

2009 Oregon Green and Solar Tours Report



2009 Green and Solar Tour Summary

The Oregon Green and Solar Tours are one of the biggest events of their kind in the nation. Each year, communities across the state offer tours of homes and businesses showcasing a variety of green and solar technologies. Each tour reflects the unique interests of community, yet all share common goal: to educate the public about green and solar strategies. Most of these tours occur in September and October with most of them coinciding with the Nation Solar Tour.

Local Tour Description (Provided by Local Coordinator)

Applegate Valley Green and Solar Tour - This year's Applegate solar tour will highlight several residences and businesses that have taken advantage of recent tax and rebate incentives to install solar systems with short payback times. Several stops will feature additional energy saving measures in construction techniques. At the end, a variety of solar installers, green contractors, and system technicians will provide further help to interested patrons. Education is the central theme of this tour.

Ashland Green and Solar Home Tour - Find out how solar energy can be used to power and heat your home and water, and how homes can be more energy efficient, healthier and better for the environment. Participants will visit homes with solar electric, solar hot water, solar space heat, traditional and innovative energy efficient construction, healthier indoor air, and reduced environmental impacts. Learn about current technologies, and financial incentive programs to implement them.

Central Oregon Tour of Green and Solar Homes - Take the bus or chart your own course to some of the most sustainable homes in Central Oregon. You will also have the opportunity to attend a talk by Nathan Good, a notable sustainable design architect, network with green building professionals and participate in our people's choice awards.

Coos County Solar Home and Green Living Tour - The tour will begin with a no-host breakfast gathering and presentation at Southwestern Community College, Eden Hall 8:30 to 10:30. Tour bus (es) will leave at 10:40 a.m. for a day long tour of Coos County homes including passive solar designs, active solar systems, Earth Advantage new construction, Cob Buildings, rocket stoves and more! Pack a picnic for lunch on the way.

Gorge Enviro-House Tour - The environmental home tour showcases local sustainable homes in hopes of inspiring others in the region to build more sustainably.

John Day Solar Tour - A 1-hour introductory class about solar and wind energy systems for homes on and off the grid will help attendees learn about system design and setup. It will be followed by a tour of three local homes, where the hosts will explain what it's like to be the manager of your own power company!

Solar Home Tour - On the 26th of September 2009 at 9AM the tour group will meet in front of the Klamath County Court House to receive home tour maps and solar magazines. (Tour group members will need to provide their own transportation for the tour.) The tour will visit three residential homes.

First will be Robert Chinook's home, located near Worden, with a 6Kw solar PV installed by Eco Solar. Second will be Roger Davenport's home who has a 4Kw solar PV and solar hot water system, located at Running "Y". The third is Greg Beckman's home, located in the Stewart Lennox area, with a solar PV and vertical wind turbine.

Newberg Chehalem Mountain Wind and Solar Home Tour - The 2009 Newberg Chehalem Mountain Wind and Solar Tour will provide our friends and neighbors a chance to see what options are available to home and business owners looking to support renewable energy. The tour will include stops at two homes with PV systems and one home/business with wind turbines. The homes are open from 10 am until 4 pm on Saturday, October 3rd. Maps will be available soon. Please check back for more details or visit www.abundantre.com.

Douglas County Green and Solar Home Tour - Free morning workshop 9:00-11:00. Douglas County Library, Ford Room, 419 NE Diamond Lake Blvd, Roseburg. Green and Solar Home Tour 12:00-4:00.

Salem Green and Solar Home Tour - Visit with homeowners, green builders, contractors and architects that have incorporated green and solar techniques & technologies into new and newly remodeled homes around Salem. Check out a 1,500sqft greenroof, a German Passive Haus certified home under construction, and a solar hot water system that provides hot water year round.

Eighth Annual Build it Green! Homes Tour - Eighteen remodels and new homes will be open from 11am - 5pm, Saturday, September 19, 2009 in the Portland Metro Area. Chat with homeowners and contractors about solar panels, rainwater harvesting, affordability, small footprints, natural landscaping, eco-friendly building materials, co-housing, energy efficiency, alternative construction techniques, salvaged materials, healthy indoor air quality and pick up some great ideas for YOUR home. A FREE Info Fair with green vendors, demonstrations and music will follow from 3pm -7pm at ecohaus, 819 SE Taylor, Portland, OR 97214. We will raffle off a custom-designed salvaged wood chicken coop from Modern Coop.

