

Green Energy Ohio 2014 Annual Report

GEO Strategic Plan Spurs Innovative Programs

The statewide, non-profit Green Energy Ohio (GEO) in 2014 continued to operate under the strategic plan adopted in 2012 by the Board of Directors. The plan includes goals to:

- Develop clean energy industry partnerships and advocacy alliance
- Create revenue from our expertise
- Continue to promote green energy to various audiences in Ohio and beyond
- Build a sustainable organization.

Implementing this strategy, with the help of generous donors and volunteers, GEO presented these projects in 2014:

2014 Spring Tour & GEO EV Tour del Sol

On May 2 & 3, GEO held a “Spring Event” in Worthington which included 8 activities:

On Friday, May 2nd:

- GEO Spring Tour: The 2nd annual Spring Tour was comprised of two guided tours; a solar homes tour and a tour of the Worthington Evening Street School. The solar homes tour featured five Worthington Hills solar homes; two of which demonstrated charging electric vehicles. The Worthington Schools received the 2013 GEO Clean Energy Community of the Year Award for, among other clean energy efforts, the installation of a 68 kW solar array on the Evening Street School. The Spring Tour was attended by 60 interested citizens.
- Solar Basics Workshop: Designed as an introduction to solar power, the Solar Basics Workshop was provided to 25 attendees for AIA and GBCI Continuing Education credits by GEO Board Member Jay Warmke.
- GEO Reception: The reception was a success with 65 attendees networking and perusing the Silent Auction, Exhibits & EV Showcase at Worthington Hills Country Club.
- GEO Dinner-Dance: To cap off Friday’s activities at the Worthington Hills Country Club, 46 participants dined and danced to the “Rolling Black-Outs.” The Rolling Blackouts are a group of experienced musicians that share a connection with municipal electric utilities as customers, staff members or consultants.



On Saturday, May 3rd:

- 3rd Annual GEO Electric Vehicle (EV) Tour del Sol: For the 3rd annual EV Tour del Sol, GEO assembled an EV Cruise-In Ride & Drive at Worthington’s Green on the Green. Several different makes of EVs were on display for thousands of Green on the Green visitors, with 30 attendees driving five of the EVs.

- “Clean Energy Green:” GEO and Ohio Interfaith Power & Light sponsored The Clean Energy Green; a special section of renewable energy exhibitors at the Green at Worthington’s Green on the Green festival.
- GEO 14th Annual Meeting: This short meeting was a celebration of GEO’s accomplishments in 2013 which included the presentation of the “GEOs” Annual Recognition Awards.
- Chasing Ice: The Spring Event was finalized by a screening of the award-winning film *Chasing Ice* and discussion with the film’s director.

GEO sends a special thank you to the 2014 Spring Event Sponsor KeyBank, the weekend’s exhibitors, EV Owners, and the 30 local volunteers that helped to make the Spring Event a great success!

GEO 14th Annual Meeting in Worthington, Ohio

GEO’s 14th Annual Meeting on May 3rd, 11am-12pm, was short and sweet! GEO Board and staff presented Annual GEO Awards to 12 recipients in about an hour. The event was well attended with 60 persons present. The GEO Board of Directors also had a short annual business meeting at the Worthington Presbyterian Church during the GEO 2014 Spring Event.

2014 Green Energy Ohio Fall Tour

GEO conducted the 12th annual Green Energy Ohio Tour in conjunction with the American Solar Energy Society’s (ASES) National Solar Tour, in what has become the largest demonstration of installed renewable energy technologies and energy-efficient building practices in the U.S. Each October, thousands of people tour renewable energy-powered and energy-efficient homes and buildings to learn from homeowners and experts how renewable energy technology works, what it costs, and why it makes sense. GEO also maintains the Tour web site over the entire year, to serve as a clearinghouse to pinpoint hundreds of clean energy sites in Ohio.



Over October 3, 4 & 5, 2014, the GEO Tour featured solar, wind, energy efficiency, biomass and other green designs with 110 tour sites with 175 open houses, 10 guided tours in 64 communities across 31 counties. The event included 30 businesses, 48 homes, 3 parks, 16 public sites and 13 schools. Over 1,900 tour goers visited these sites that featured the products and services of 196 businesses.

Premier Sponsors were R.J. Perritt Homes, and Solar Power & Light; Featured Sponsors were Ecohouse Solar, Key Bank, Zane State College, Third Sun Solar, and Dayton Power & Light; and Supporting Sponsors were the Akron Zoo, Yellowlite, Everpower, Dovetail Solar & Wind, Vectren and the Turner Foundation.

Over the past 11 years, GEO Tours have showcased 810 specific tour sites in 66 of Ohio’s 88 counties.

Public Education & Outreach in 2014

GEO Regional Workshops

On March 14, 2014, GEO held a business-to-business workshop at the Dayton Convention Center for Financing Ohio Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Projects. This informative event had 118 attendees networking and hearing 32 experts discussing the latest methods and incentives. The workshop was supported by 5 sponsors, 18 exhibitors, and the owners of the 3 EV and CNG cars on display. Most of the expert presentations are posted on the GEO Dayton Workshop web site.

The Platinum Sponsors were: Dayton Power & Light and Vectren. Green Star Sponsors were: Dovetail Solar & Wind, and Williams, Allwein & Moser. Key volunteers assisting GEO Staff with the event were: GEO Board Members Chris Meyer, Robert Gilbert and Brent Boyd with Al Frasz, Greg Kuss, Dale Arnold and Jim Gravelle also participating.



