

CLEAN ENERGY  
**STORYTELLER**



March 2017

### In the News

**NCSEA in the News:** [Cook backs limits on wind projects](#)

**NCSEA Member in the News:** [New Google tool estimates solar-panel potential of your rooftop, neighborhood](#)

**NCSEA Member in the News:** [North Carolina offshore wind hailed as job creator](#)

[NASCAR fans may notice some changes soon at Charlotte Motor Speedway](#)  
[How a high-tech experiment in a cotton mill town might change your life](#)

### You Asked - We Listened! New Website and Benefits April 5

The NC Sustainable Energy Association is excited to announce that our brand-new website and updated membership benefits structure will go live on Wednesday, April 5th!

YOU ASKED, WE LISTENED...  
COMING APRIL 5TH  
NCSEA will be launching  
a new **website** & updated  
**member benefits**



In an effort to better serve our ever-growing and diverse community of members, we're pleased to offer improved website content, aesthetics, and visibility of our programs. Additionally, we'll be launching an exclusive set of benefits tailored to each membership level, with more online members-only features and new ways to engage in our work!

**If you're not already an NCSEA member, there's never been a better time to [join!](#)**

### Clean Energy in Your Community

**Solar gets the green light in the performance racing industry**

In 2003, [Morse Measurements](#) was founded to support the United States' most popular spectator sport – the National Association for Stock Car Racing, NASCAR. At the time, NASCAR teams from the South were driving more than 1,500 miles just for their automotive suspension testing. Bob Simons, Founder and President of Morse Measurements, and his team saw an opportunity to develop a company that could serve these clients in their own backyard.



When thinking of “clean” industries and companies, NASCAR may not be the first name to come to mind. However, the performance racing industry has made some great strides. NASCAR has put into place industry-wide recycling efforts, introduced a biofuel called Sunoco Green E15, and adopted solar and energy efficiency measures at its many racetracks.

This concept of sustainability and clean energy has been accepted throughout the industry, including at Morse Measurement. “Our business supports protecting the environment and we’re proud to say to our customers that their testing is powered by a clean resource – the sun,” Bob says.

Morse Measurements worked with [Baker Renewable Energy](#) to install their 30kW solar project in 2015, just in time to take advantage of the state tax credit. Adopting solar can be an exciting journey for many businesses, but it can also be challenging. Typically, the first step is getting educated about the available options. (Determining system size, available financial incentives, and understanding the new relationship with their local utility are just a few example considerations.) Also, the motivations behind these projects can range from improving their environmental impact to taking advantage of a lower utility bill.

NCSEA helps those interested in adopting solar by providing basic information they need to consider as they begin the process, such as baseline annual production estimates of installed systems. Please see our [Consumer Guide to Customer-Owned Solar Photovoltaic](#) for more information. Additionally, we’re able to work closely with our members and partners to uncover some of these challenges and determine whether the best approach is to resolve them through policy actions.

If you're wondering how Bob continues to embrace solar power, in 2016 Bob purchased a Nissan Leaf, using the same solar technology that powers his business to "fuel" his car. Just think about Bob the next time you're in a rush and that annoying little gas light comes on.

*NCSEA wants to hear about your experience adopting a clean energy technology – perceptions, attitudes, and motivations behind your decision. We encourage you to participate in our upcoming [Consumer-Adopter Survey](#), which will help us understand more about the customer experience. Contact Robin Aldina at [Robin@energync.org](mailto:Robin@energync.org) or 919-832-7601 ext. 114 for more information.*

## **Policy Perspective**

With 2.4 gigawatts (GW) and growing, North Carolina is now second in the nation for installed solar capacity. The majority of this capacity is from statewide utility-scale solar projects. These projects serve as a clean generation resource, help electric utilities meet customer demand, and offset the need to build the next power plant.

Much of the utility-scale solar industry's success can be attributed to our state's strong clean energy policies, such as favorable contracts and rates paid to these facilities for the energy and generation capacity they provide. The terms of these contracts and rates are set by the North Carolina Utilities Commission (NCUC) every two years in "avoided cost" proceedings, where stakeholders like NCSEA can continue to advocate for fair rates.

In the current avoided cost proceedings, Duke Energy Carolinas and Duke Energy Progress (collectively known as Duke Energy) are seeking significant changes that could hinder future solar development. For instance, Duke Energy is pushing to reduce contract lengths for and the system size of Qualifying Facilities (QFs) eligible for standard contracts. Furthermore, these avoided cost rates have the ability to shape other areas of the clean energy landscape because they serve as the basis for the cost effectiveness of utility-sponsored energy efficiency measures.

Right now, debates are happening at both the regulatory and legislative level. **In order to make our strongest case, we need both your financial support and your personal engagement.** As an additional service, all large

contributors are invited to attend and provide input during weekly update phone calls with relevant staff as the proceedings unfold. Please make your contribution to NCSEA with the memo "Avoided Cost Proceeding / NCUC Docket E-100 Sub 148."

## Tips & Facts from an Expert

### How does a solar panel convert sunlight into electricity?

Sunlight hits a solar panel, also known as photovoltaic (PV) cells, and stimulates the electrons in that cell. These electrons become loose from their atoms and form an electrical current. In other words, the panel is able to convert sunlight to direct current (DC) electricity. Since our homes and businesses are not powered by DC (thanks to [Nikola Tesla](#)), an inverter is needed to convert that DC electricity into alternating current (AC) that can then be used to power your devices. The utility can measure the amount of energy generated or consumed by installing metering equipment, which could be reflected on the customer's utility bill.

## Thank you to our New & Returning Members

[Alternative Green Investment Florida LLC](#)

[Cape Fear Community College](#)

[Cape Fear Solar Systems](#)

[Capital Solar Development, LLC](#)

[CLT Joules](#)

[Community Energy Solar](#)

[Crowder Energy Services, LLC](#)

[East Point Homes](#)

[Heelstone Development](#)

[Henderson County](#)

[iSolar, LLC](#)

[Kairos Government Affairs](#)

[Renewable Energy Design Group](#)

[ReVenture Park](#)

[Sheercom, LLC](#)

[SolFarm Solar Co.](#)

[Strata Solar](#)

## Events

**Save the Date:** Join us on April 21st for our *New Website and Membership Benefits Webinar*. NCSEA staff will take you on a tour of our new website and explain our newly designed member benefits.

[Members' Webinar: Mid-Session Legislative Update](#) on May 5, at 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM.



*Copyright © 2017 NC Sustainable Energy Association, All rights reserved.*

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)