



## **Reducing fuel costs and energy use on the minds of visitors of open house**

November 19, 2008 - Green Buildings

With winter approaching and fuel costs rising, the consumer trend toward exploring alternative energy systems to lower fuel and electric bills is increasingly relevant, exemplified by the over 10,000 people who toured more than 600 sites during the Green Buildings open house on Saturday, October 4th. Organized by the Northeast Sustainable Energy Association (NESEA), Green Buildings Open House took place in the six N.E. states as well as N.Y., N.J., Penn., and Delaware. This annual event is held in conjunction with the American Solar Energy Society's National Solar Tour. A record 282 new sites were open to the public this year in the northeast.

Sustainable energy features were on display at private homes, businesses, public buildings, schools, farms, colleges, and nature centers, where owners graciously opened their doors and welcomed the public to tour, ask questions, and discover the variety of ways they are saving energy, money, and the environment.

Incorporating sustainable and energy-efficient elements into buildings helps address many of the problems headlining in today's news. Weatherized, well-insulated buildings have lower heating costs compared to traditional buildings. Buildings incorporating renewable energy sources such as solar, wind and geothermal reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil; slow the pace of global warming; reduce pollution-induced increases in asthma-related illnesses; reduce the incentive to drill for oil and gas in pristine landscapes; and even generate surplus clean energy to power other buildings.

"NESEA is pleased to offer an event that not only allows the public to increase its knowledge of sustainable and energy efficient buildings but gives them an opportunity to connect with proven professionals in the industry. Visitors can clearly see how the installations and technologies used by their neighbors are steps they, too, can take to help reduce our dependency on oil and reduce their fuel costs," said David Barclay, NESEA executive director.

The Green Buildings Open House is sponsored by Efficiency Maine, a Division of the Maine Public Utilities Commission; GroSolar; National Grid; N.Y. State Energy Research and Development Authority; and NRG Systems.

Media partners include CSRwire, E/The Environmental Magazine, ecological Home Ideas, Environmental Design + Construction, Green Builder Magazine, Green Living Journal, High-Profile Monthly, metrogreenbusiness.org, New Jersey & Co., the New England Real Estate Journal, New York House, and Smart HomeOwner magazine.

Ways you can save money and energy, reduce climate change emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>) and reliance on foreign oil, and improve our air quality and quality of life:

1. Weatherize and increase the insulation in your building or home.

2. Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent energy-efficient light bulbs.
3. Put appliances, including your computer, on a power strip and turn it off when done.
4. Choose Energy Star labeled appliances when purchasing new ones.
5. Install solar panels and/or a solar hot water heating system.
6. Purchase green electricity, it's easy and quick to do!

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