2014 Spring Lecture Series

For the second year, GEO Board Member Jay Warmke organized eight lectures across the state at venues in Athens, Cincinnati, Wooster and Worthington. Each lecture presented one of two renewable energy experts on local solar co-ops and Stirling engine thermal compressors. Total lecturers attendance was 400 people.



What's the Future of Ohio Clean Energy after SB 310 GEO Networking Meetings

During June 2014, in the immediate aftermath of the Ohio legislative enactment of Senate Bill 310 making Ohio the first state to halt (or freeze for 2 years) their Renewable Energy Portfolio and Energy Efficiency Standards, GEO conducted four Clean Energy Networking meetings featuring expert speakers in Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton and Cincinnati area venues. The Summer 2014 *GEO News Magazine* also featured seven expert articles on Advancing Green Energy with SB 310.

GEO Booth at the 2014 Ohio State Fair

Courtesy of the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation, 23 volunteers maintained the statewide GEO display booth at the Ohio State Fair from Wednesday, July 23 through Sunday, August 3, 2014.

Social Media

A number of news stories and green energy educational information were communicated on the GEO Web Site and through daily posts to GEO Facebook, GEO Tour Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube.

Wind Program

Ohio Local Partner in Midwest Regional Resource Center

During 2014, Green Energy Ohio served as a partner organization of the Midwest and Prairie Regional Wind Resource Center, led by Windustry, a non-profit based in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The Center focuses on a 10-state region: Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Ohio, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin. This Wind Resource Center is one of six selected in a competitive process by the U.S. Department of Energy.

Solar Electric Photovoltaic (PV) and Solar Thermal Rebates

In August of 2014, GEO coordinated a Solar Electric PV Training Program with Jay Warmke, a certified Electronics Technicians Association (ETA) instructor, which was attended by six students at the Melink Company's Cincinnati facilities. This program allowed beginners to achieve the ETA@ International's (PV1) level 1 certification.

Green Energy Ohio, in November 2014, modified its Solar Thermal Rebate Program for commercial scale installations to provide up to 30% of the project cost. Since 2009, GEO has awarded 46 rebates to homeowners, businesses and educational institutions across Ohio.

Green Energy Ohio News Magazine

GEO produces four quarterly full-color statewide news magazines containing up-to-date regional news, case studies of renewable energy applications and green building techniques, GEO Green Pages which serve as a directory of GEO business members, and a special feature section for each 48-page issue. Each issue is available free to view on-line page by page or as individual articles. The magazine is provided as a GEO Membership benefit and distributed at GEO events throughout the year.

2014 magazine features included:

- Guide to Green Energy Financing Incentives - Winter 2014
- 2014 Spring Event & Worthington Green on the Green - Spring 2014
- Ohio Buyers Guide & Advancing Green Energy with SB 310 - Summer 2014
- 2014 Green Energy Ohio Tour - Fall 2014

During 2014, the magazine was supported by 33 advertisers, 33 volunteers authoring one or more articles, and the GEO Staff. The 27 quarterly editions of the *GEO News Magazine* are the primary chronicle of Ohio green energy development since 2008.



As featured advertisers in the Fall 2014 *GEO News Magazine*

–the Fall GEO Tour publication was supported by Premier Sponsors R.J. Perritt Homes and Solar Power & Light; Featured Sponsors Dayton Power & Light, Ecohouse Solar, KeyBank, and Zane State College; and Supporting Sponsors Akron Zoo, Dovernail Solar & Wind, Everpower, Turner Foundation, Vectren and Yellowlite.

GEO Challenges into 2015

The challenge of advancing wind and solar across Ohio became difficult for many Ohio green energy business and GEO in mid-2014. Despite persuasive evidence of the benefits of green energy, the Ohio General Assembly became the first state in June 2014 to halt (or freeze for 2 years) the Renewable Portfolio Standard in SB 310. Everyday a majority of other states move past Ohio in solar and wind installations as their RPS laws continue in

force. Another Ohio law in 2014 virtually halted over \$2 billion in certified Ohio wind farms by making property set-backs uneconomic for wind developers in HB 483.

Despite this concerted state policy effort to deter Ohio's green energy, a growing number of local communities, private corporations and others have continued to install solar and community wind applications across the state. The solar home market continues to be boosted by the federal tax credit and rural Ohioans are benefitted by U.S. Department of Agriculture REAP grants.

Many believe that the continual reduction of solar and wind costs will also lead Ohio utilities to adopt more green energy as they must meet the new US EPA "Carbon Rule" in 2015 and beyond.

As GEO began to celebrate its 15th Anniversary in 2015, the organization was boosted by the most successful Fall Appeal ever as 98 donors supported the statewide non-profit with its most successful fundraising effort ever.

The need for public education on the jobs, energy savings and environmental benefits of clean energy grows bigger every day. GEO is asking individual donors, businesses, governments and foundations to keep the non-profit's mission alive "to promote economically and environmentally sustainable energy policies and practices in Ohio."

Toward our mission in 2015, Green Energy Ohio will:

- Develop and implement a new 3-year Strategic Plan
- Upgrade the GEO Web Site and continue social media outreach
- Continue to provide quality workshops on timely topics, the Spring and Fall Tours, PV Training and Solar Thermal Rebate programs
- Increase membership and public education
- Develop partnership driven events with regional and statewide organizations with similar goals
- Seek sustainable funding to support program activities

Green Energy Ohio is proud of its work from 2001 through 2014 as together we have built a greener Buckeye State. Join our effort in the years ahead!