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Company of the Month: Solect Energy Development can help determine if solar makes sense for your business

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The solar market in Massachusetts is going strong, and according to a recent report from consultancy Ernst & Young, the state is the second-most attractive in the nation for long-term solar growth because of its overall commitment to renewable energy solutions. Attracted by very compelling financial incentives from the state and federal governments, many Massachusetts property owners are turning to solar energy to offset a portion of - and in some cases all - of their electricity costs.

Solar makes sense for a wide variety of property owners, businesses, and other organizations. Solect Energy Development, LLC, a full-service solar photovoltaic (PV) project developer, has expertise and experience working with several of these types of organizations to deploy solar PV energy solutions.

Solect, founded in 2009 by three local Hopkinton residents - Ken Driscoll, James Dumas and Craig Huntley - is known for its experience and knowledge in each stage of the solar process. Solect partners with its customers, walking them first through a feasibility assessment to determine how beneficial solar would be on the property, and then managing financial and incentive modeling, financing options, the regulatory process, design and engineering of the system, overall project installation, and on-going management and maintenance. The company has more than 7 megawatts (MW) of systems installed or under contract in New England.

Capital Group Properties, a property management firm headquartered in Southborough, Mass., has worked with Solect on two projects to date: in Acton, Mass., Solect deployed a 140 kilowatt (KW) solar PV system at 100 Discovery Way and in Southborough, Mass., Solect is developing a 1 MW land-based solar PV solution. This system, at more than 4,000 panels across 4 acres, will be the largest system of its kind in the MetroWest area. Capital intends to cover 100% of the local common area electric usage at its complex and the excess generation will be used to satisfy the common area electrical costs at the company's other buildings in town via Net Metering, an approved state process. Bill Depietri and Doug Freeman, principal owners of the systems, have made conserving energy and protecting the environment guiding principles in their building practices.

Another customer of Solect's, Fore Kicks, which owns two indoor/outdoor multi-use sporting complexes in Marlborough and Norfolk, Mass., is a great example of a property owner marrying business acumen and environmental consciousness. Tom Teager, owner of Fore Kicks, thinks green in every decision about his facilities, and chose Solect to design and deploy solar PV systems for his facilities as part of his strategy to make the complexes as environmentally friendly as possible.

In Fore Kicks' 130,000 s/f facility in Marlborough, Solect is deploying a 312 KW solar PV system. In Norfolk, a 282 KW system is being installed atop the 85,000 s/f facility. The two systems will power

close to 100% of Fore Kicks annual energy consumption.

Another local project, Lumber Street Auto Repair, shows how a small business can benefit from solar. The businesses' vehicle lifts, compressors and other energy-hungry repair equipment generate high electricity bills, and owner Phil Harper was seeking a way to reduce costs while better serving the environment. The 30 KW system from Solect will offset more than 80% of the business' electricity bills. "We understood pretty quickly that solar was a terrific option for us because of the southern exposure of our roof, but Solect helped make it real for us by creating a strong business case for solar," Harper said.

Does solar make sense for your business? Solect can help you determine if it does.

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