A Community of Solar Schools

OVERVIEW

Students choose another solar school (or schools) in the state or country to communicate with. They may choose to compare PV array power production, PV system specifications, or ways in which they have used the PV array for learning.

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

This activity is recommended as a culmination of a classroom's study of the school's PV array. It uses the knowledge and skills students have gained in previous lessons to reach out to another school and start a conversation about solar energy.

ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS ADDRESSED

The standards addressed will vary depending on how you choose to design the activity. You can tailor your students' work to address specific benchmarks as you see fit.

TIME

Varies.

MATERIALS

Varies

NOTE TO TEACHERS

Unlike previous lessons that were specifically designed to explore certain aspects of the schools' PV system in depth, this lesson is simply meant to be a launch pad for your imagination. The main goal is to initiate and maintain conversations between solar schools. Using the expertise and skills you have built with previous lessons, you choose what questions to ask, what data to collect/compare, what ideas to exchange. Determining the preparation and procedures to make your conversation successful is part of the process for the classroom. You are strongly encouraged to document your activities and accomplishments in an Energy Portfolio or Scrapbook and submit it for recognition in OEP's annual Youth Energy Celebration. Contact the Ohio Energy Project, www.ohioenergy.org for more information.

Guidelines for Building a Community of Solar Schools

1. **Choose another solar school or schools to work with.** There are many solar schools across the country. Ohio is one of the leaders with over 40 K-12 solar schools! Here's a partial list of websites with places to start:

    - **Soltrex** www.soltrex.com - The company that monitors your school's solar information is a great place to start. Visit other solar schools on the Soltrex website, including Ohio. Compare data and contact them to see what kinds of fun and exciting things they are doing at their schools.

    - **Schools Going Solar** http://www.irecusa.org/schools/ - the Interstate Renewable Energy Council site for solar schools. Includes a database of solar school projects around the country.

    - **Florida Solar Energy Center** http://www.fsec.ucf.edu/ - Good information, education resources, and background. One of the "flagship" solar energy sites.

    - **Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana** http://www.wattsonschools.com/activities.htm - Watts On Schools is American Electric Power's way of bringing solar power to schools in communities throughout Texas, Arkansas and Louisiana. Great site with activities, information, and links to solar schools in TX, AK, and LA.

    - **Montana** http://www.montanagreenpower.com/ - Explore these pages to learn what's happening in solar, wind and other renewable energy technologies in Montana. You'll find the latest renewable energy news, information on planning and designing your own solar, wind and micro-hydro systems, activities for the classroom, updates on utility restructuring, and links to other useful sites.

    - **New York** http://www.nyserda.org/schools/ - School Power....naturally is an innovative program from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) that is designed to educate New Yorkers about energy, and, in particular, the role solar electric power can play in providing clean energy for our homes, schools and workplaces.