

The green energy sector is an internationally booming industry. In the past 5 years, \$25-billion has been invested in Canada's green energy sector, with employment increasing 37% to approximately 26,900 jobs. From 2010-2014, Manitoba invested \$1.7 billion in clean energy* and is a national leader in terms of its clean grid and commitment to renewable energy due to Manitoba Hydro. However there are opportunities for significant growth and improvement in this expanding industry. Manitoba doesn't have any community-sized wind or solar projects and the Act governing Manitoba Hydro is in need of an update as it was written in 1961, when issues like climate change and energy poverty were not well known.

Many Indigenous communities in Manitoba live in energy poverty, meaning they spend more than 10% of their income on home energy.** They have to allocate more money towards electricity than is spent on housing and good food initiatives combined. This money leaves the community without meeting the potential of investing in energy efficient cost savings for residents, expanding local economy development or creating long-term employment. Local ownership of community-scale renewable power can produce five times the local economic benefits compared to large projects that are owned by outside investors. These kinds of growth opportunities exist in both rural and urban communities for community-led and owned renewable energy production and reducing energy consumption.

Manitoba needs to make greater progress towards a greener economy and needs to ensure better quality homes and employment opportunities for people across the province. A stronger and more efficient energy economy can be created in Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities across Manitoba through efforts on both the supply and demand side of the equation. Initiatives that could accomplish these multiple goals include:

1. Properly insulating buildings;
2. Using geothermal or biomass for space heating;
3. Generating electricity locally, through solar and wind power, to replace costly imported electricity; and
4. Scaling up community-led social enterprises already working on such initiatives.

Question for Candidate: The transition to an economy focusing on green energy and a healthy environment is a priority for CCEDNet – Manitoba members and for Canadians across the country. What will you do to harness the potential for community-owned renewable energy and energy efficiency initiatives in Manitoba, particularly for northern and remote communities?

*Clean Energy Canada: Tracking the Energy Revolution, <http://cleanenergycanada.org/>

**Loney, S. (2009). *The Case for a National Strategy on Low Income Energy and Water Efficiency*. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives Manitoba. www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/commentary/fast-facts-case-national-strategy-low-income-energy-and-water-efficiency