

STEAM

The monthly newsletter of the Green Lake Area Sustainability Team (STEAM)

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TOP STORIES / RECOMMENDED SITES

[Renewable Energy Jobs](#). Searchable database of worldwide employment opportunities.

The Department of Labor's Women's Bureau has released [Why Green Is Your Color: A Woman's Guide to a Sustainable Career](#), a comprehensive manual designed to help women with job training and career development as they enter innovative and nontraditional jobs. Additional resources to help women succeed in nontraditional and emerging job sectors are available by contacting the [Women's Bureau](#).

[China Releases Solar Industry 5-Year Plan](#). China's Solar Industry 12th Five Year Plan (2011-2015), released today, aims to further reduce the price of solar by increasing capacity. The goal is to reach \$1,111 per kW by 2015 and \$794 per kW by 2020. China now supplies about half the world's solar cells and 45% of polysilicon.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

[Clean energy and energy independence funding opportunities](#)

EDUCATION/ HOW TO / TRAINING

[UWEX Environmental Communication and Social Marketing Newsletter](#)

BUILDINGS

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's new [Sustainable Communities Resource Center](#) features a comprehensive set of information that supports local and regional strategies, with a particular emphasis on sustainable housing and planning. The Resource Center provides ready access to best practices, cutting edge research, new reports and resources, and spotlights innovation in the field.

BUSINESS and EMPLOYMENT

[Nevada Town Rakes in Money, Thanks to Solar.](#) Boulder City, Nevada, home of the Hoover Dam, is fast becoming an epicenter of utility-scale solar plants, and is benefiting mightily from it financially. The city had the foresight to set aside land for solar plants and as a result will rake in lease payments for decades to come. Since they set aside 8000 acres as an "energy zone," it's become home to the nation's largest solar PV plant. Mayor Roger Tobler says the projects could eliminate the city's debt and stabilize its revenue stream far into the future, reports Las Vegas Review-Journal. Unlike other cities in Nevada, Boulder City has been able to avoid laying off employees and other drastic spending cuts because it will collect about \$12 million a year in lease payments from the two projects it's approved thus far. Besides the lease payments, the city requires solar developers to pay millions of dollars in upfront payments that cover the 2-4 year construction phase. In total, the city stands to collect over \$480 million in rent through the life of the contracts, increasing its annual revenue by almost 50%. And even on top of that, the solar plants are creating many hundreds of [renewable energy jobs](#).

[Equality and Efficiency.](#) Finance and Development, September 2011. In recent work... equality appears to be an important ingredient in promoting and sustaining growth. The difference between countries that can sustain rapid growth for many years or even decades and the many others that see growth spurts fade quickly may be the level of inequality. Countries may find that improving equality may also improve efficiency, understood as more sustainable long-run growth.

[Ohio County Creates Clean Energy Zone.](#) Sandusky County, Ohio is now a clean energy zone, after being unanimously approved by county commissioners. The county will offer tax breaks to renewable energy companies that locate there. German wind

turbine manufacturer Nordex plans to build a \$400 million wind farm there, and the county hopes to attract projects in solar and biomass too.

[Virent technology is part of new Shell biofuel plant](#), Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Feb. 28. Using technology licensed from Madison-based biofuels firm Virent Inc., Royal Dutch Shell has built a pilot biofuel plant in Houston. Shell has been a partner of Virent for the past five years, working to develop the Eagle pilot biorefinery that has been operating in Madison for several years.

[Indonesia: Unrest Shows Risks of Resource-Led Growth](#), Reuters AlertNet, 19 February 2012. Escalating conflict between pulp and paper companies and local communities in Indonesia emphasizes the challenges the country faces trying to balance economic growth with conservation and local rights. Related articles: [On the Front Line: Muara Tae's Last Stand Against Big Palm Oil](#)

ENERGY

[Marine Corps Expeditionary Energy](#). Marines are modern-day Spartans – our ethos demands that we change the way we think about energy as we train, equip, and lead our expeditionary force...by 2025 we will reduce by 50 percent our battlefield requirement for energy. By 2020 50 percent of our bases and stations will be net-zero energy consumers. [Marine Corps Military Strategy](#)

China Establishes Renewables Think Tank. China established its first renewable energy policy research think tank yesterday, the China National Renewable Energy Center. The Center will develop policies and strategies based on research and carry out collaborative programs internationally. It will help policymakers create a renewable energy roadmap and collect data that can be used by policymakers. In January, China's prime minister confirmed the country will increase the amount of non-fossil fuel energy it uses to 11.4% by 2015, and will "vigorously" develop renewable energy as part of its [5-Year Plan](#).

