

## INDUSTRY NEWS

### LT. GOVERNOR JENNINGS UNVEILS SOLAR TECHNOLOGY IN HOLDEN HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD

**L**t. Governor Toni Jennings recently dedicated the first installation of solar technology in Orlando's Holden Heights Front Porch Community. Through Front Porch Sunshine, Florida is putting sunshine to work to conserve energy and reduce electricity bills in underserved communities. The program is providing 150 solar water heaters to residents in the 20 Front Porch Florida communities throughout the state, making Florida the first in the nation to install solar energy technology in weatherized, low-income homes.

"Front Porch Sunshine protects our environment and provides aid to Florida's underserved residents," said Lt. Governor Jennings. "Solar water heaters are providing these citizens with both economic and environmental benefits, improving their quality of life."

The reliable, low-maintenance solar systems use the sun's energy, instead of electricity, to heat water. A solar collector installed on the roof holds water that is heated by the sun. A traditional water heater serves as a backup supply of hot water on overcast or rainy days.

"Using solar technology provides clean energy and expands energy savings to Florida's underserved



communities," said Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Colleen M. Castille. "By providing energy-

saving opportunities to our residents, families are able to minimize their energy bills and protect Florida's environment."

"The solar water heater program is a perfect complement to the Front Porch Florida Initiative," said Department of Community Affairs Secretary Thaddeus Cohen. "These dynamic neighborhoods have continued their legacy of promoting economic revitalization and community education while embracing this environmentally friendly technology."

Governor Bush launched Front Porch Florida in 1999 to revitalize low-income neighborhoods. State agencies are assisting 20 designated neighborhoods with community-driven initiatives for economic growth, education and environmental preservation. Recently, the Florida Energy Office, Florida Solar Energy Center and

*(Continued on Page 10)*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE  
PAGE 2

FLORIDA LEGISLATURE CONVENES ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION  
PAGE 3

LAWMAKERS QUICKLY GET DOWN TO BUSINESS  
PAGE 5

INSURANCE COMMISSIONER APPROVES WORKERS' COMPENSATION RATE CUTS  
PAGE 7

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION TAX RATES ARE GOING UP AGAIN  
PAGE 8

SUNBUILT GOES GOLD  
PAGE 9

DEPUTY TREASURY SECRETARY BODMAN NOMINATED FOR ENERGY SECRETARY  
PAGE 10

FMI PARTICIPANTS  
PAGE 11

ON THE HORIZON  
PAGE 12

# Message:

2



**DAVE BESSETTE**  
**FLASEIA PRESIDENT**

Legislative Committee gets busy. FlaSEIA members had a very productive meeting with Senator Mike Bennett, Co-Chair of the Utility and Energy commission, in September. Colleen Kettles, Co-chair of FlaSEIA's Legislative Committee, along with a little help from friends, produced a very well prepared "white paper" at the request of Senator Bennett. This "white paper" will be given to Senator Bennett in hopes that he will use the valuable information to promote our Industry in a media campaign.

Additionally, a brochure was created which highlights key points in the "white paper". This brochure will be distributed to all the legislators by FlaSEIA's Executive Director and Lobbyist Bruce Kershner. All of this sets the stage for a very aggressive legislative agenda for the Industry, and we will be calling upon all of you to visit with your local representatives to carry the message.

I want to especially want to thank Dillon Daniels (Solar Source), our newest Board member, for all the hard work he has put into this association. He has brought a lot of enthusiasm to the committee and has gone the extra mile to make things happen.

The New Year is just around the corner, and we have many opportunities to "shine". Kicking off the year is the National Home Builders' Convention in Orlando on January 13-16. I would like to encourage all of you to start off the New Year with a renewed vigor and participate in one of the committees helping to build our Industry. Let 2005 be our year for "Carrying the Message".

Merry Christmas (Happy Holiday),

and best of luck in the New Year.

