

Sit down and plug into the sun

BY DOUG SCHMIDT, THE WINDSOR STAR SEPTEMBER 28, 2012 true



University of Windsor student Abdullah Allawna uses GreenSunRising solar recharging station near the Leddy Library Wednesday.
Photograph by: Nick Brancaccio, The Windsor Star, The Windsor Star

Power hungry visitors to Windsor's waterfront may soon have a free outdoor supply of electricity for their smartphones, laptops, iPads or MP3 players.

Green Sun Rising Inc., a Windsor renewable energy company, is offering the city a free "solar bench" for installation at the waterfront. Capturing energy from the sun and converting it into electricity, it allows users to sit down, plug in and recharge their electric devices.

"Electric wheelchairs can also be charged," company president Klaus Dohring wrote in a recent letter to the city. Council will be getting a staff report recommending approval at next Monday's regular meeting. A solar bench was set up temporarily at this summer's Balloonapalooza festival in the downtown, and it drew a steady stream of power-seekers. The city's first permanent solar bench, donated by Green Sun Rising, was recently installed near the gardens in front of the University of Windsor's Leddy library.

The only donor stipulation is that the city provide a suitable concrete base and that it be located in a high-visibility location in the riverfront park system near the downtown. The Windsor company said its bench and solar mounting system are locally designed and built, has a roof and night lighting and can accommodate four people sitting down.

"Our main goal is to promote solar energy usage in a customer-friendly way," said Dohring, whose company name is attached to the environmentally friendly device.

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