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APPLIED SOLUTIONS UPDATES

Upcoming Webinars

NACo Green Government Programs
March 1st, 11am PST/2pm EST
As a part of the Applied Solutions webinar series, join us on March 1st at 11am Pacific/2pm Eastern time to hear about the latest and greatest Green Government programs happening in County governments around the country. The National Association of Counties will present their recently released 2012 Emerging Sustainability Strategies and share the resources available through their Green Government Initiative. In addition, Franklin County Commissioner Paula Brooks will discuss how NACO’s Green Government programs have helped the county implement its goals.

Space is limited. Please click here to reserve your spot now.

Sustainable Energy as an Infrastructure Investment: The SEU Model
March 22nd, 10am PST/1pm EST
The Sustainable Energy Utility (SEU) is a 21st century non-profit organization designed to serve our need for a low-carbon, efficient, renewables-sourced and economically robust energy services sector. The concept of the SEU and its unique bond financing structure was first adopted by the State of Delaware in 2007 as an independent, non-profit organization to foster a sustainable energy future for the State. Analysis at the Center for Energy and Environmental Policy (CEEP) of energy conservation programs throughout the U.S. finds that the SEU model achieves greater energy savings at a faster rate than traditional utility incentive programs. Webinar participants will receive an overview of the SEU model and the Foundation for Renewable Energy and Environment (FREE)’s Sustainable Energy Bond Program and learn how widespread adoption can help ensure a clean, safe and prosperous planet for future generations.

Space is limited. Please click here to reserve your spot now.

For videos and materials from past webinars, please visit our website.
Leadership Symposium: 21st Century Local Energy Innovation

Applied Solutions and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments hosted the Leadership Symposium: 21st Century Local Energy Innovation earlier this month in Washington, DC. The symposium was attended by approximately 50 representatives of local governments (from California, Colorado, DC, Virginia, Maryland), Department of Energy, State Department, Environmental Protection Agency, White House, foreign embassies, sustainable energy utilities, clean and renewable energy non-profits, private sector, journalists, and academicians from top universities. The meeting showcased three different local clean energy initiatives taking place in the country, with presentations detailing the variety of design and implementation strategies undertaken by local governments, how they localized their energy resources, and the types and range of energy services utilized by their communities.

West Coast Conference: May 2-3, 2012

Municipal leaders and legislators will meet in the heart of wine country on May 2 and 3 to learn best practices in sustainability and develop a 2012 federal sustainability agenda. The Growing Sustainable Communities Conference, Western Region, will feature four tracks of educational sessions for municipal government professionals and elected officials on Thursday, May 3 at the Double Tree Hotel in Rohnert Park. The general conference will be preceded by a special, half-day legislative roundtable for top leadership, and an evening networking reception for all conference and roundtable attendees at the St. Francis Winery and Vineyards on May 2 (transportation will be provided from the hotel).

Hosted by Applied Solutions and the Sonoma County Water Agency, the conference is presented by Sustainable City Network and Climate Communities, and will educate leaders and staff on the latest sustainability ideas, plans and best practices in four tracks: Energy, Water, Transportation, and Resource Management.

AS Partner EDN Announces Cities Participating in Commitment for Billion Acts of Green®

Earth Day Network announced its partnership with five U.S. cities today to work toward reducing their carbon emissions, which is part of the Billion Acts of Green commitment announced at the 2011 Clinton Global Initiative Annual Meeting. The participating cities are: Fayetteville, Ark.; Grand Rapids, Mich.; Bozeman, Mont.; Babylon, N.Y. and Santa Fe County, N.M.

These five cities were selected as a result of their existing efforts to pave the way in reducing energy consumption while implementing cost-saving measures that help balance their budgets.

For more information, see the full article.
**Delivering Energy Efficiency to Middle Income Single Family Households**

Researchers at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) recently put out a study that identifies specific steps that can help to deliver energy savings to middle income U.S. households. The report offers a variety of strategies for making inroads on this challenging market, including: improving the effectiveness and appeal of outreach efforts specific to this market, increasing access to financing through credit enhancements, alternative underwriting, and new financial products, addressing health, safety and building structural issues in conjunction with efficiency upgrades, and bringing additional complementary public policies into play.

