



Break-out Sessions

1. Towards our Solar Future Step by Step

Christina Snyder

Everyone can make progress towards transitioning off of fossil fuels whether homeowner or renter. Each of the steps taken can leverage one farther along the path, building on the savings from previous steps. Organized in order of energy savings/\$ invested, the practical steps shown will walk you towards a greener future. Infra-red vision will allow you to see heat energy seeping through typical trouble spots in homes, and remedies will be suggested. Recommendations for integrating renewable energy systems into Michigan buildings will be made. Examples of award winning Zero (fossil fuel) Energy designs for Michigan as well as exemplary existing Michigan homes that already are approaching Zero Energy will illustrate the solar future that we are reaching towards.

2. Designing the Hobbit Home

Tom Huber

Even the Hobbits knew to face their homes to the sun and shelter them from the winter winds. Taking a page from the Hobbit Design Manual and other forms of Folk Architecture, this session will highlight natural ways of building and passive solar design principles for creating energy efficient dwellings on moderate incomes. Case studies from the Southwest Michigan Solar Home Tour will be featured to demonstrate successful building projects in our area.

3. Powering the Remote Homestead with Renewables

John Wakeman

This workshop will evaluate the decision-making process of using small-scale wind and solar electric systems to power Michigan homes on and off the grid. The basics of siting, sizing, and buying wind turbines and photovoltaics along with the other components of a home power system will be covered.

4. Commercial Wind Power in Michigan

Rich Vander Veen

This session will provide an update on the current development of commercial wind power in Michigan. It will include an overview of the installation of the wind generators in the Mackinaw City area and the status of other proposed wind farms along the west coast of Michigan. Additionally, a forecast of the future of the wind industry as a critical component of America's electricity infrastructure will be considered.

5. Great Lakes Renewable Energy Association:

An Array of Resources for Michigan Communities

Susan Barnes

We come together for this conference with a common interest in promoting the use of renewable energy. Along with being members of a renewable energy community, we also have ties to education, public service, the business community, and elsewhere. This session will overview the growing list of resources, educational programs, outreach efforts, and personnel that make up the GLREA, and how individuals can both benefit and help make a difference in creating a sustainable energy future. Learn how the GLREA can help turn your possible energy-related projects into practical plans for implementation.