

DOE's Solar Decathlon to Highlight Innovation, Future Green Jobs

The U.S. Department of Energy today announced this year's participants and dates for DOE's 2009 Solar Decathlon, a competition that challenges students to design and develop houses that can provide their own energy from the sunlight – a clean, renewable source of energy. The twenty collegiate teams from the United States, Canada, Spain and Germany will each build a completely self-sufficient solar powered house, showcasing energy-efficient amenities and smart home systems that provide reduced carbon emissions without sacrificing the comfort of modern conveniences.

“The Solar Decathlon highlights President Obama's goal of improving our national security and transforming the economy by using off-the-shelf, clean energy technologies to reduce our dependence on foreign sources of oil, reduce our carbon emissions, and protect the environment,” said U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu. “As part of the building competition, the next generation of green engineers, architects, designers, and professionals gain valuable experience that will help them to lead America toward a clean energy future.”

DOE's Solar Decathlon, which takes place October 9-18 on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., consists of 10 individual contests that evaluate the teams' skills in architecture, home design, and communications. The homes constructed by the teams must produce enough electricity and hot water from solar panels to perform all the normal functions of a home — from powering the lights; to cooking, washing clothes and dishes; to powering home electronics; and maintaining a comfortable temperature. This year, a new net-metering contest will evaluate each home's ability to produce its own power. The competition focuses on cutting edge energy efficient and renewable energy innovation while providing a unique green jobs training opportunity for each of the students.

The start of the competition marks the culmination of more than two years of hard work by the student teams. The twenty teams will assemble their homes on the National Mall in early October. Following the Opening Ceremony on October 8, the homes will be open for public tours October 9-13 and 15-18.

This is DOE's fourth Solar Decathlon competition since premiering in 2002 with subsequent competitions in 2005 and 2007. On average, each Solar Decathlon competition has drawn more than 100,000 visitors to the National Mall.

The colleges and universities competing in the 2009 Solar Decathlon are:

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Cornell University
Iowa State University
The Ohio State University
Penn State
Rice University
Team Alberta (University of Calgary, SAIT Polytechnic, Alberta College of Art + Design, Mount Royal College)
Team Boston (Boston Architectural College, Tufts University)
Team California (Santa Clara University, California College of the Arts)
Team Missouri (Missouri University of Science and Technology, University of Missouri)
Team Ontario/BC (University of Waterloo, Ryerson University, Simon Fraser University)
Technische Universität Darmstadt
Universidad de Puerto Rico
Universidad Politécnica de Madrid
The University of Arizona
University of Illinois
University of Kentucky
University of Louisiana at Lafayette
University of Minnesota
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Virginia Tech

The Solar Decathlon is sponsored by DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, in partnership with its National Renewable Energy Laboratory, which manages the event. For more information, please visit <http://www.solardecathlon.org/> [1].

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[1] <http://www.solardecathlon.org/>