Eugene Green and Solar Tour - The City of Eugene and EWEB are hosting a tour of green buildings in Eugene on Sunday, October 4th. Mayor Piercy will kick off the event at EWEB, followed by a presentation on Lane Community College's solar electric and electric vehicle charging station project. Attendees will be able to explore green buildings first hand and talk directly to the builders, solar contractors and homeowners. The self-guided tour will feature energy and water efficiency, passive solar design, solar electric and hot water systems, and other sustainable building elements. La Perla restaurant will host a reception after the tour.

BRING IT HOME - 20 eclectic homes and gardens featuring solar technologies, green building solutions and/or recycled materials

Newberg Chehalem Mountain Wind and Solar Tour

Estimated Attendance: 35

Coordinator Name: Jon Roschke

Coordinator Email: jon@abundantre.com

Coordinator Phone: 503-538-8298

Residential Locations: 2

Commercial Locations: 0

Multiuse Locations: 1

Government Locations: 0

Pre-tour Workshops Performed: 0

Local Tour Media: Flyers

Tour Results: We had a great turnout due to local advertising. Folks were interested in checking out the turbines they drive past every day. Stormy weather drove people away as well for part of the tour.

Lessons Learned: More advertising in local newspapers may have led to a greater turnout. Targeting advertising to those in the community with the wind resource would lead to better turn out for those interested in wind.

Suggestions: None

John Day Solar Tour

Estimated Attendance: 15

Coordinator Name: Jennifer Barker

Coordinator Email: info@solwest.org

Coordinator Phone: 541-575-3633

Residential Locations: 4

Commercial Locations: 0

Multiuse Locations: 0

Government Locations: 0

Pre-tour Workshops Performed: 1

Pre Tour Workshop: One-hour workshop: "How to Save \$\$, Save the Planet, and Gain Some Independence for Yourself."

Post-Tour Workshops: 0

Post-Tour Workshop Description:

Local Tour Media: Record-Courier (Baker City), Burns Times-Herald, East Oregonian (Pendleton), Baker City Herald, The Blue Mountain Eagle (John Day), KJDY (John Day), KTIX-KWHT-KUMA (Pendleton-LaGrande-Baker), KZZR (Burns), www.solwest.org, Energy Independence Sol-utions (newsletter).

Tour Results: The day started with a one-hour workshop (tea and hot chocolate served) in a classroom at the Grant County Fairgrounds. Everyone enjoyed the workshop and tour in spite of the weather (snowing). The two off-grid houses (one passive solar) were very popular, as was the owner-installed evacuated-tube solar hot water.

Lessons Learned: Publicity really pays off! I put out two press releases before the tour, and faxed the radio stations (for their community calendars). After the tour, both the Baker Record-Courier and the Blue Mountain Eagle ran coverage of the tour.

Suggestions: None

Salem Green + Solar Home Tour

Estimated Attendance: 130

Coordinator Name: James Santana

Coordinator Email: santanaj@pringlecreek.com

Coordinator Phone: 971.285.7744

Residential Locations: 8

Commercial Locations: 1

Multiuse Locations: 0

Government Locations: 0

Pre-tour Workshops Performed: 0

Pre Tour Workshop Description:

Post-Tour Workshops: 0

Post-Tour Workshop Description:

Media: Press release to local newspapers; print ads purchased in local newspapers; radio ads; email listserves; website links; newspaper article prior to event.

Tour Results: Strong turnout given the economic climate; attendees visited eight homes, some currently under construction, others completed, others remodeled; we noticed attendees were more interested in structure and design efficiencies than the interior product fit and finish; homeowners pleased to share their lessons learned with such an interested and knowledgeable audience. Very worthwhile event because of community and educational elements.

Lessons Learned:

Suggestions:

Klamath Solar Association

Estimated Attendance: 50

Coordinator Name: Scott McMahon

Coordinator Email: scottkg7ul@aol.com

Coordinator Phone: (541)882-9923

Residential Locations: 2

Commercial Locations: 1

Multiuse Locations:

Government Locations:

Pre-tour Workshops Performed:

Pre Tour Workshop Description:

Post-Tour Workshops:

Post-Tour Workshop Description:

Media: Radio, TV, and News Papers

Tour Results: We had about half attendance than last year.

