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SouthPoint Solar installs 364 solar panels on NorthStar Construction Services' 20,400 s/f headquarters

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NorthStar Construction Services recently installed more than 360 solar panels on the roof of its 20,400 s/f headquarters. NorthStar works very hard to reduce its carbon footprint and to use products manufactured in the U.S. As part of that effort NorthStar is preparing to throw the switch to their new solar system which will produce enough electricity to power the company's entire operations.

"In May of 2011 we were very excited to move into an existing facility in Shirley which fit our needs and allowed room for growth. Since then, we have worked hard at making the facility sustainable and being a good neighbor, we are very environmentally conscious" said John LaStella, president and founder of NorthStar. "This is the second time we have installed solar panels on a facility. Our previous solar installation in Leominster provided 30% of our electricity and proved to be efficient and a good return on investment. With those results deciding to install solar panels on our new location was easy and the size of this system will provide 100% of our energy needs."

"In concert with the solar panels we have taken several operational steps to reduce our carbon footprint. We had an energy audit conducted which resulted in changing the facility's lighting with new light bulbs and motion sensor switches. We also installed a new high efficiency HVAC system; we participate in the Energy Star Program; we recycle all waste including as much as possible from job sites; and we operate our own fueling station to better manage fuel consumption and costs," said John LaStella.

"In preparation for this solar system NorthStar installed a Firestone 090 EPDM fully adhered roofing system. When we were ready for the solar panels we purchased them from Firestone. This combination of roofing materials and solar panels can become part of the Platinum 30 year roof system warranty provided by Firestone, this is an important protection" said John Lastella.

The company worked with SouthPoint Solar, a solar energy contractor. Mike LaStella, president of SouthPoint said the overall system will produce 92.8 kilowatts DC and the solar panels cover 75% of the roof area.

SouthPoint installed 364 panels each one with a capacity of 255 watts manufactured from the metro Atlanta based company, Suniva. Suniva manufactures high-efficiency crystalline silicon solar cells and high powered Buy America compliant solar modules. The inverters used to tie the system into the power grid are Solectria PVI 82kW manufactured by Solectria Renewables, LLC.

All inverters are manufactured in the USA, based in near by Lawrence.

"The estimated annual production for this system is 103,000 kilowatt hours, which will cover NorthStar's annual energy usage, and possibly more. With the cost of electricity at about 16 cents per kilowatt, that is over \$16,500 of generated electricity per year. The pay back on this system will be 4 years which includes the full roof replacement," said Mike LaStella.