Sincerely,

**Dave Bessette**  
**FlaSEIA President**



*The  
FlaSEIA  
Board of  
Directors and  
Staff wish  
everyone a  
Happy  
Holiday  
Season and a  
prosperous New  
Year!*

	2003 – 2005	2004 – 2006
<b>PRESIDENT</b> Dave Bessette Allsolar Service Company, Inc.	Dillon Daniels Solar Source	David Bessette Allsolar Service Company, Inc.
<b>1st VICE PRESIDENT</b> Tom Harriman Harrimans, Inc.	Victor Eyal Heliocol U.S.A., Inc.	Dr. Charles Cromer Florida Solar Energy Center
<b>2nd VICE PRESIDENT</b> Bob Zrallack Solar Energy Systems	Steve K. Gorman Thermal Conversion Technologies	Pete DeNapoli Shell Solar Industries
<b>SECRETARY</b> Colleen Kettles Florida Solar Energy Research & Education Foundation	Tom Harriman Harrimans, Inc.	Tom Lane Energy Conservation Services of North Florida
<b>TREASURER</b> R.W. Schabes The LeverEdge	R.W. Schabes The LeverEdge	Bob Zrallack Solar Energy Systems
<b>IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT</b> Pete DeNapoli Shell Solar Industries		

## FLORIDA LEGISLATURE CONVENES ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION

The Florida Legislature held its Organizational Session on Tuesday, November 16, electing two new leaders who have pledged to work more cooperatively with each other.

Senate President Tom Lee (R – Brandon), a homebuilder from the Tampa area, will preside over the Florida Senate. House Speaker Allan Bense (R – Panama City), a businessman from the panhandle, will lead the Florida House.

During the Organizational Session, House Speaker Bense announced the structure of the Florida House of Representatives and on which councils and committees House members will serve.

The new House structure includes 10 councils containing 35 committees.



*House Speaker Allan Bense*



*Senate President Tom Lee*

There are also four joint committees to which both the House and Senate appoint Members.

"In business, I try to bring on my team the best possible person for the job then get out of the way and let them do their job," said Speaker Bense. "That's what I've done with our councils and committees.

House members will be limited to introducing six bills during the 2005 Legislative Session. In general, bills



*Industry News* is the official newsletter of the Florida Solar Energy Industries Association (FlaSEIA), a nonprofit, professional association of companies involved in the solar and energy conservation industries. *Industry News* is published four times per year and distributed to all member companies of FlaSEIA and a broad range of other interested parties.

• will be referenced to the appropriate committees based upon the subject being addressed. The council above the committee of first reference will be the bill's last stop before becoming available to be heard on the floor of the House.

• On the other side of the rotunda, Senate President Lee announced the Senate Committee Vice-Chairs and Committee Membership during the Senate Member Orientation Meeting held at the Florida Capitol on Wednesday, November 17.

• "The most important work done by the Legislature occurs during the committee process," said Senate President Lee. "It is where we can openly discuss and debate ideas, and where the public can provide input into the law-making process."

• "We're looking forward to greatly improved relationships between the House and Senate this year," Lee

said to a delegation from the House.

Asked for areas where he and Lee disagree, Bense said he couldn't think of any. Lee said he and Bense are already working together on a number of issues, and their staffs are sometimes meeting jointly.

Governor Jeb Bush has said that he probably will call lawmakers into a Special Legislative Session during the week of December 13 to pass a bill creating the universal pre-kindergarten program as well as providing subsidies for hurricane victims who were forced to pay multiple deductibles and property tax relief for those who lost use of their homes because of the storms.

Republicans hold a 26–14 majority in the Senate and an 84–36 advantage in the House. Also sworn in Tuesday were 19 new House members and two new Senate members elected earlier this month.

**THIS IS NEWS!**



**E**CO SUN collectors from Aquatherm Industries are the latest "State of the Art" development in solar pool heating.

Unique venting slots in the collector combine the strength of a full plate collector with the benefits of roof ventilation and reduced wind load.

With exclusive "fluting" design to provide more surface area, Ecosun is now the most powerful package in the business.

