



CARBON EMISSION REDUCTION TOP MORAL OBJECTIVE

The United Church's General Council and our current moderator have gone on record to set carbon emission reductions as our top moral objective. HOW then can we help achieve this objective? By ACTION and LEADERSHIP:

1. The Green Energy Act introduced the Feed-in-Tariffs (FIT) permitting a reasonable return on investing in renewable energy projects. Debentures can be used to fund a PhotoVoltaic(PV) project.
2. Using the Co-op structure is an easy way to separate the financing of a renewable energy system and paybacks to investors from the finances of a congregation.
3. The act envisages multiple points of generation. It is possible for the Co-op to rent roof space from members to install a PV system. It is also possible, and anticipated in the larger provincial context, that a Co-op would assemble lands to set up PV or Windmill generation facilities.
4. There is an added incentive for Co-op based power with the government adding 1 cent per kW-hr generation.
5. The Co-op provides the mechanism to separate the operations and liability of Power generation from a congregation. Even though volunteers may be used a separate corporation helps to keep accounts clean and distinct.

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ABOUT RHUC

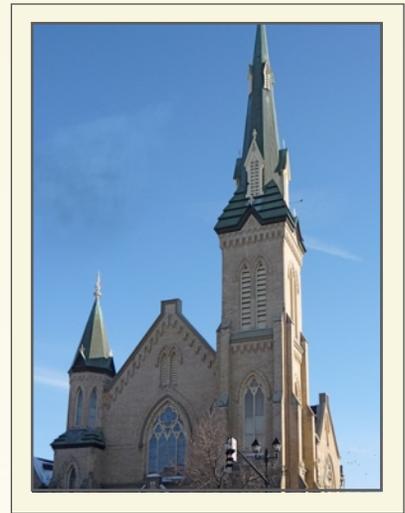
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We are celebrating 200 years of being a worshipping, working, witnessing faith community in Richmond Hill and invite you and your family to join us!

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RHUC'S NET ZERO COMMITTEE & SUSTAINING CREATION RENEWABLE ENERGY CO-OPERATIVE INC.

REDUCING OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT



NET ZERO

The Net Zero Committee of Richmond Hill United Church was established over 3 years ago with the objective of reducing carbon emissions to zero. The committee produced a concept proposal in Feb. 2009 which was accepted by RHUC's Council. This has evolved to include three planks:

1. An electricity oriented initiative focused primarily on installing a Photo Voltaic System on the church's roof;
2. A heating/cooling oriented initiative focused on the use of Geo Thermal Exchange heat pumps; and,
3. Conservation measures to reduce energy consumption but with the same or better level of comfort.



INTERNATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF CO-OPERATIVES

Co-operatives are a very different kind of entity to organize economic activity. Unlike typical businesses that focus on the financial bottom line, co-operatives are primarily formed for a different objective. Financial considerations are for maintaining the viability of the Co-operative so it can continue to fulfill its main purpose.

There are seven (7) principles of co-operatives from their beginnings:

1. Voluntary and open membership
2. Democratic member control
3. Member economic participation
4. Autonomy and independence
5. Education, training, and information
6. Cooperation among cooperatives
7. Concern for community.

These principles are in total harmony with beliefs of most faith communities.

The renewable energy Co-ops are restricted by the Ontario Act in their business to making and selling electricity from renewable energy sources. The exact words in the Act are:

The business of the Co operative is restricted to:

a. generating, within the meaning of the Electricity Act, 1998, as amended, electricity produced from one or more sources that are renewable energy sources for the purposes of that Act, and

b. selling, as a generator within the meaning of that Act, electricity it produces from one or more renewable energy sources."



Sustaining

WHY A CO-OP?

In May 2009, the Ontario government passed its Green Energy and Green Economy Act radically changing the face of renewable energy generation in this Province. This Act also promotes the concept of Community Power owned by the citizens. To further this end, other Acts were amended to support the Green Energy Act including amending the Co-op Corporation Act to establish 'Renewable Energy Co-operatives' as a new type of Co-op. It seemed logical that the Net Zero Committee follow the government's lead and investigate how and what a Co-op might mean to further the committee's objectives.

THE SUSTAINING CREATION CO-OP

RHUC Council directed the Net Zero Committee to setup the Co-operative as a fully open membership, much in the spirit of the 7 co-op principles. It is now possible for individuals of any faith community to join this co-op.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

To become a full member of the Co-op, a person 16 years of age or older must complete an application form and, upon acceptance by the Board, pay \$100.00 for a membership share. This entitles an individual to full voting rights and participation within the Co-operative.

To actually finance a renewable energy project requires the issuing of debentures tied to the project. The debenture is a loan, set up like a mortgage, paying principle and interest annually. The funds are used to pay for the equipment and setup a new renewable energy generation

Creation

system. The sale of the energy produces the revenue to pay back the investors.

It is possible for a church/congregation to collectively own a share in the co-operative (only one vote per share). It is also possible for the collective congregation to purchase one or more debentures should it believe that this would be a good long term investment for their funds.

HOW CAN A NEW CONGREGATION JOIN?

Given the structure of the Co-op and the ability to separate individual projects, it is a simple matter for others to join. The following is an example of a workable sequence:

- a) One or more members of the new congregation join the Co-op and indicate their interest in establishing a new generating location.
- b) The governing body of the congregation obtains all the internal approvals required to rent or provide space suitable for a generation system (roof or ground space).
- c) Complete an application form and space use contract with the Co-operative.
- d) The Co-operative will then issue a new debenture series with first preference to members of the joining congregation. Those buying debentures must also become members of the Co-op.

Members of a congregation can follow a similar sequence to become a location provider using their house/property for a renewable energy generation facility.

In all cases, a location provider can purchase some or even all of the debentures in the series issued for their location.