Lessons Learned:

Suggestions:

Ashland Green & Solar Home Tour

Estimated Attendance: 60

Coordinator Name: Larry Giardina

Coordinator Email: giardin@ashland.or.us

Coordinator Phone: 541-552-2065

Residential Locations: 5

Commercial Locations:

Multiuse Locations:

Government Locations:

Pre-tour Workshops Performed:

Pre Tour Workshop Description:

Post-Tour Workshops:

Post-Tour Workshop Description:

Media: Newspaper

Radio

Parks Department Calander

Website

Utility Bill Newsletter

Tour Results: Participants visited homes with solar electric, solar hot water, solar space heat, hydronic heat, ductless heat pumps, a ground source heat pump, a conditioned crawl space, high mass wood heat, a whole house cooling fan, heat recovery ventilation, waste water heat recovery and tankless water heaters. Construction methods exhibited included advanced framing techniques, straw bale walls, insulated concrete forms, structural insulated panels and other innovative technologies that achieve more sustainable, energy efficient, and healthier homes, while reducing environmental impacts. Participants learned about current sustainable technologies, and financial incentive programs to implement them.

Lessons Learned: Adjust promotion to achieve full attendance.

Suggestions:

2009 Build it Green! Home Tour

Estimated Attendance: 1000

Coordinator Name: Valerie Garrett

Coordinator Email: valgal@involved.com

Coordinator Phone: 503-823-5431

Residential Locations: 18

Commercial Locations:

Multiuse Locations: 1

Government Locations:

Pre-tour Workshops Performed: 1

Pre Tour Workshop Description: By Solar Oregon

Post-Tour Workshops: 1

Post-Tour Workshop Description: By Solar Oregon

Media: postcards, City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) e-newsletter, social media (FaceBook, LinkedIn, Twitter), local tv KOIN and KATU (two shows), radio KPAM and KEX (two shows), full page OR Home Magazine ad, online calendar advisories, local neighborhood newsletters, Oregonian blog, Oregonian article

Tour Results: Now in its eighth year the BIG! Home Tour has an established following. Despite the economy and poor weather the morning of we had a great turnout for visitors eager to see 18 homes (seven with active solar). Most tour-goers report they come for design and construction ideas.

Lessons Learned: From evaluations collected Tour goers reported they want a better map, more affordable projects, more home info in the tour booklet, financial cost info, and homes situated more closely together.

Suggestions: Delightful to work with Solar OR!

Coos County Solar Home and Green Living Tour

Estimated Attendance: 50

Coordinator Name: Shannon Souza

Coordinator Email: Shannon@solcoast.com

Coordinator Phone: 541-266-0877

Residential Locations: 3

Commercial Locations:

Multiuse Locations: 1

Government Locations: 1

Pre-tour Workshops Performed: 1

Pre Tour Workshop Description: Oregon Solar presentation on the Basics of Residential Solar. Standing room only! over 100 attendees.

Post-Tour Workshops: 0

Post-Tour Workshop Description:

Media: Local paper The World, local reader boards, twitter and search engines, radio (bi-coastal media and jefferson public), radio interviews (bi-coastal and k-dune), t-v interview (KCBY local CBS affiliate)

Tour Results: Great turn out. Those who took the bus enjoyed the conversation and relaxation. Two county commissioners attended, so good representation from local officials. The first two stops after the workshop were the best attended - 65 at first stop. Our local Energy Trust outreach coordinator was on the bus to answer questions. We had a full spectrum of sites from "cadillac" PV systems to off grid do it yourself permaculture.

Lessons Learned: This was our first year without a post tour workshop and it was missed. If not a workshop then at least a social gathering.

Suggestions: The brochures provided to us didn't have any oregon specific information and so were of lesser value to us. It would be great for them to refer people to the Solar Oregon website from the get-go.

The posters were great - keep up the good work!

Eugene Solar & Green Building Tour

Estimated Attendance: 200

Coordinator Name: Jenna Garmon

Coordinator Email: jenna.r.garmon@ci.eugene.or.us

Coordinator Phone: 541-682-5541

Residential Locations: 6

Commercial Locations: 2

Multiuse Locations: 1

Government Locations: 0

Pre-tour Workshops Performed: 0

Pre Tour Workshop Description:

Post-Tour Workshops:

Post-Tour Workshop Description:

Media: All local newspaper, radio & television media. Relevant list-servs.

Tour Results: Feedback from tour participants, site hosts and project-related firms indicated that the tour was very successful and enjoyable. Participants enjoyed the diversity of sites and the one-on-one interaction allowed by the tour. Associated firms appreciated the publicity and ability to showcase their work.

Lessons Learned: Rather than a self-guided tour, we created three different tour loops and organized participants into groups so that no more than 30 participants would be present at a site at any given time. This was very time-consuming and involved a lot of logistical coordination. But feedback indicates that hosts prefer to have small groups than a constant stream of individuals.

Suggestions: Make sure enough signs are available.