Find out how you can benefit from the Ecosun Advantage - Call Today

MADE IN USA

Ask about our **MASTER DEALER PROGRAMS**

**800-535-6307**



**SUN EARTH INC.**  
Quality Solar Energy Products

---

*Protecting Our Environment Since 1978*

**Empire & Imperial Liquid Flat Plate Collectors**  
**CopperHeart Intergal Collector Storage Systems**  
**SunSiphon Closed & Open Loop Thermosiphon Systems**  
**SunBurst Standard & Custom Absorber Plates**  
**Oasis All Copper Pool Plates**  
**"Solar Strut" Mounting Systems & Hardware**  
**Complete Packaged System and Component Distribution Services For International Markets**

Please Direct All Dealer and Sales Inquiries to [sunearth@lava.net](mailto:sunearth@lava.net)

**SunEarth, Inc.**  
 4315 Santa Ana Street, Ontario, California 91761  
 (909) 405-5610, FAX (909) 405-5613

# LAWMAKERS QUICKLY GET DOWN TO BUSINESS

OCTOBER–DECEMBER 2004

5

**W**ith the 2004 elections behind us, our attention now turns to Tallahassee where lawmakers have returned to begin shaping issues for the upcoming 2005 Legislative Session. They will be meeting from now through February in committee meetings working on issues that will be addressed during the 60-day regular session which will begin on March 8, 2005.



The Florida Solar Energy Industries Association (FlaSEIA) have outlined an aggressive agenda for the upcoming Legislative Session. Proposals being sought by FlaSEIA will focus on "Renewing Florida's Energy Future" and include a myriad of measures:

- Renewing the solar energy sales tax exemption which is set to expire in June 2005.
- Reinstate the solar property tax exemption.
- Provide annual funding for
  - Front Porch Sunshine Program
  - SunBuilt Builder Program
  - PV for Schools Program

FlaSEIA has already been making the rounds with legislators

promoting these issues.



Representative Ken Littlefield (R – Zephyrhills), Chairman of the House Utilities & Telecommunications Committee, is working with FlaSEIA on both the sales tax and property tax issues. The chairman has given his tentative approval in making the sales tax issue a committee bill.



Over in the Senate, Senator Mike Bennett (R – Bradenton) is refiling the Renewable Energy Bill (SB 494). The bill would require utilities to offer purchase contracts to producers of renewable energy.



FlaSEIA has also been meeting on a regular basis with Senator Lee Constantine (R – Altamonte Springs) and newly appointed Chair of the Senate Communications and Public Utilities Committee. Senator Constantine recently attended the Front Porch Sunshine Dedication in Holden Heights where he also observed a demonstration of a Rapid Deploy system. The system is a fully integrated portable hot water heater designed for sites requiring temporary hot water without electricity. The system was developed by FlaSEIA member Thermal Conversion Technology for use in disaster recovery such as the recent hurricanes that beset the state.

Other construction related issues that may come before the



*Industry News* is published quarterly by the Florida Solar Energy Industries Association (FlaSEIA). Ideas, opinions and views expressed herein are not necessarily those of FlaSEIA.

- legislature during the 2005
- Legislative Session include:
- Retainage, Lien Law, Florida
- Building Code, Mold Remediation,
- Bond Forms and Sales Tax on
- Construction Materials.

**SPECIAL SESSION**

- Leaders of the state House and
- Senate recently decided to call a
- special session without waiting for
- the Governor to take the lead . . .
- and that’s just fine with Governor
- Jeb Bush. After spending the past
- two years watching the house and
- senate snipe at one another, the
- Governor says he welcomes the
- new spirit of cooperation in the
- Legislature.

- Senate President Tom Lee (R –
- Brandon), together with House
- Speaker Allan Bense (R – Panama
- City), announced that the Florida
- Legislature will convene for a
- Special Session. Special Session
- 2004–A began on Monday,
- December 13, 2004 and was
- scheduled to end on Friday,
- December 17, 2004.

- The call included a limited agenda
- that focused on the issues of
- Voluntary Universal Pre–K; critical
- state needs related to the natural
- disasters that occurred this
- hurricane season including Tax
- Relief for residential owners,
- Multiple Deductibles for Hurricane
- Claims, Beach and Dune
- Renourishment, School
- Construction and Citrus Canker
- Eradication. The call also included
- two issues requiring the immediate
- attention of state policy makers:
- funding for the Department of
- Juvenile Justice and licensing for
- the Discount Medical Plan
- Organizations.

