

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES FOR THE HOME

The trend toward homes that are powered by alternative energy sources, ranging from wind turbines and solar collection cells to hydrogen fuel cells and biomass gases, is one that needs to continue into the 21st century and beyond.

We have great need of becoming more energy independent, and not having to rely on the supplying of fossil fuels from unstable nations who are often hostile to us and our interests.

But even beyond this factor, we as individuals need to get "off the grid" and also stop having to be so reliant on government-lobbying giant oil corporations who, while they are not really involved in any covert conspiracy, nevertheless have a stranglehold on people when it comes to heating their homes (and if not through oil, then heat usually supplied by grid-driven electricity, another stranglehold).

As Remi Wilkinson, Senior Analyst with Carbon Free, puts it, inevitably, the growth of distributed generation will lead to the restructuring of the retail electricity market and the generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure.

The power providers may have to diversify their business to make up for revenues lost through household energy microgeneration. She is referring to the conclusions by a group of UK analysts, herself included among them, who call themselves Carbon Free.

Carbon Free has been studying the ever-growing trend toward alternative energy-using homes in England and the West. This trend is being driven by ever-more government recommendation and sometimes backing of alternative energy research and development, the rising cost of oil and other fossil fuels, concern about environmental degradation, and desires to be energy independent.

Carbon Free concludes that, assuming traditional energy prices remain at their current level or rise, microgeneration (meeting all of one's home's energy needs by installing alternative energy technology such as solar panels or wind turbines) will become to home energy supply what the Internet became to home communications and data gathering, and eventually this will have deep effects on the businesses of the existing energy supply companies.

Carbon Free's analyses also show that energy companies themselves have jumped in on the game and seek to leverage microgeneration to their own advantage for opening up new markets for themselves. Carbon Free cites the example of electricity companies (in the UK) reporting that they are seriously researching and developing ideas for new geothermal energy facilities, as these companies see geothermal energy production as a highly profitable wave of the future.

Another conclusion of Carbon Free is that solar energy hot water heating technology is an efficient technology for reducing home water heating costs in the long run, although it is initially quite expensive to install. However, solar power is not yet cost-effective for corporations, as they require too much in the way of specialized plumbing to implement solar energy hot water heating.

Lastly, Carbon Free tells us that installing wind turbines is an efficient way of reducing home electricity costs, while also being more independent. However, again this is initially a very expensive thing to have installed, and companies would do well to begin slashing their prices on these devices or they could find themselves losing market share.

Source : <http://www.hicow.com/alternative-energy-sources/UK/hydrogen-fuel-cells-1.html>