

Opinion

# Need for Site C dam challenged

**To the editor:**  
Here's proof that the Site C dam is not needed.

This summer, I took the initiative and installed 24 solar panels on my property.

The panels worked on overcast days, when the sun wasn't shining, producing more power than our two-family, seven-freezer home could use, and sent the extra power back to the grid.

Fortis charges nine to 13 cents per kilowatt hour. What will be the cost per kilowatt hour in 10 years, if and when the Site C dam is built?

A new solar panel has already been developed and is entering the manufacturing stage that will substantially lower the cost of solar by reducing the amount of silicon needed in the panels.

Another new solar panel is being developed that has a battery system embedded in each panel. The batteries charge during the day, when the solar panels are powering your house, and then the batteries power your house at night.

This is cutting edge technology that no hydro dam, no coal, no oil and no gas can price match.

Once solar panels are paid for (I estimate mine will be fully paid for in about seven years), your solar power is free.

Consider Germany, a nation of 81 million people, which has 500,000 homes producing solar power.

Fully one third of their power needs come from solar. The projected Site C dam would supply power for 450,000 homes, but would also put hundreds of

## LETTER OF THE WEEK

I was surprised that the solar panels work on light; as long as there's daylight, my panels are producing solar power.

Since installing my panels, my hydro bills have been slashed more than 50 per cent.

I expect even greater savings because my hydro supplier, FortisBC, recently installed a smart meter that measures how much excess power I send back to the grid and will credit future bills.

I figure I am paying three to four cents per kilowatt hour on solar.

SEE SITE C A11



## BORN LEFTIES

Wild kangaroos tend to favour their left hands during common tasks like grooming and feeding, a study suggests based on hours of observation.

## POACHING

Most illegally-poached African elephant ivory, killing 50,000 elephants a year, can be traced to just two areas of Africa, Tanzania and nearby parts of Mozambique.

## ON THE MOVE

Researchers have discovered tiger sharks in the Atlantic Ocean complete epic migrations every year that are more similar to those of birds and turtles than other fishes.

## PERKS UP MICE

Neuroscientists have discovered that artificially stimulating a positive memory can cause mice to snap out of depression-like behaviour.

# Assessing a 'fair financial compensation' cost

The goal of "fair financial compensation for loss" is simple when you can point your finger at specific dollars and cents losses such as receipts for chiropractic sessions or time missed from an hourly wage job.

The goal is not so simple when there is nothing specific you can point your finger at.

How, for example, do you come up with fair compensation for injuries that reduce the ability to perform domestic, household tasks?

If a housekeeper was hired, you can easily add up the invoices, but what if family and extended family picked up the slack without pay?

A couple months ago, I described a recent court decision that affirms that this type of loss must be compensated just like any other.

In that decision, \$70,000 was awarded for the injury victim's past as well as future loss of ability to do domestic work in her own home, even though family and extended family members had picked up the slack and she had not spent any money to hire replacement services.

A more recent case, this time coming from the

Achieving Justice

PAUL HERGOTT



highest level of court in this province (Court of Appeal), provides another example of complexity when considering compensation for loss.

In this case, Reynolds v. M. Sanghera & Sons Trucking Ltd., 2015 BCCA 232, Mr. Reynolds had lost the capacity to perform home

renovations and landscaping work.

This loss is a little bit different from a loss of housekeeping capacity because domestic tasks do not result in any change, over time, in the property itself. By comparison, home renovations and landscaping work result in an improved property.

The defending insurance company pointed to that difference when coming up with an argument that was successful at the trial level, but failed at the Court of Appeal.

They argued that, since his wife was an equal owner of the home and the renovations and installation of an irrigation system in the yard would improve the value of home, compensation for this loss should be reduced by fifty percent.

The Court of Appeal agreed that home and yard work can improve the value of a property but

disagreed that this improvement should result in a reduction of compensation.

The court noted the reality that all home owners would agree with "...such maintenance and improvement work is often undertaken not as a capital investment, but as part of making and maintaining a home..."

In conclusion, the Court of Appeal decided: "The value of this lost benefit should not be discounted just because it is possible that Mr. Reynolds' spouse may also receive an increase in the value of her interest in the property."

These are examples of where complex issues of injury compensation have been resolved by court decisions that will assist other injury victims to achieve fair compensation without the need for a trial.

The reality is that the vast majority of injury claims settle with the "writing being on the wall" of what the court is likely to do available with case law research.

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