO and the Kingston Technology Council. Please go to <http://www.elorin.ca/> for more information. Workshops will be held at Innovation Park from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm on the following dates:
 - Mar 05 - Workshop #1 - The Plan
 - Mar 12 - Workshop #2 - Intellectual Property
 - Mar 18 - Workshop #3 - The Pitch
 - Apr 05 - Workshop #4 - The Money
 - Apr 09 - Workshop #5 - Strategic Marketing and Sales (SWITCH Board Member, **Theresa MacBeth, Boom Strategy**, will be speaking).
20. **Event:** George Smitherman will be speaking about the renewable energy industry at the International Leaders Breakfast Club, March 27th, 7:30 to 9:00 am, TOSCA Conference Centre, 800 Champlain Avenue, Oshawa. To read more and to register, please go to <http://gtmailbc.com/>.

- 21. Event:** SWITCH will be exhibiting at the Quinte Conservation Sustainable Living Symposium on Saturday March 28th in Belleville. If SWITCH members would like the SWITCH staff to take some of your product and services literature to display at the SWITCH booth, please let us know. The event is usually quite well attended. For more information see <http://www.quintesustainability.ca/>
- 22. Event:** BioGas for Electricity and Heat, The Hyatt Regency, Minneapolis, MN. There will be two courses held in early April. BioGas 101 will take place April 6th and 7th. Please go to <http://www.euci.com/conferences/0409-biogas-101/index.php?ci=651> for more detailed information. Advanced BioGas will be held April 7th and 8th. For more information and to register, please go to <http://www.euci.com/conferences/0409-adv-biogas/index.php?ci=652>
- 23.** BrightSource plans to construct 7 solar thermal plants in California's Mojave Desert. For the full story, please go to <http://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/brightsource-inks-13gw-social-edison-deal-5699.html>. Thank you again to Rob Miller for this reference.

Hope to see you at the next Open Meeting,

Ted Hsu, Executive Director; Catherine Humphreys, Administrative Assistant

SWITCH - The Sustainable Energy People

2nd Floor - 945 Princess Street

Kingston, ON K7L 5L9

613-547-6700 x 129

info@switchkingston.ca

<http://switchkingston.ca/>

SWITCH thanks the **Ontario Trillium Foundation**

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Has SWITCH helped you? Would you like to support our work?

Please consider becoming a member or a sponsor of SWITCH.

For more information, go to our website: <http://switchkingston.ca/> or phone us!