

<http://www.mtpleasantsolarcoop.org/>

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Mount Pleasant Goes Solar!

D.C. Homeowners Fight Climate Change One Neighborhood at a Time

While Congress fiddles about climate change, the Washington D.C. neighborhood of Mount Pleasant is actually doing something about it.

This fall nearly 50 home owners of this racially and economically mixed urban enclave will install rooftop solar installations, according to the Mt. Pleasant Solar Cooperative, a neighborhood group that organized the effort.

The Coop and the Bancroft Elementary School PTA are co-sponsoring a Eco-Living Fair on Saturday September 19 to celebrate the latest victory in the war on global warming.

The new solar installations will cut the carbon energy consumption of the participating homes by 25-40 percent and spare the earth's atmosphere an estimated 271,000 pounds of airborne carbon every year, according to Coop President Anya Schoolman. With each solar array expected to last 25 years, Mt. Pleasant is now on a path to cutting its carbon emissions by 6.7 million pounds over the next 25 years.

"What's happening at the national level is important but we would be foolish to wait for politicians and lobbyists to save the planet," Schoolman says. "One way or another, the fight against global warming is going to happen one neighborhood at a time. So we say, 'Let's get going.'"

After the installations are complete, approximately 4 percent of the neighborhood's single family dwellings will be powered by the sun.

The Mt. Pleasant Solar Cooperative was founded three years ago after Schoolman's then 12-year old son, Walter Lynn and his friend Diego Arene-Morley saw the movie, "An Inconvenient Truth," and asked their parents what they could do about global warming.

Over the course of three years, the group grew to include more than 200 members who educated themselves about energy efficiency, the District's energy policies, Renewable Energy Credits, and federal and D.C. solar incentives.

"The current carbon energy system has a lot of built-in obstacles that prevent D.C. homeowners from going solar," Schoolman says, "We have proved they can be overcome by neighbors educating themselves and sharing information."

Solar cooperatives are being formed in the several other metropolitan neighborhoods, according to Schoolman

This spring 48 members of the group signed contracts to put photo-voltaic generating systems atop their homes.

The installations, which deploy a variety of the latest solar technologies, are being done by local contractors including Switch Inc., Maggio Roofing, Standard Solar, and Chesapeake Solar.

The Mt. Pleasant Eco-Living Fair will be held on Saturday, September 19 from 10 am-2 pm at the Bancroft Elementary School playground, located at 18th and Newton Streets NW.

The fair will feature

- * Tours of solar arrays already sprouting on the flat roofs of the neighborhood's row houses.
- * Exhibition by the Bancroft students who tend the White House organic garden sponsored by First Lady Michelle Obama.
- * The latest in solar technology, including solar film.

- * Solar cars and other activities for kids

- * How to cook with solar power
- * Performance by the Peaceful Warriors of DC Self-Defense Karate Association

The Mt. Pleasant Solar Cooperative has previously been covered by [Scientific American](#), [Washington Post](#), [Washington City Paper](#), and the [Washington Business Journal](#).

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