

Solar is coming to the landscapes and rooftops of Alberta

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Ottawa – The Canadian Solar Industries Association (CanSIA) is well positioned to support Alberta’s plan to tackle climate change. Premier Notley’s plan includes an accelerated phase-out of coal and an emphasis on tripling the share of renewable energies such as solar and wind in the province’s electricity mix to 30 percent. “We’re ready to put solar on the rooftops and in the communities of Alberta,” says John Gorman, President and CEO of CanSIA. “The province has a tremendous solar resource and has barely tapped the potential.”

The time is right for solar energy in Alberta. Because of its abundant sunshine, the province has the largest solar resource in Canada. The huge energy potential of solar is increasingly attractive given that it provides emission-free electricity, declining electricity generation costs, significant economic benefits for Albertans, and high levels of public acceptance.

Alberta has the highest rate of coal-fired electricity of any province, contributing to its greenhouse gas emissions, air quality issues, and health impacts on Albertans. Solar energy does not emit any of the gases that contribute to either climate change or smog.

Solar energy is rapidly becoming cost-competitive with other forms of electricity generation. Manufacturing costs have fallen by 50 percent over the last five years; and capital costs are forecast to fall by another 40 percent over the next five years, according to a Deutsche Bank study. “With equipment costs expected to continue to fall, ‘grid parity’ – or price-competitiveness with other fuel sources – is, for the first time, an achievable goal for solar energy,” Gorman says.

In addition to declining costs, solar has unique operational advantages. It generates electricity during the day, when power demands are highest, helping to keep supply reliable. It can also be located close to customers, avoiding costly additions to the electricity transmission and distribution system.

Solar facilities also come with a number of economic benefits – good-paying jobs during construction; permanent jobs for operators; and significant payments to site-hosts and property taxes paid to municipalities.

Solar power also enjoys high levels of public and community acceptance, making it easier to build in our communities. Canadians especially appreciate its role in keeping the air clean and helping to prevent climate change.

“Premier Notley’s government has provided a “Made in Alberta” plan to address climate change in a province with a fossil-fuel intense economy,” Gorman says. “For too long, discussions about climate

change have focused on what we can't do. But we have tremendous renewable energy resources, technology costs keep falling, and it's time to focus on what we can do. Solar energy is ready to be a big contributor to a strong and clean Alberta economy.”

Key Facts:

- Every 150 megawatts (MW) of solar energy capacity represents \$310 million in investment, 1,875 direct full-time-equivalent construction jobs and 45 permanent direct jobs in operations. This amount of solar capacity would also provide about \$54 million in lease payments to site-hosts and \$30 million in property tax payments to municipalities over a 20-year period.
- Canada today has a total installed solar generation capacity approaching 3,000 MW. Alberta's electricity generation capacity is just over 16,000 MW, most of it fossil-fuel based.
- Alberta has the greatest solar energy resource in Canada, receiving an amount of solar energy daily that is equivalent to the province's remaining established conventional oil reserves.
- The cost of solar electricity has decreased by more than 50 percent in the last five years. In addition, a Deutsche Bank February 2015 solar energy report predicts that solar capital costs for residential and commercial sectors are expected to decrease up to 40 percent in the next five years.
- Solar energy is incredibly flexible. Solar farms or rooftop applications are situated close to customers, allowing residents, businesses, farmers, communities and Aboriginal people to generate their own electricity and manage their own carbon footprint.
- According to public opinion tracking over the past five years, solar energy has remained the preferred fuel source of Canadians for providing their electricity (Canadian Electricity Association studies).

About CanSIA:

The Canadian Solar Industries Association is a national trade association that represents the solar energy industry throughout Canada. Since 1992, CanSIA has worked to develop a strong, efficient, ethical and professional Canadian solar energy industry with capacity to provide innovative solar energy solutions and to play a major role in the global transition to a sustainable, clean-energy future.

In December 2014, CanSIA released our [Roadmap 2020](#). Implementing the objectives contained in this document will solidify solar as a mainstream energy source, and an integral part of Canada's diversified electricity mix. It will also ensure the solar electricity industry will be sustainable, with no direct subsidies, and operating in a supportive and stable policy and regulatory environment that recognizes the true value of solar.