



2009 WISCONSIN

Renewable Energy Summit

Renewables, Sustainability, Energy Efficiency,
Social Responsibility, and Green Energy Practices

Solar Thermal & Geothermal

Session 15-3

DATE:

THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2009

Breakout Session 15-3:

Time:

10:00am - 11:45am

Presenters:

The Policy Case for an Aggressive Solar Hot Water Program – Solar Site Evaluation: Consultants and Technicians

Michael Vickerman

Preheating domestic water with solar energy can lead to significant savings in fossil fuel energy use. A technology that's been used for decades, solar hot water systems save money in a variety of commercial and institutional applications. Depending on the application and the price of fuel being displaced, the internal rate on investment (ROI) for a solar thermal system can range from 10% to 20%. In addition, the energy captured is both clean and renewable, and the resource is evenly distributed throughout the state. It has been estimated that each square foot of collector space offsets 23 pounds of carbon dioxide per year.

Notwithstanding these direct and indirect benefits, solar thermal systems remain an underexploited technology, both here and in the United States. While Wisconsin has a more active solar hot water market than do neighboring states, additional policy support is needed to make solar thermal a truly mainstream option. This presentation will address two questions: (1) why is solar hot water such a good fit for Wisconsin businesses and institutions; and (2) what additional policies are needed to tap the full potential of this effective yet underappreciated renewable energy technology.

Presenter Biographies:

Michael Vickerman

Michael Vickerman is Executive Director of RENEW Wisconsin, a nonprofit group located in Madison to advance public policies and market-based mechanisms for creating a more sustainable energy future for Wisconsin. As a subcontractor to Focus on Energy's Renewable Energy Program, RENEW is providing marketing support for the Solar Thermal sector.

Mr. Vickerman has given similar presentations on solar hot water at this year's Energy Fair in Custer and the 2008 Solar Decade conference in Milwaukee. Mr. Vickerman gave several presentations on wind energy at the 2008 Renewable Energy Summit.