Douglas County Green and Solar Home Tour

Estimated Attendance: 24

Coordinator Name: Scott McKain

Coordinator Email: ssmckain@charter.net

Coordinator Phone: 541 6795597

Residential Locations: 4

Commercial Locations: 1

Multiuse Locations: 1

Government Locations: 0

Pre-tour Workshops Performed: 1

Pre Tour Workshop Description: Energy Trust of Oregon gave a 2 hr talk on incentives for solar and energy conservation

Post-Tour Workshops:

Post-Tour Workshop Description:

Media: KPIC-TV, KLCC Radio, Jefferson Public Radio, The News Review, Distributed posters and flyers around the county

Tour Results: The workshop was free and the tour was \$15 per person. Of the 24 at the workshop, 20 went on the tour.

Lessons Learned: People wanted to see all the sites but it was difficult with the time allotted.

Suggestions:

Gorge Enviro House Tour

Estimated Attendance: 150

Coordinator Name: Elaine Hopper

Coordinator Email: elainehopper@gmail.com

Coordinator Phone: 541-399-2628

Residential Locations: 10

Commercial Locations:

Multiuse Locations:

Government Locations:

Pre-tour Workshops Performed: 1

Pre Tour Workshop Description: Our current building methods are using the world's energy resources 100,000 times faster than they can be replenished and causing significant environmental harm. As a modern society, we must learn how to use less, conserve what we have and implement renewable energy sources very rapidly. This class will help homeowners, designers, architects and builders with ideas on how to conserve energy and resources while increasing the health of our homes. Then we review how on-site renewable energy sources can be utilized to offset long-term impacts. Ultimately we need to design/build structures that live and breath with the environment to have little or no impact, i.e. "a living building". Come join the quest/discussion to develop buildings that can meet that goal.

Post-Tour Workshops:

Post-Tour Workshop Description:

Media: Rediviva Magazine, CGEC website, Local Newspaper, Flyers, Email blast

Tour Results: October 3rd was a beautiful day in Gorge and a great day for the Enviro House Tour! With 10 homes on the tour, ranging from rastra block and straw bale construction to smart communities, tour goers came out in record numbers. They were inspired by our hardworking and passionate hosts who have taken such great strides to make responsible building decisions. Tour goers remarked how nice it was to have the opportunity to speak one on one with the builders and homeowners who have undertaken these great projects.

The morning of the tour Tod LeFevre graciously hosted an inspiring workshop on renewable energy and energy efficient design. It was great to see people come out to learn and get inspired!

Lessons Learned:

Suggestions: Thanks for everything!

Applegate Valley Green and Solar Tour 2009

Estimated Attendance: 100

Coordinator Name: Tom

Coordinator Email:

Coordinator Phone: 541-846-1025

Residential Locations: 4

Commercial Locations: 1

Multiuse Locations:

Government Locations:

Pre-tour Workshops Performed:

Pre Tour Workshop Description:

Post-Tour Workshops: 1

Post-Tour Workshop Description: All tour patrons were given an opportunity to conduct detailed discussions with local 'green' contractors, manufacturers, realtors, resource guides, and tax experts.

Media: Jefferson Monthly, Jacksonville Review, Grants Pass Courier, Southern Oregon, Electronic mailing lists, Business mailing lists, Community bulletin board posters

Tour Results: Too early to tell. Typically, a certain percentage of patrons use the information in future remodeling, construction, or business projects.

Patrons received a wide-ranging menu of sustainable building practices and energy conservation measures. Tour sold out for second year in a row.

Lessons Learned: Use smaller buses in a rural tour.

Don't combine with winery events; you tend to lose control.

Smaller, less hi-tech projects are more popular with patrons because of their affordability.

Suggestions: Solar Oregon did a good job of limiting the # of e-mails this year. Keep this.

Solar Oregon was unresponsive to our detailed request for technical material to pass out to patrons. The handout provided was unspecific and too general to be practically useful. Include DOE and ETO materials. Help tour organizers educate!

Website registration is valuable.

Solar Oregon should do ALL the coordinating with ASES. Volunteer non-profit organizers don't need the hassle.

2009 Central Oregon Green + Solar Homes Tour

Estimated Attendance: 150

Coordinator Name: Diana Fischetti

Coordinator Email: dfischetti@earthadvantage.org

Coordinator Phone: 541.704.8821

Residential Locations: 6

Commercial Locations:

Multiuse Locations:

Government Locations:

Pre-tour Workshops Performed: 1

Pre Tour Workshop Description: Keynote Speaker Nathan Good provided information about green materials and techniques used in residential construction.