- The smooth debut during this
- Special Session of House Speaker
- Bense and Senate President Lee,
- who assumed power after the
- November elections, contrasted
- with four prior years of House–
- Senate strife complicated by the

past House speakers’ political ambitions. Both businessmen, Bense and Lee promised a more problem–solving approach to policy–making. The results of this week bode well for the regular Legislative Session that begins in March.

For the first time in nearly two years, the Legislature’s top two leaders took part in the handkerchief drop signifying the end of the session.

It was a small gesture that spoke volumes about the changed atmosphere in the Capitol. The tradition was abandoned last spring because of bitterness between the previous leaders, Senator Jim King (R – Jacksonville) and former Representative Johnnie Byrd (R – Plant City).

Senate President Tom Lee and House Speaker Allan Bense, both Republicans, greeted each other warmly in the Capitol rotunda after finishing their work a day early. “I like this a lot better than the past,” said Governor Jeb Bush.

Florida’s new legislative leaders stayed on script, didn’t stumble and got the job done. The packed agenda – designing Florida’s first statewide pre–kindergarten program, helping hurricane victims, easing paperwork for subsidized health insurance and compensating counties for juvenile detention – was completed a day before the deadline.

---

*Happy  
New  
Year!*



# UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION TAX RATES ARE GOING UP AGAIN

The Florida Department of Revenue has announced that unemployment tax rates are going up in 2005, as required by laws designed to ensure that the state's unemployment compensation trust fund maintains a sufficient balance to pay benefits to unemployed workers.

A typical Florida small business with 10 employees who is currently paying the minimum unemployment comp tax rate will see an increase of \$49 per year in its total tax bill.

Employers who pay the minimum rate will pay \$29.40 per employee per year, which breaks down to \$4.20 for every \$1,000 in wages, up to a maximum of \$7,000 in wages. In Florida, wages above the \$7,000 level are not subject to the unemployment tax.

Currently, employers at the minimum rate pay \$24.50 per employee per year, or \$3.50 per \$1,000 of wages. This rate, which took effect in January 2004, was a significant increase over the previous year's rate. This will be the second time in two years the rates have increased.

This increase in the state unemployment compensation tax rate does not include the effect of unemployment claims filed during August and September after four hurricanes struck the state. These claims may have an impact on the rates for 2006.

The maximum tax rate, which is paid by about 18,000 Florida Businesses that have had the most layoffs, will not change. The maximum rate is \$54 per \$1,000 per employee per year, up to a maximum of \$378 per employee.

The rate for new employers is also not going up. New employers pay \$189 per employee until they have accumulated enough time in the state unemployment compensation insurance program to qualify for the minimum rate.

The Department of Revenue is mailing notices of the new rates to all 446,000 affected employers. The new rates will be effective for calendar year 2005. The first payment under the new rates will be due April 1, 2005, with your business' regular quarterly unemployment tax report (UCT-6).

**State Certified Solar Exam**

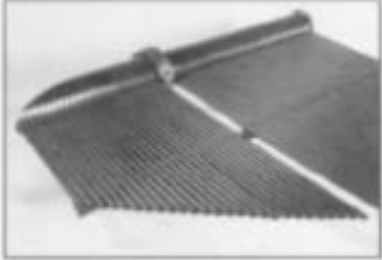
February 15–16, 2005  
June 21–22, 2005

Applications may be obtained by logging on to [www.proftesting.com](http://www.proftesting.com)

**HELIOCOL**  
SOLAR POOL HEATING ENGINEERED FOR LIFE.

The design innovator of the Solar Pool Heating Industry  
*now features*  
**HELIOCOL GOLD**  
A marvel of simplicity & durability

*Exclusive  
Incase, Panel, Parts  
& Labor Warranty  
for the  
ultimate in  
Peace of Mind*



13620 49th Street North • Clearwater, Florida 33762  
Tel. 727-572-6655 • FAX 727-572-7922  
<http://www.heliocol.com>

# SUNBUILT GOES GOLD

## FIRST "GOLD LEVEL" BUILDER PLEDGES TO INSTALL SOLAR TECHNOLOGY IN NEW HOMES

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) recently unveiled *SunBuilt Gold*, the latest program to expand solar energy technology in communities throughout Florida. A partnership between DEP, the Florida Home Builders Association and the Florida Solar Energy Research and Education Foundation (FlaSEREF), *Sunbuilt Gold* provides rebate checks to home builders who install solar hot water heaters in newly constructed homes.