To read the full report and its recommendations, see this link.

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**Two Levelized Cost of Energy Tools Developed by NREL - Which one is best for you?**

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) has developed two tools to help determine the levelized cost of energy (LCOE) for solar, wind and geothermal projects. The Cost of Renewable Energy Spreadsheet Tool (CREST) provides a streamlined and high level spreadsheet analysis which draws upon the best of publically available LCOE tools and was built to simplify policy and rate analysis for state and local stakeholders. The System Advisor Model (SAM), which has been featured by this newsletter in the past provides a more robust and complex analysis of renewable energy projects targeted for engineers and project developers. For more information about the two models, visit NREL’s renewable energy finance website.

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**A Mismatch Between Grid Regulation and Modern Needs**

The changing landscape of energy in the United States has sparked a conversation about current regulations that govern the grid and the needs of a clean energy future. A new study released by the Massachusetts Institute for Technology looks at this problem, and suggests that the infrastructure for the power grid is adequate for modern needs, but that there may need to be regulatory changes to allow for the integration of intermittent energy sources, like wind and solar, across state lines.

The study also takes a new look at how the cost of maintaining the electricity distribution system are shared. At the moment, those costs are part of the price of a kilowatt-hour, so bigger users pay more and smaller users pay less. But the study noted that when homeowners installed solar panels on their roofs and cut their kilowatt-hour consumption from the utility, they no longer paid for the energy or the cost of local distribution equipment.

See the full study here. Read the NYT article here.
Greening of Building Sector on Track to Deliver Trillions in Savings

A new report issued by Architecture 2030 in January asserts that the greening of the U.S. building sector is on track to deliver far more energy savings than government officials predicted only a handful of years ago, with important implications for the country’s energy and climate picture.

The report compared the Energy Information Administration's (EIA) 2005 and 2011 projections and found something that surprised them. The EIA had quietly, but dramatically, lowered long-term projections for energy use and carbon emissions from America’s homes, office buildings and other commercial properties. Energy consumption from buildings will increase by 14 percent from 2005 to 2030, the EIA said, down from the 44 percent spike it predicted seven years ago. Architecture 2030 says it amounts to eliminating the electricity output from 490 500-megawatt coal-fired plants over the same 25-year period. The new projections mean Americans will save an additional $3.7 trillion on energy bills through 2030.

Read the full article here.

Recommended Reading: Making Good

As we emerge from the recession, a generation is searching for practical answers about how to succeed financially while also making positive change in the world. From energy to food to education, Making Good: Finding Meaning, Money and Community in a Changing World outlines how to find opportunities to affect change and make money. These opportunities are not just for entrepreneurs and Fortune 500 companies -- Making Good outlines step by step how any person can achieve financial autonomy, capitalize on global changes to infrastructure and learn from everyday success stories - providing the skills and insights this generation needs to succeed.

Earth Day Network Announces Campaign for Communities

In April 2012, over a billion people around the world will celebrate Earth Day, which has encouraged individuals to make real improvements to our environment for more than 40 years. The first Earth Day in 1970 was instrumental in mobilizing public support across the nation for the passage of the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act and other key environmental laws. Today, Earth Day Network is at the forefront of promoting the green economy. In support of this goal, Earth Day Network is proud to invite you to participate in the Campaign for Communities program, whose main goal is to engage government officials in Earth Day (April 22) activities.

Local leaders are on the front lines of addressing how to build a sustainable future in their communities while at the same time creating job opportunities, energy savings and a healthier environment. Campaign for Communities is a platform for local leaders to engage constituents and stakeholders in their communities, through conversations on the challenges and opportunities related to sustainability.

For more information regarding how to host to participate in Campaign for Communities, as well as a formal registration form, please visit the website.