

# Canadian Press

## Prime Minister opens new facility at northern B.C. college

Sat Oct 15 2011  
Section: National general news  
Byline: BY MICHAELA GARSTIN

DAWSON CREEK, B.C. \_ Prime Minister Stephen Harper was reminded of the criticism of his government's environmental track record as he opened an ultra-energy saving building at a northern B.C. college on Saturday.

He presided over the official opening of the new facility at North Lights College that will allow students to conduct research and prepare for careers in the alternative energy sector.

But Harper faced media questions about whether announcements like Saturday's will be enough to satisfy critics who say his government has failed to do enough to fight climate change and curb greenhouse gas emissions.

"We've been very clear that we intend to be, in the future, an energy super power, and a clean energy super power," said Harper at the opening of the facility in Dawson Creek.

"We're making major investments here in Canada to ensure that we will be a major producer of energy power of all kinds."

Canada routinely wins "fossil of the day" awards at international climate conferences and was called out publicly at the Copenhagen conference in 2009 for not setting earlier targets for reducing emissions.

The federal government has vowed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 17 per cent from 2005 levels by 2020, which critics have said is insufficient.

The Centre of Excellence for Clean Energy Technology comes with a nearly \$8-million pricetag paid for by the federal and B.C. governments.

The facility produces all its own energy needs through wind turbine, solar panels, biomass and geo-exchange systems and will accommodate nearly 200 students.

The federal and B.C. governments also joined private sector partners to foot the \$2.5 million bill to refurbish the college's Health Sciences Building.

B.C. Premier Christy Clark was also on hand for Saturday's announcement.

Copyright © 2011 The Canadian Press