



Canada: Government Support for Solar Energy Projects

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August 08

In June 2008 the Government of Canada has committed over US\$ 760,000 through the “ecoENERGY for Renewable Heat” program to various solar energy projects and regions in Canada. The contributions will support up to 20 percent of the total cost of purchase and installation of solar water heating systems. The entire program is aimed at increasing the use of renewable thermal energy by industry, commercial businesses, institutions, and consumers. The increased demand for solar systems offers lucrative export and business opportunities for U. S. companies.

Market Demand

On June 20, 2008 the Government of Canada has committed US\$ 460,000 through the ecoENERGY for Renewable Heat program to the Okanagan–Shuswap Solar Project, which will support the installation of solar water heating systems in 470 new homes in Kelowna, BC. The announcement is available online at:

[Government of Canada Supports Solar Water Heating for New Homes in the Central Okanagan.](#)

On June 10, 2008 the Government of Canada has committed US\$ 306,000 to support the Sustainable Ottawa Community Energy Co-operative's Solar H2Ottawa program, covering 250 solar domestic water heating systems. Additional grants from the ecoENERGY Retrofit program and from the Province of Ontario are available. The announcement is available online at: [Government of Canada Supports Solar Water Heating for Ottawa Homes.](#)

The “ecoENERGY for Renewable Heat” program is a four-year, US\$ 35 million investment to increase the use of renewable thermal energy and runs from April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2011. The program offers incentives to purchaser of solar heating systems in industrial/commercial/institutional sector and is estimated that, by 2011, will have supported installations of solar systems in about 700 buildings. More information available online at:

[ecoENERGY for Renewable Heat.](#)

In addition, pilot projects conducted with energy utilities, energy service companies and non-governmental organizations will explore ways of making solar water heating systems more accessible and will drive the demand for solar energy systems, both for PV elements as well as for PV modules, and panels.

Market Data

An overview of the solar energy potential with the photovoltaic estimates is available on Natural Resources Canada website at: [Photovoltaic potential and solar resource maps of Canada.](#)

Based on Statistics Canada data for photosensitive semiconductor and photovoltaic cells, total imports of solar cells was estimated at US\$ 47 Million in 2007. The import of U.S solar cells was estimated at US\$ 24.5 million in 2007, of which almost 60 percent are assembled in modules and panels. After an initial decline at the beginning of 2007, in the last 12 months ending May 2008 the import of solar cells was almost 10 percent up compared with the same period previous year.

The total Canadian market for solar energy systems is much higher when counting the supply and installation of full equipment and completion of projects at general contractor level.

Opportunities for U.S. Companies

The Canadian market increased demand offers lucrative opportunities for U.S. manufacturers of solar energy systems. The best prospects are for Solar Cells Assembled Into Modules Or Panels (HS code 8541406020) and for Solar Cells, Not Made Into Panels Or Modules (HS code 8541406030).

There are over 250 Canadian companies involved in the manufacturing, assembling and installing of solar energy systems. The Canadian Solar Industries Association (CanSIA) is the organization representing the industry and it's website is www.cansia.ca

The CanSIA Annual Conference 2008, Toronto, Dec. 8-9, 2008 represents a major industry event, and will include also a trade show (Solar Showcase). Details available online at: [2008 Solar Conference](#).

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