

Press Release

Saskatchewan Environmental Society
Tuesday, May 31, 2016
Embargoed until 9:45 a.m.

SES Solar Co-op reveals first solar project in Saskatchewan

SES Solar Co-operative President Joe Schmutz and Shift Development Founder and CEO Curtis Olson announced today that the largest solar power installation built to date in the Saskatoon Light and Power district is now complete and just days away from powering up.

The unique partnership between Shift Development and SES Solar Co-operative Ltd. has facilitated the installation of 90 solar panels on the roof of The Two Twenty Building at 220-20 Street West in Saskatoon. Shift Development owns the Two Twenty Building while SES Solar Co-op is the owner of the solar power system.

Each solar panel in the installation at the Two Twenty Building has 305 watts of capacity. The total solar installation is 27.5 kilowatts. The electricity the solar system will generate will be supplied to Shift Development and the larger Saskatoon Light and Power grid, and Shift Development will pass the monies saved on its Saskatoon Light and Power bill onto SES Solar Co-op as a revenue stream.

"We are pleased to be installing a rooftop solar system of this size," said Schmutz of SES Solar Co-op. "It has helped us to achieve some economies of scale, which in turn will reduce the period for recovering installation costs. This is one of the benefits of organizing co-operatively. We are also pleased to be installing a solar system where inverters and wiring meet the high standards of the 'Restriction of Hazardous Substances Directive' adopted by the European Union."

"Our members are investing in SES Solar Co-op in order to advance renewable power in the Saskatoon area and in order to make a contribution towards reducing Saskatoon's greenhouse gas pollution levels. This SES Solar Co-op Ltd. solar system will be the equivalent of taking the greenhouse gas pollution from five cars off the road each year."

The SES Solar Co-op has noted they are excited to be working with a building owner who is committed to renewable energy and to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the building where the Saskatchewan Environmental Society rents office space.

Curtis Olson of Shift Development displayed how the rooftop solar installation will meet a significant portion of the annual electricity needs of his building. "I anticipate the system will produce approximately 33,000 kilowatt hours of electricity per year and will meet about 40% of electricity demand in the Two Twenty Building. In turn, the greenhouse gas emissions associated with electricity use in my building will be cut by approximately 40%," said Olson.

"Climate change is a pressing issue. I believe it is important for local building owners to look for ways to reduce their greenhouse gas footprint. While the economics of energy conservation are excellent, the current economics of installing solar power in Saskatchewan are still challenging, as an insufficient value is attached to the production of low-emission electricity. This partnership with SES Solar Co-op makes the solar option viable for me and is a win-win situation for both of us."

The SES Solar Co-op said they are also grateful for the important financial support provided by Bullfrog Power and Affinity Credit Union.

Bullfrog Power CEO Ron Seftel announced that Bullfrog Power will be providing SES Solar Co-op with financing to help proceed not only with the rooftop solar installation at the Two Twenty Building but also with additional solar projects. "I am pleased to announce today that Bullfrog Power will provide SES Solar Co-op Ltd. with \$100,000 of construction financing, interest free loan which will be repaid as new co-operative members are given the opportunity to purchase shares in the co-operative," said Seftel.

"Bullfrog Power is happy to be partnering with Saskatchewan's first solar power co-operative and believes that SES Solar Co-op will play an important role in increasing the amount of solar power generated in the Saskatoon region. We are also pleased to have the opportunity to add to the 60 community-based renewable energy projects that we support across Canada."

Affinity Credit Union provided valuable start-up assistance and advice to SES Solar Co-op on multiple fronts. "We're excited to celebrate the partnership between SES Solar Co-op and Shift Development on their rooftop solar project and congratulate them for the remarkable work they have done, and continue to do, in making our communities more sustainable," said Fred Khonje, Affinity Credit Union Community Development Manager. "As a local credit union, we believe in supporting the development of locally-owned businesses and co-ops like these who work to strengthen the real economy of our province through values-based innovation."

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SES Solar Co-operative Ltd.

SES Solar Co-operative Ltd. was established by the Saskatchewan Environmental Society in early 2015 and has 98 members, each of whom have invested \$1,000 in the co-op. The Solar Co-op has recently received approval from the Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority to issue additional shares, and is therefore in a position to take new members. In addition to receiving financial assistance from Affinity Credit Union and Bullfrog Power, the Solar Co-op has received valuable help and advice from VerEco Homes and the Saskatchewan Co-operative Association.

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