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Press Release

RMLD explores community shared solar project in Reading

Reading, MA, April 1, 2015 - Reading Municipal Light Department (RMLD) is in the early stages of exploring a community shared solar (CSS) project on a town-owned site in Reading. Solar electric generation (photovoltaic or PV) systems have been booming in Massachusetts in recent years. However, to date, only homeowners with optimally sited roofs and sufficient financial resources could benefit from these clean renewable energy solutions. CSS will give all RMLD ratepayers the option to participate in the solar revolution by building one large *community* solar array and selling *solar shares* to residents who would then benefit from the clean, green output from the system. Once this first site is established in Reading, it could then be used as a model for additional solar arrays in RMLD's other served towns -- North Reading, Wilmington and Lynnfield.

A working group comprised of RMLD staff, community planning officials and representatives from the Reading Climate Advisory Committee (RCAC) has been formed and will meet over the next few

months to develop the initial plans, detailing how a CSS project could work in Reading and to review potential municipal sites.

“We are working closely with Town of Reading officials and the RCAC to evaluate municipal sites and to establish the specifics of how the project would be financed, constructed and operated. The Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) has established CSS guidelines which will provide a solid foundation upon which our specific program can be built,” said RMLD’s Integrated Resources Engineer Tom Ollila.

In 2006, RMLD created the Green Choice Program for customers who wanted to support renewable energy. In response to customer demand, RMLD made renewable energy a strategic and integral part of its wholesale power supply portfolio. A pilot CSS project would be the next phase along this renewable energy path and will allow people who don’t have rooftops suited for solar panels to invest in and reap the rewards of solar PV systems which happen to be located someplace else in their community.

“RMLD values our close ties with our customers and we will continue to share information on current issues and trends in the utility industry,” said Ollila. “We welcome public input on the planned CSS project.”

RMLD’s Integrated Resources Department maintains the cost-effective reliability and capacity of the RMLD electric system by working with customers to reduce peak demand, incentivize energy efficiency upgrades and coordinate onsite generation, including renewable energy sources like solar.

For more information or if you have questions about the CSS project, please contact us at energyrmlld@rmlld.com or 781-942-6426.”