

## business

Climate change is a serious issue with serious consequences. These are not only compassionate moral issues, but rather fundamental business issues that if left ignored, will hurt where it counts — the bottom line. On the other hand, companies and investors that seize the opportunities available are likely to be richly rewarded.

— *Mindy Lubber, president of Ceres, an American network of investors and environmental groups, which works with businesses to address sustainability, speaking last fall at the Business of Climate Change Conference in Ottawa.*

## commuting

### HAIL A HYBRID

IF YOU'RE in Alberta, tell your driver to keep the change — the change to a hybrid, that is. Four cabs in Calgary and two in Edmonton are now hybrid-electric vehicles thanks to a \$5,000 incentive from a pilot program. In return for the subsidy, drivers log information about costs, repairs and reliability to demonstrate their practicality as taxis.

Climate Change Central (C3), a partnership of businesses, government and environmental groups in the province, launched Hail a Hybrid last year. With a



typical cab racking up more than 100,000 kilometres a year, it saw the taxi industry as an ideal target for greenhouse gas reductions. Larger cabs could save more than \$5,000 in fuel costs and reduce 12 tonnes of greenhouse gases each year. "They are also a great venue to promote new technology," says John Rilett, a director at C3, noting that the vehicles are marked with logos and tend to attract attention.

## off the grid

### THE REAL SLIM SOLAR

Australian researchers have slimmed down solar cells to beef up their efficiency. By cutting silicon solar panels into thin slivers akin to a loaf of bread, the engineers have exposed more surface area to absorb more energy from the sun. The innovation could cut the production costs of these cells by as much as 60 percent, making solar power cheaper down under than electricity from the grid — a strong incentive for homeowners to go green.

— *Jennifer Eldridge*

Organizers are seeking funding for additional hybrid cabs. "If we switch all vehicles in the taxi industry to hybrids," says Rilett, "the reduction in Calgary alone could be as high as 20,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases annually."

— *Laura D'Amelio*