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The Municipal Government of Norwich VT becomes 100% Solar

One of the First Municipalities in the U.S. to run on 100% Solar Energy

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Norwich, VT – April 20, 2015 – Solaflect Energy and the Town of Norwich announced today that the municipal government electricity is now 100% solar energy. The Town Hall, police and fire station, public works facilities, and the speed limit signs throughout the Town are now all powered by solar energy.

Neil Fulton, the Town Manager of Norwich, proclaimed “the Town is very pleased to lead the way in adopting solar energy and energy efficiency. More than 6% of the households in the Town have gone solar, and the Town is happy to follow their lead in working towards a cleaner future for our children and grand-children. We are also excited to be saving 10% on the Town’s electric bill. We sincerely hope that other communities will follow our example.”

Solaflect Energy is headquartered in Norwich, and has developed an innovative Suspension PV Tracker that reduces steel usage by nearly 75% compared to traditional designs. This efficiency has enabled the project to meet the financial goals of all parties involved. Bill Bender, President of Solaflect, noted that “we are in an amazing industry and rapidly becoming the world’s cleanest and cheapest source of energy. There is 50 times as much solar in the world as a decade ago, and solar has gone from a cottage industry to having an installed base worth hundreds of *billions* of dollars. There is no sign of a slowdown in technology development, and we are proud to be part of the clean future that solar is creating.”

Gabrielle Stebbins, Executive Director of Renewable Energy Vermont, adds that “The Town of Norwich’s success in becoming Vermont’s first 100% solar powered municipality exemplifies the many benefits of local, renewable energy. This community-supported project not only helps reduce the Town energy bills, it also helps grow local solar businesses while securing clean, free energy for decades to come. It’s a great representation of what makes Vermont unique. Projects like these require collaboration and coordination - from smart energy legislation and regulation to local community support and local business know-how.” Dorothy Schnure, Corporate Spokesperson at Green Mountain Power, one of the nation’s most solar friendly investor owned utilities, says that “we are so pleased to see how communities are embracing renewable energy and helping to move us to a cleaner, cost effective and more reliable future.”

Thus far, only two other municipalities in the U.S. have been identified as legally 100% solar. “We certainly hope there are more, but we haven’t found them yet” states Bender. Although some communities host large

solar arrays and get cheap electricity, if the Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) are sold to third parties, the municipality cannot legally claim to be renewable. In the case of Norwich, the RECs are retired.

Solaflect has won two highly competitive awards from the U.S. Department of Energy that have contributed to their innovative Suspension technology. By tracking the sun all day, 40% more energy can be delivered to the Town from the same PV equipment. Unlike fixed mount PV, the Tracker is typically at full power in late summer afternoons when the New England grid most needs additional power from solar.

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Note: Photos are available upon request.