

## Ask Judith: Solar Colwood FAQ

### *What is the Solar Colwood Program?*

**Colwood is a leader in Canada** – the first community to take a community-wide approach to energy conservation and renewable clean energy. It is a program designed to be a WIN-WIN-WIN for homeowners, job creation and the environment.

- ♦ Solar Colwood is providing financial incentives for up to 1,000 homeowners and businesses to install solar hot water or ductless split heat pump systems over the next three years, and offering ‘smart home’ systems that will let homeowners better understand and control their home energy use.
- ♦ Colwood is BC’s pilot project for the installation of ductless split heat pump systems, and a pilot community for payment of energy retrofits on utility bills.
- ♦ The City is putting solar hot water and solar photovoltaic (electricity-producing) systems on the Fire Hall to reduce operating costs, and be installing some charging stations for electric vehicles.
- ♦ The City is working with League Assets to make Colwood Corners a showcase energy efficient/clean energy development.
- ♦ The program is funded through a \$3.9 million grant from the federal government, with additional contributions from the provincial government and private sector. Less than 0.5% of the cost of the program comes from the municipal budget and none of it comes from borrowing or from reserves of any sort.

### *Who can take advantage of the program incentives?*

Colwood homeowners and businesses (including home-based businesses) can apply for incentives that reduce the costs of getting home energy assessments and installing solar hot water and ductless split heat pump systems. Combined with other rebates from the provincial and federal governments, this can reduce costs by 40-50%. Financing options mean that anyone can do this, even if they have no cash upfront. Check [www.solarcolwood.ca](http://www.solarcolwood.ca) for more information.

To date,

### *What are the benefits to participating homeowners and businesses?*

- ♦ Lower energy costs
- ♦ More comfortable homes
- ♦ Higher home resale value
- ♦ Reducing your greenhouse gas emissions

### *What are the benefits to the City of Colwood?*

#### **Reduced costs for Colwood taxpayers**

- ♦ The Solar Colwood grant is paying the entire cost of installing solar hot water and solar photovoltaic systems on the Fire Hall—which will reduce the energy bills at the Fire Hall, year after year after year.

#### **Job creation and skills development**

- ♦ At a time when jobs in the construction industry have been down, Solar Colwood is creating work for all kinds of tradespeople. The program is also providing training to provide new skills to workers. The first 30 installs are bringing over \$200,000 worth of work to the City – with lots more to come.

**Free marketing for the City:**

- ♦ This 'first-of-its-kind' program has attracted attention from across the province, the country and even internationally. Staff and members of Council are being invited to present information at provincial and national conferences. This is 'putting Colwood on the map'—and creating an awareness of this community that is attracting the attention of new or expanding businesses.

***How much is it costing Colwood taxpayers?***

Over the three years of the program, the program will cost an estimated \$31,400 from property taxes. This works out to a total of **less than \$5 for each property owner** —an extremely modest investment for the benefits described above. *(This amount covers the City's portion of HST on program funds, as well as the cost of financing the program.)*

In addition, some staff time is spent on managing this program, just as for any other project such as a new development or road upgrading. I have also contributed over 600 hours of my time to this program.

Changes won't happen overnight. But we are moving in a good direction.  
Please support a progressive new council who will

**Keep Colwood Moving Forward**