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CSR News

Mayberry Goes Solar

O2Energies unveils 1.2 Megawatt Solar Farm

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MOUNT AIRY, N.C., Oct. 10 /CSRwire/ - Mount Airy, N.C., the birthplace of Andy Griffith and the basis for his popular show's town "Mayberry," has gone solar.

"Tens of thousands of people visit Mount Airy each year in search of a simpler time and place, but this is a city that is preserving the best of its past, while embracing its future," said Olee Joel Olsen, managing director at O2 Energies. "The six-acre solar farm opening today will generate clean energy for the residents and businesses of Mount Airy for generations to come."

O2 Energies, Inc. announced today it has commissioned Mayberry Solar, a 1.2 megawatt solar power plant, which will be Surry County's first large scale solar installation. The six-acre solar power plant will generate enough power to offset the electricity usage of hundreds of average homes.

"O2 Energies' Mayberry Solar Farm is a major achievement in the city's effort to bring renewable energy projects to our local economy, and it shows that our community intends to compete and lead in the implementation of this emerging technology," said Mount Airy Community Development Officer Martin Collins.

The Mayberry Solar Farm is located only three miles from Mount Airy's historic Main Street, on six acres of buffer land surrounding the municipal wastewater treatment plant.

Emphasis on creating work for the local community has boosted local support immensely.

"Thanks to the Mayberry Solar Farm project, 15 to 20 local businesses have already been involved with some phase of construction," said Chamber President Betty Ann Collins. "We are confident that the Mayberry Solar Farm will become a positive tool in future economic development plans and provide the platform with additional growth in the renewable energy industry in our city."

O2 Energies worked with Surrey Bank & Trust to provide loan financing for the multimillion dollar project. The project created work for more than 100 individuals with Mount Airy contractors including, Sowers Construction, Ken Horton Logging and Lewis Cox Surveying.

North Carolina-based Strata Solar provided engineering, procurement and construction services. "We are excited to provide work opportunities for skilled laborers in the community," said John Morrison, chief operating officer at Strata. "Strata and O2 Energies share a common goal to create local economic development."

Solar module manufacturer REC will supply more than 5000 Peak Energy 235W modules for the fixed tilt Mayberry Solar power system. “We are proud to have our high-efficiency, REC Peak Energy modules included in the Mayberry Solar Farm,” said Marius Kroksjø, REC’s Managing Director Americas. “We applaud O2 Energies’ commitment to use sustainable REC solar modules in this system, reducing the carbon footprint of installing solar from the very start of the manufacturing process. In addition, using REC Group products helps to support over 800 solar jobs in the US.”

SMA Solar Technology AG, the world's largest manufacturer of solar inverters, will supply two Sunny Central 500HE-US (500 kW) inverters assembled at its Denver factory.

Electricities of North Carolina and Duke Energy will buy the renewable energy credits and electricity generated from Mayberry Solar.

In addition to providing Mount Airy residents with clean energy and work opportunities, locals and visitors to the area will have the opportunity to visit the farm and learn about solar energy.

About O2 Energies, Inc.

O2 Energies, headquartered near Charlotte, NC, develops turn-key, ground-mounted solar photovoltaic systems. The team at O2 leverages strong relationships in the solar manufacturing industry, technical expertise from more than 70 project installations, and an in-depth understanding of project ownership, tax structuring and state energy policy. O2 owns and operates its own systems, as well as provides development and consulting services for corporate and utility clients who wish to invest in solar. Visit www.o2energies.com for more information.

About Strata Solar LLC

Strata Solar LLC is an international provider of complete solar energy systems and installations. In addition to turnkey services for the complete design, construction and installation of residential and commercial photovoltaic and solar thermal systems, Strata Solar provides a full array of engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) services, separately, as needed, to solar developers and companies interested in clean, renewable energy. Headquartered in its LEED Silver certified office and showroom in Chapel Hill and expansive warehouse nearby, Strata Solar also has operations in Ontario, Canada and San Francisco, California. Visit www.stratasolar.com for more information.

About REC

REC is a leading vertically integrated player in the solar energy industry. Ranked among the world's largest producers of polysilicon and wafers for solar applications and a rapidly growing manufacturer of solar cells and modules, REC also engages in project development activities in selected PV segments. Founded in Norway in 1996, REC is an international solar company employing about 4,000 people worldwide with revenues approximately \$2.7 billion in 2010. Visit www.recgroup.com to learn more about REC.

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