



REI Extends Commitment to Renewable Energy with Solar Power Investment

Solar Electric Installations Planned for Retail Locations in California, Oregon and Texas

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SEATTLE (Business Wire) Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI), a national retail cooperative providing quality outdoor gear and clothing, today announced plans to retrofit more than 10 percent of its stores with solar electric technology in 2008. Aligned with the co-op's environmental priorities, REI's commitment represents one of the largest solar investments for a specialty retailer in the country.

Photovoltaic solar panels can self-generate up to 35 percent of a store's energy needs. REI's solar investment will generate an estimated 1.1 million kilowatt hours of electricity, enough to power 117 homes for one year and save approximately 880 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency).

The co-op has selected 11 stores to be retrofitted with solar electric systems in 2008. The seven locations in California include Arcadia, Folsom, Sacramento, San Carlos, San Diego, San Francisco and Santa Rosa. Additional stores include three in Oregon -- Clackamas, Hillsboro and Tualatin -- and the co-op's second prototype store in Round Rock, Texas, which was piloted in Boulder, Colo. and aims to test retail design and green building concepts. These locations will serve as a foundation for REI to determine how it approaches solar installations in the future.

"We are continuously looking for ways to make the design, construction and operation of our buildings more sustainable," said Brian Unmacht, REI's executive vice president of Sales, Service, Store Development and Logistics. "This investment in solar technology will deliver both financial and environmental benefits, helping to contribute to the long-term strength of the co-op and support our goal to reduce our carbon footprint."

Consulting with Blue Oak Energy, a solar electric engineering firm, the store locations were selected based on a variety of criteria, including available state incentives and utility rebates, current cost of electricity, and size and current condition of the store's roof. The solar panels for the REI stores in California will be installed by Offset Electric, the installation subsidiary of Blue Oak Energy, while the Oregon locations will be retrofitted by Christenson Electric, Inc., a large privately held electrical contractor based in Portland, Ore.

"REI understands that enjoying and protecting the natural environment go hand-in-hand," said Tobin Booth, president of Blue Oak Energy. "We are honored to be part of this historic project to power REI retail stores with clean, renewable solar energy."

"It is naturally fitting that REI, whose main focus is promoting the great outdoors, would make use of renewable resources to reduce their impact on the environment and energize their stores," said Mark Walter, president of Christenson Electric, Inc. "Christenson is proud to be involved with REI's solar projects, along with our photovoltaic designer, EI Solutions."

REI is dedicated to green building design to lower its impacts on the environment, reduce operating costs and enhance the retail experience for its customers and employees. To accomplish this, the company has chosen to focus on areas such as increasing water conservation, waste recycling, energy efficiency and indoor air quality in its locations.

The co-op has committed to utilizing renewable power sources wherever possible. REI currently purchases approximately 20 percent of its electricity from green sources, including wind and biomass, and continues to collaborate with utility companies in developing additional options available in the market.

Announced in May 2006, REI's prototype initiative was developed to test retail design and green building concepts, and help the company make decisions on how it will approach store design and construction in the future. The company will analyze the Boulder and Round Rock locations extensively prior to opening a third prototype store currently targeted for 2010.

REI first announced formal strategies to reduce the company's carbon footprint in its 2006 stewardship report. For additional information on the co-op's social and environmental practices, including its inventory of greenhouse gas emissions, visit the 2007 stewardship report available online at www.rei.com/stewardship.

About REI

REI is a national outdoor retail co-op dedicated to inspiring, educating and outfitting its members and the community for a lifetime of outdoor adventure and stewardship. Founded in 1938 by a group of Pacific Northwest mountaineers seeking quality equipment, REI operates retail stores nationwide, two online stores -- www.rei.com and www.REI-OUTLET.com -- and an adventure travel company, REI Adventures. REI offers products from all of the top brands for camping, climbing, cycling, fitness, hiking, paddling, snow sports and travel, including its own line of award-winning outdoor gear and apparel. While anyone may join or shop at REI, members pay a one-time \$20 fee and receive a share in the company's profits through an annual member refund based on their purchases. As an active supporter of the communities in which it does business, REI is committed to promoting environmental stewardship and increasing access to outdoor recreation through education, volunteerism, gear donations and financial contributions.

About Blue Oak Energy

Blue Oak Energy is a design, engineering and planning firm for the solar electric industry. The company is responsible for engineering activities associated with some of the largest and most prominent North American solar electric projects. Blue Oak Energy is a member of the 1% For the Planet and a percentage of the company's annual earnings are donated to environmental organizations. Their offices are located in Davis, California. For more information, please visit www.blueoakenergy.com. Offset Electric is a branch of Blue Oak Energy which focuses on installation of solar electric systems.

REI Public Affairs
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