

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



PRESS CONTACT

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Southwest Florida Solar Energy Retrofit Initiative

FORT MYERS, FLORIDA (November 30, 2009) - The Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council (SWFRPC) is seeking vendors interested in participating in a Solar Energy Retrofit Initiative to install solar water heaters in homes and businesses in Southwest Florida. SWFRPC, on behalf of the Counties and Cities within its six county service area is submitting an application for grant funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Vendors are needed to manufacture and/or supply equipment, to install and maintain the equipment, provide billing services, and to provide financing. Vendors with other skills that could be applicable to the project are also encouraged to come forward.

Vendors interested in participating in the program are requested to complete a questionnaire at www.SolarSWF.com, by clicking on the "Interested Vendors" link. A response by December 8, 2009 is requested. The questionnaire will gather contact information and areas of interest for potential vendors. It is anticipated, but not certain, that qualification criteria for vendors will be established if the grant is obtained, and all qualified vendors will be able to participate in the program. SWFRPC serves Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, Lee, and Sarasota Counties as well as the incorporated cities and towns within these counties.

Grant funds are being sought for the Southwest Florida Solar Energy Retrofit Initiative. The purpose of the initiative is to take advantage of solar energy for the region's water heating needs. The initiative will involve local governmental agencies as well as private sector manufacturing, installation, and financing. The primary purpose of the program is to retrofit large numbers of homes with solar hot water heaters, however some commercial buildings may also be eligible. Installation of solar water heaters results in significant savings on utility bills; however the relatively high initial cost is a barrier to installation of these systems. This program, if grant proceeds are received, would result in the cost being repaid at an amount that would result in no increase in monthly cost to property owners when the utility savings are factored in. Once system costs are repaid, the property owner would continue to enjoy the reduced utility costs.

SWFRPC is also seeking homeowners and other property owners that would be potentially interested in obtaining a solar hot water system under this type of program. Interested persons are requested to complete a very brief questionnaire at www.SolarSWF.com by clicking on the "Interested Property Owners" link.

It should be noted that many of the programs specific details are still under development. As more program specifics are known, they will be posted on the website, www.SolarSWF.com.

Interested parties are requested to complete the questionnaire by Tuesday, December 8, 2009. Vendors and property owners may instead send a letter to the SWFRPC, c/o Wilbur Smith Associates, 1532 Jackson Street, Fort Myers, FL 33901 to indicate interest in the program.

For more information contact Chris Swenson at 239-936-9400.