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## **Press Release**

Saskatchewan Environmental Society

Wednesday, September 12, 2018

For immediate release

### **Celebrating *Renewable Rides* during National Drive Electric Week**

One hundred and twenty-six (126) solar panels, with 37.8 kilowatts of generation capacity, have been installed to power new electric vehicles on the roads in Saskatoon. The solar array, on the roof of a new sustainable housing development, Radiance Cohousing, at 475 Avenue L South, is part of an innovative program in which the Saskatchewan Environmental Society (SES) has brought 100% solar-powered electric vehicles (EV) to the Saskatoon CarShare Co-operative's (SCC) fleet. To date, four EVs have been launched in the *Renewable Rides* program. Soon, a fifth publicly-accessible EV will also be located at Radiance Cohousing.

National Drive Electric Week is a celebration to heighten awareness of today's availability, affordability, and convenience of electric vehicles. The *Renewable Rides* team has added five EVs to the mix in Saskatoon. Additionally, by weaving together the use of green technologies—including renewable energy, smart meters, virtual net metering, and electric vehicles—*Renewable Rides* aims to showcase one of the many ways that we can reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and, subsequently, reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

*Renewable Rides* team member, the SES Solar Co-operative (SESSC), arranged the installation of the solar array at Radiance Cohousing. "The SESSC, on behalf of its 169 members, is excited to supply solar electricity into the Saskatoon Light and Power grid to fuel these electric vehicles from their respective charging stations," said Peter Prebble, President of the SESSC. "This is the first application of virtual net metering in Saskatchewan, and it offers a glimpse into a low-emission transport future. Powering electric vehicles using solar energy instead of fossil-fuel generated electricity cuts greenhouse gas pollution more than tenfold."

"The members of Radiance Cohousing are thrilled to host the SES Solar Co-operative's largest solar array to date and, soon, one of the electric vehicles being introduced to our community through the Saskatoon Carshare Co-operative," says Michael Nemeth, spokesperson for Radiance Cohousing. "We believe that collective action will lead to a climate-positive, community-oriented future. *Renewable Rides* is an excellent example of this."



Jason Praski of Exa Energy Consulting is one of the technical experts on the *Renewable Rides* team: "What this group has achieved is really amazing! *Renewable Rides* is not only proving-out, but also educating the public about the financial and community benefits of solar power, electric vehicles and car-sharing, all while making our air cleaner. My family sees the city smog from our home east of Saskatoon and it's easy to understand why this project is important. Many 'firsts' for Saskatchewan have been accomplished, and local green economic growth and better services to our communities are the result. It's a model for other local leaders to follow."

In addition to the SESSC, Radiance Cohousing, Exa Energy Consulting, and the SCC, SES is pleased to partner with Saskatoon Light & Power, Sun Country Highway, Saskatchewan Research Council, Wardell Gillis Law, Affinity Credit Union, and Western Economic Diversification Canada to bring this project to fruition.

"The Government of Canada, through Western Economic Diversification Canada, invested over \$238,000 towards the Saskatchewan Environmental Society's work on the *Renewable Rides* program," said the Honourable Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, and Minister responsible for Western Economic Diversification Canada. "We are happy to celebrate this solar installation and the program's electric vehicles, which are a great step forward for clean technologies and a sustainable future for the citizens of Saskatchewan."

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The *Renewable Rides* program is the first of its kind in Canada: a car-share program, with electric vehicles, powered by 100% solar energy, available to all. Learn more on the SES website: [www.environmentalsociety.ca/programs/renewable-rides](http://www.environmentalsociety.ca/programs/renewable-rides)

**Photos and video** of the *Renewable Rides* solar array can be viewed and downloaded here: <http://environmentalsociety.ca/solar-array-photos/>

**Saskatchewan Environmental Society (SES)** is a non-profit, registered charity that is committed to supporting sustainable living and sustainable resource use in Saskatchewan. SES's current action areas include sustainable energy and climate solutions, water protection, resource conservation, biodiversity preservation, and reduction of toxic substances. Our work in Saskatchewan spans Treaties 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, and our office is located in Saskatoon on Treaty 6 territory, the traditional territory of Cree Peoples, and the homeland of the Métis Nation.

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