"Adopting clean energy technology protects Florida's air quality and the health and prosperity of Florida's citizens and economy," said DEP Deputy Secretary for Regulatory Programs and Energy Allan Bedwell. "Through *SunBuilt*, homes across Florida will use solar technology, highlighting new energy innovations, environmental protection and saving homeowners money."

*SunBuilt* Builders are eligible for a \$400 rebate for each solar equipped home constructed. The reliable, low-maintenance solar systems use the sun's energy, instead of electricity, to heat water. A solar collector installed on the roof holds water that is heated by the sun. A traditional water heater serves as a backup supply of hot water on overcast or rainy days. Benefitting both the economy and the environment, the amount of energy generated annually by a single solar water heater is equal to two barrels of oil, lessening the state's dependence on petroleum imports.

To become a *SunBuilt* Builder, a builder must be a current member of the Florida Home Builders Association, sign the *SunBuilt* pledge, use approved solar water heaters and contractors and participate in a home energy efficiency program. Builders who pledge to install solar water heaters on all new homes are classified as

Gold Level builders and are eligible to receive a free solar water heater for their model home. America's Homes President Luis Diaz was certified today as the first Gold Level home builder, pledging to install solar water heaters in 100 percent of new home construction. Silver level builders pledge to offer solar heaters as an option in their new construction.

"For me, conservation means more than the requisite energy saving efforts," said Luis Diaz president of America's Homes. "It means providing clients with a quality home and a community designed for livability. My choices consider what benefits customers the most economically and environmentally. We've met Energy Star standards in our homes for awhile now. With *SunBuilt* we've taken it to the next level by including solar water heating in each home. I believe that makes a statement beyond economic savings, beyond upgrading one electric appliance for another – it says I'm concerned, I'm economically smart, and I'm doing my part. What could be better?"

"Solar water heating is the most cost-effective solar energy technology on the market today," said FlaSEREF Executive Director Colleen Kettles. "By making this commitment, America's Homes becomes one of just two builders in the nation installing these systems in every home they build."

The *SunBuilt* program expands DEP's current solar energy programs. Over the last year, the Department unveiled *SunSmart Schools* to install solar electric units in Florida's public schools and *Front Porch Sunshine*, which installs solar water heaters in weatherized low-income homes. For more information, visit the following websites:  
[www.FloridaEnergyOffice.org](http://www.FloridaEnergyOffice.org) or  
[www.sunbuilt.org](http://www.sunbuilt.org).

(Lt. Governor Jennings Unveils Solar Technology in Holden Heights Neighborhood Continued from Page 1)

Florida Solar Energy Research & Education Foundation (FlaSEREF) established a partnership with Front Porch Florida to improve the energy efficiency of homes within designated communities.

“I am thrilled the Holden Heights Front Porch community will benefit from this groundbreaking program,” said Florida Office of Urban Opportunity Director Patricia West. “Bringing the power of solar energy to our communities is a wonderful way for residents to take advantage of the successful collaboration between the Department of Community Affairs, Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Solar Energy Research & Education Foundation and community partners.”

For more information about Front Porch Florida, visit [www.myflorida.com](http://www.myflorida.com). For more about Front Porch Sunshine, visit the following websites: [www.fsec.ucf.edu/solar/projects/frontporch/frontporch.htm](http://www.fsec.ucf.edu/solar/projects/frontporch/frontporch.htm).

## DEPUTY TREASURY SECRETARY BODMAN NOMINATED FOR ENERGY SECRETARY

Samuel Bodman, Deputy Treasury Secretary, was nominated Friday by President Bush to succeed Spencer Abraham as Secretary of Energy. SEIA issued the following statement:

“The Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA), the national trade association of solar energy companies, congratulates Dr. Samuel Bodman on his nomination by President Bush as Energy Secretary.