Post-Tour Workshops:

Post-Tour Workshop Description:

Media:

Newspaper: advertisements in the Source Weekly; advertisements, tour brochure, and articles, in the Bend Bulletin;

Community calendars: Source Weekly, Bend Bulletin, Bend Chamber of Commerce, Bend Convention and Visitors Bureau, Central Oregon Visitors Association, KOHD TV: community calendar, web banner and website coverage, community calendar on air, flyer postering throughout

Bend press releases to: Bend Radio Group, COCC, Combined Communications, Cascade Business News, Central Oregon Family News, Central Oregonian, KOHD, Source Weekly, Bend Bulletin, Madras Pioneer, Sisters Nugget, Redmond Spokesman, Sunriver Scene, and OPB

Web blasts to: Cascadia members, Earth Advantage Institute email lists, The Environmental Center email lists, High Desert Branch master list

Websites: Cascadia High Desert Branch website; Solar Oregon website

Tour Results: The 150 attendees included tour goers, as well as volunteers, sponsors, and members of the Green + Solar Homes Tour Steering Committee.

The Tour was a great success. We made approximately \$2000 for our nonprofit organization.

This year, the Tour was more affordable than in the past (\$10 for Cascadia members and \$15 for non-members). In addition, for the first year it was only 1 day, and there were only 6 homes on the Tour.

We chose homes that demonstrated cutting-edge features beyond the standard suite of green building techniques and materials. We also had a representative of the design-build team at each home to support the homeowner and answer questions. Homes ranged from a \$100,000 Habitat for Humanity House to a \$1.1 million luxury home on a golf course. The range in prices was meant to stimulate conversation about "what is green building?"

For the first time, we tried to provide busses for the tour goers for only an additional \$5. The busses drove in a continuous loop and bus riders were able to get on and off any bus they wanted. This was in response to feedback we had received from previous tours. Lessons learned will be discussed below.

The Keynote Speaker, Nathan Good, did a wonderful job of introducing green building concepts to tour goers so that they could know what to look for and what questions to ask on the Tour. It was a perfect workshop to precede the Tour.

We also had a People's Choice award that doubled as a feedback mechanism. It was a great way to draw people to a closing event and to publicly recognize the homeowners and design-build team involved with the house folks liked the most.

Lessons Learned: With the busses, we need to change the way we organize them in future years. The continuous loop created some time issues that need to be addressed in future years.

We would re-structure the People's Choice award. It was intended to be fun and playful, but some of the homeowners and design-build teams took it more seriously than intended.

We anticipated many more attendees would register online and print their tour materials online. There were a number of factors that contributed to this not happening, including the inaccessibility of the website (which we will discuss below), that we did not articulate that message, and the complexity of printing at home. In the future, we need to have a discount for online registration, make the website more accessible, and articulate that message.

We need to diversify advertising techniques.

We would like to include other partners and combine efforts next year.

We should consider getting a grant to pay someone to be the Tour Coordinator next year. We would continue the committee-style of Tour organizing, but hire a Coordinator.

We would like to offset our energy use with the Blue Sky Power program next year, as well as make the event zero waste.

We would like to include the homeowners more in the process for networking benefits.

Finally, we would like to visit each house in person prior to accepting for the Tour.

Suggestions: website: on the Solar Oregon website, we would like to have fewer clicks required to get to the Central Oregon Tour website. And, we would like to see something like "SEE OFFICIAL WEBSITE, INFO ABOUT THE HOMES, AND PURCHASE TICKETS HERE" with link to official website. We also have feedback for Cascadia about their website structure.

We would like to have more interaction with the Solar Oregon employees that come to Central Oregon before and during the Tour for better coordination and promotion. It would be great to have someone from Solar Oregon at the Tour, and allow that person to set up a booth at the opening events.

Thank you for the grant money!! Sorry it has taken us so long to do this survey.

Finally, Solar Oregon could check with each Tour group prior to sending outreach materials. Because we had posters already made, we were not able to make good use of the Solar Oregon posters and probably did not need to receive any.

Bring It Home Tour

Estimated Attendance: 250

Coordinator Name: Michele Piastro

Coordinator Email: michelep@bringrecycling.org

Coordinator Phone: 541.606.9093

Residential Locations: 20

Commercial Locations:

Multiuse Locations:

Government Locations:

Pre-tour Workshops Performed:

Pre Tour Workshop Description:

Post-Tour Workshops:

Post-Tour Workshop Description:

Media:

Tour Results:

Lessons Learned:

Suggestions: