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Project Sunshine Set to Capture Benefits of Solar Technology

OGS, Corrections, and New York Power Authority Team Up on Energy Pilot Program

ALBANY, NY (10/16/2009)(readMedia)-- New York State officials today jointly announced that construction has begun on "Project Sunshine" a pilot demonstration of solar technology jointly developed by the New York State Office of General Services, the Department of Correctional Services, and the New York Power Authority. If successful at the Hudson Valley based site, the project has the potential to grow into a statewide application.

The project, located at the Walkkill Correctional Facility, near New Paltz (Ulster County) seeks to harness the power of the sun to improve energy efficiency and meet the hot water needs of the 608-bed, medium security men's prison.

Commissioner Egan said: "Project Sunshine is a break-through because it combines the state's ability to design, construct, and replicate the use of sustainable technology in state facilities and is a component of Governor Paterson's commitment to policies that consider the environment in state operations.

"The added bonus occurs when leveraging the state's purchasing power to aggregate the procurement of solar thermal and photovoltaic technologies," Commissioner Egan, the state's chief procurement officer, added. "If successful at correction facilities, Project Sunshine could be easily replicated on college campuses, hospitals, and at other state facilities."

Department of Corrections Commissioner Brian Fischer said: "Housing nearly 60,000 inmates at 68 correctional facilities across the State is an energy-intensive business. We hope to replicate the Walkkill project at many more of our correctional facilities, saving taxpayers money and reducing both pollution and our dependence on foreign oil by taking advantage of the ultimate renewable fuel."

Said Richard M. Kessel, Chief Executive Officer the New York Power Authority: "The New York Power Authority is proud to provide a \$250,000 grant to support this clean energy project. The development of solar thermal technologies such as this one advances Governor Paterson's executive order to reduce current greenhouse gas emissions within the state by 80 percent by the year 2050."

The project, located on the perimeter of the 48-acre facility, consists of 48 eight foot long tubes, constructed of borosilicate glass. The product was developed and designed by Silicon Solar, a 10-year-old company, based in of Bainbridge (Chenango County). A glycol/water solution is circulated through the durable, closed-loop system, and is capable of preheating vast volumes of water used for showers, laundry, and kitchen facilities. The project is scheduled to be fully operational within 90 days, is expected to reduce the facility's current oil consumption by 160,000 gallons, and requires minimal annual maintenance.

The project being funded in part by a \$250,000 Renewable Energy Program grant from the New York Power Authority.

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