In his experience overseeing the National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration (NOAA) and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), Dr. Bodman has demonstrated the importance of advanced technologies in improving our national security and environmental performance. SEIA looks forward to working with Dr. Bodman and the Administration to expand the use of clean, domestically produced solar energy.

“The United States invented practical solar power in 1954, and thanks to the Department of Energy’s research programs, our national laboratories and partners continue to be pioneers in the field. As a result of their excellent work, solar is now cost-competitive in a growing number of markets. The global solar industry is doubling in size every two years; this trend will only increase as costs continue to fall.

“The future of the US solar industry depends on our ability to leverage our nation’s research and development excellence. We stand ready to work with Dr. Bodman, the Administration, and Capitol Hill to enable access to this popular source of safe, clean, renewable energy, enhance our nation’s energy independence and security, and help the solar industry to meet its projected goal of supplying 360,000 new American jobs by the year 2030.”

## FLASEIA 2005 MEMBERSHIP DUES

On October 15, 2004, FlaSEIA mailed out 2005 Membership Dues invoices. Please address your dues responsibility promptly. FlaSEIA depends upon your dues to provide the services that you have come to expect. Dues must be paid to the FlaSEIA office as soon as possible.

If you have any questions, misplaced your invoice or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact the FlaSEIA office at (407) 339-2010.

# Initiative:

**F**laSEIA wishes to thank the following companies for their financial commitment to FlaSEIA and the Florida solar energy industry as participants in the Florida Manufacturers' Initiative (FMI) program.

**DHW COLLECTORS**

SunEarth, Inc.  
Thermal Conversation Technology, Inc.

**POOL COLLECTORS**

Aquatherm Industries, Inc.  
FAFCO, Inc.  
Heliocol USA, Inc.  
Solar World, Inc.

**PUMPS AND CONTROLS**

Ivan Labs, Inc.

You can best show your appreciation by buying products from these manufacturers and by urging unlisted manufacturers to participate in the FMI program.

**THERE'S ONE SOLAR LEADER**



- The oldest U.S. manufacturer of solar pool heating panels
- The only manufacturer with 1,000,000 panels installed
- The industry innovator with over 20 patents
- The highest rated solar panel

**CALL NOW FOR MORE INFORMATION  
(650) 363-2690**

IF YOU'VE DECIDED TO SERVICE THE FLORIDA RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION MARKET, CALL US...



...TO FIND OUT WHY MORE FLORIDA HOME BUILDERS CHOOSE THE *PROGRESSIVE TUBE PASSIVE SOLAR WATER HEATER* THAN ALL OTHER TYPES COMBINED.

Thermal Conversation Technology, Inc.  
101 Copeland Street  
Jacksonville, Florida 32204  
(904) 358-3720



# Horizon:

**The 2005 International Builders' Show, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Florida  
January 13–16, 2005**

**ASHRAE Winter Meeting/HVAC Expo, Wyndham Palace Resort/  
Orlando Convention Center, Orlando, Florida  
February 5–9, 2005**

**FlaSEIA Board of Director's Meeting/Legislative Dinner  
March 23 – 24, 2005  
Tallahassee, Florida**

**Green Power Summit, Disney Coronado Springs Resort, Orlando, FL  
May 2–5, 2005**

**Southeast Building Conference Trade Show, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Florida  
July 14–16, 2005**

**Board of Director's Meeting/Election of Officers,  
SEBC, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando  
July (TBA) 2005**

**Solar World Congress 2005 & ASES Annual Meeting,  
Rosen Center Hotel, Orlando, Florida  
August 8–12, 2005**

**Board of Director's & Annual Meeting/Auction  
October (TBA) 2005**

**For additional information on the above meetings and/or events, please contact the FlaSEIA office at (407) 339-2010.**



231 West Bay Avenue  
Longwood, FL 32750-4125  
Phone: (407) 339-2010  
FAX: (407) 260-1582  
Website: [www.FlaSEIA.org](http://www.FlaSEIA.org)