

Inhabitat's Week of Green: Solar Hourglass and Urban Tornadoes, and The World's Tallest Garden

Japan is the birthplace of high-speed rail, and continues to be a pioneer in train travel. Officials recently unveiled the nation's first magnetic-levitation train that was revealed to the public. The new train, which is based on "L-Zero" technology to reach speeds of up to 311 MPH, can transport passengers from Tokyo to Nagoya in just 40 minutes. Tesla is preparing to reveal something significant this week. Elon Musk tweeted a mysterious image of the project. However, we will have to wait until Thursday to see the complete details. China's Foxconn is best known for making Apple products. However the company is ready to enter the electric vehicle market with a \$15,000 car. And Spanish firm Opbrid hopes to revolutionize public transportation by introducing the development of a system that will recharge the entire electric bus in five to eight minutes in a row.

Copenhagen is one of Europe's most important design capitals and the Danish city is set to soon boast one of the world's most innovative renewable energy sources. Santiago Muros Cortes, an Argentine designer, was awarded the 2014 Land Art Generator Initiative design contest with his idea for a huge solar energy-generating hourglass. It could produce enough energy to power 1,000 Danish homes. Burlington, Vermont is now powered entirely by renewable energy sources. The city of 42,000 people gets its electricity from a mixture of wind, hydro, and a biomass facility. Solar farms are great, but they take up a lot space. This is why the folks at Ciel et Terre just installed the first UK-wide floating solar farm in Berkshire. The array includes 800 photovoltaic solar cells and 200kW of power output. New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio announced plans to install solar panels in 24 public schools by 2016. The solar schools are part of a larger plan to install 100 megawatts of solar power on 300 public buildings over the next decade. And with ski season just a couple months away, snowboard maker Signal just launched an solar snowboard that can charge your devices while you glide down the mountain.

The world's highest vertical gardens are now located in Sydney. It's an incredible sight to behold. Jean Nouvel, an architect, and Patrick Blanc, a French botanist, designed the 550 foot tall building. It features 250 species native Australian flowers and plants. In other green architecture news, North America's biggest green wall is now completed in Vancouver. A stunning time-lapse video showcases the construction of the 10,150 square-foot, double-sided green wall. Urban development is the cause of many environmental changes that range from water pollution to the urban heat island effect. But is it possible for urban design to trigger tornadoes? A Turkish newspaper has published a report that blames Istanbul's rapid urbanization in the recent spate of "freak mini tornadoes". Beehives have served as inspiration to designers, and the UK Pavilion at the 2015 Milan Expo will bring awareness to the plight of vanishing bees through a virtual beehive made of a fine steel mesh and LEDs.

It's October 1st and Halloween is coming up fast -- do you know what you'll be? We have lots of great costumes that you can choose from if you aren't certain what to dress up as. You can take part in the debate between Android and iPhone by dressing as your phone of choice, or you can bring your favorite game to life by dressing up as the Minecraft character,

Tetris blocks or a Rubik's Cube. You can also create your own R2D2 costume. Best of all, most of these costumes can be assembled with cardboard boxes and items that you have lying around your house!