

Encouraging Energy Self-Sufficiency

Overview: The Sustainable Energy Cooperative of Gabriola encourages progress towards energy self-sufficiency by installing large solar arrays on public buildings on our island.

The Sustainable Energy Cooperative of Gabriola (<http://cooperategabriola.ca/energy-co-op/>) is dedicated to providing sustainable energy education and alternatives for our small island on Canada's west coast and to contributing to significant reductions in Gabriola's Green House Gas emissions. One of our goals is to enable Gabriola organizations and individuals to reduce their need for electricity from BC Hydro through the installation of solar energy arrays. Through our Community Solar Initiative, we are promoting and facilitating the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) arrays on properties owned by community or public organizations and financed by local investors and available grants.

The goal is to install large enough solar arrays to offset a significant portion of a site's annual electricity use by using the net metering program to generate large amounts of electricity when the sun is shining and sell it back to BC Hydro, while also drawing on BC Hydro for power at night and during inclement weather. In effect, we are using the utility as a giant battery to store extra power when available and to provide power when needed. With electrical rates rising at close to 5% per year, there is the opportunity for an organization to protect against rising utility costs while also reducing its carbon footprint. For more information, contact John Peirce D'68, member of the board of the coop.

- **John Peirce**
- Time zone: Pacific
- Email: John.Peirce@Dartmouth68.org
- Phone: 250-247-8632
- Best time to contact: Anytime