[UW-Manitowoc to take part in energy analysis of campus](#), Manitowoc Herald Times Reporter, Feb. 14. The University of Wisconsin-Manitowoc, in an ongoing commitment to energy efficiency on campus, has initiated a partnership with Honeywell to perform an in-depth energy analysis of all campus facilities...

[Bangladesh: Biogas Expansion Protecting Incomes, Forests in Rural Areas](#), Reuters AlertNet, 16 February 2012. Families in rural Bangladesh are using biogas digesters to

produce fuel for cooking, and in some cases heating and lighting, reducing their dependence on fuelwood and kerosene.

[UW cogeneration plant expansion set](#), Capital Times, Feb. 16. A heating and cooling plant on the UW-Madison campus that started up in 2005 is on line to be expanded this fall...

[Area universities' energy efficiency a lesson for all](#), Eau Claire Leader-Telegram, Feb. 27. A UW System Administration energy data summary released last month shows UW-River Falls was the most energy efficient four-year campus in the UW System during the 2010-11 academic year.

ENVIRONMENT

[International: Soil Erosion and Nuclear Reactor Management Emerging as Key Green Issues in UNEP Yearbook](#), UN News Centre, 13 February 2012. According to UNEP, 24 per cent of global land area has declined in productivity over the past 25 years due to unsustainable land use, triggering unprecedented soil erosion. The Yearbook warns that without changes in the way land is managed, there will be grave losses in forests, peatlands and grasslands, and biodiversity. Land erosion could aggravate climate change by releasing carbon stored in soil.

[Project to study local climate change adjustments](#), La Crosse Tribune, Feb. 24. La Crosse will be the focus of a four-month pilot program to develop ways to better prepare for more extreme weather and other effects attributed to climate change.

FOOD

[My Prices Are Not Too High: A Farmer Fires Back](#). Why are they those at the super market? Glad you asked.

USDA Unveils the Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food Compass. WASHINGTON, Feb. 29, 2012- Today, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and Agriculture Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan unveiled the [Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food \(KYF\) Compass](#), an interactive web-based document and map highlighting USDA support for local and regional food projects and successful producer, business and community case studies. The KYF Compass organizes USDA's work on local and regional food systems into seven

thematic areas. Among the themes covered on the map and in the narrative portion of the Compass are:

1. [Local Food Infrastructure](#): maps USDA support for food hubs, cold storage facilities, local food processors and other infrastructure and examines how this infrastructure keeps wealth in rural communities.
2. [Farm to Institution](#): examines programs to connect local food producers and institutions and the results of these initiatives for healthy food access, farm incomes, and students' understanding of agriculture.
3. [Careers in Agriculture](#): discusses USDA support for young and beginning farmers and ranchers, as well as opportunities to get involved in agriculture through food business development and public service, and the importance of this work to creating vibrant rural communities.
4. [Stewardship and Local Foods](#): explains how local food producers are implementing environmentally sustainable practices on their farms and ranches to preserve farmland, forests and natural landscapes across the country.
5. [Local Meat and Poultry](#): showcases resources for local meat and poultry producers and small processors to succeed in local markets.
6. [Healthy Food Access](#): highlights tools to connect farmers and ranchers underserved communities to increase access to healthy food for consumers and economic opportunities for producers.
7. [Local Food Knowledge](#): tracks existing research and identifies opportunities for further understanding of local and regional food systems and their impacts.

For more information and to join the national conversation, please visit the 'Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food' website, at www.usda.gov/knowyourfarmer. People can join the national conversation on Twitter by using the hash tag #KYF2.

RECYCLING

[Chancellor Hall at UW-Eau Claire beginning a composting program to cut waste](#), WEAU-TV, Feb. 20. The Student Office of Sustainability at UW-Eau Claire is one of the few universities in the country to begin a composting program using worms.

SUSTAINABILITY

[HUD Announces New Sustainable Communities Resource Center](#). HUD recently launched the Sustainable Communities Resource Center (SCRC) — a new section of HUDUSER.org dedicated to providing information that supports local and regional strategies, with an emphasis on sustainable housing and planning.