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## OER, Partners Build on Efforts to Grow RI's Clean Energy Economy

*Expand program to help small businesses, homeowners  
invest in solar, conserve energy, and save money*

Providence, R.I., – The Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources (OER), in partnership with Commerce RI and Smartpower, announced today the Solarize Rhode Island Program is now open to businesses and homeowners in Providence, Warren, and Bristol. The program, now in its third year, has assisted nearly 400 local property owners transition to solar power and benefit from the related energy and cost savings.

“Rhode Island continues to make strides in growing its clean energy economy and creating jobs,” said Governor Gina Raimondo. “The economic and environmental benefits are significant, and we must continue to work together to achieve a sustainable energy future for our state. The continued success of the Solarize Rhode Island program is a testament to the great work of all partners involved and reinforces Rhode Islanders’ desire to play their part in moving our state forward and ensuring a healthier environment for our children. I’m pleased to see this program building on the state’s efforts to lead by example in energy efficiency and clean energy.”

As part of her efforts to reduce the effects of climate change and transition to a cleaner, low-carbon energy economy, Governor Raimondo signed the *Lead By Example in Energy Efficiency and Clean Energy* Executive Order in December 2015, tasking state agencies with reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions across state government. As part of a broader statewide effort to promote renewable energy, it also requires government to procure 100 percent of its electricity from renewable sources by 2025.

“Rhode Island is on the cusp of becoming one of the hottest solar markets in the country,” said Commissioner Gold. “Solarize Rhode Island is another tool in our belt that is increasing awareness of the many economic, energy, and environmental benefits associated with solar energy; the program is creating jobs, reducing consumer energy costs, and shrinking our carbon footprint.”

Through Solarize Rhode Island, the state is working with local communities to promote adoption of residential and commercial renewable energy systems and create clean energy jobs; to date, 10 communities have participated in the program which offers funding assistance to property owners to make the transition to solar more affordable. Already, the clean energy economy in Rhode Island supports nearly 10,000 jobs and is expected to add 1,600 over the next year. Rhode Island is now ranked the fourth most energy efficient state in the nation, according to the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy.

“The Solarize Rhode Island program grows each year as more communities reinforce our energy cost reduction efforts,” said Rhode Island Commerce Corporation President Darin Early. “As we push to increase Rhode Island’s presence on the regional, national and international maps, our dedication to keeping energy costs low and providing a favorable business and residential climate becomes even more crucial. This program accomplishes that while fostering our green and technology economic sectors, which have been highlighted as focus points for us moving forward.”

“If you’ve ever thought of going solar, now’s the time!” said Brian F. Keane, President of SmartPower. “What’s happening here in Rhode Island is fast becoming a model for the entire country. The residents and small business owners all over this state are showing how easy – and smart – it is to go solar. Let’s Solarize!”

As part of the Solarize Rhode Island Spring Campaign, participating communities will partner with qualified installers to offer discounted rates and education to property owners. The program is available to businesses and homeowners in Providence, Bristol, and Warren now through June 26. Solar 101 events will be scheduled in each community this spring; residents can sign up for a free, solar assessment of their property at the event.

"Going solar is a great option for property owners to make the switch to clean, affordable renewable energy," said Providence Mayor Jorge Elorza. "Solarize Rhode Island will help drive down costs and support the growing solar industry in Providence."

“Bristol is very excited about the opportunity to participate in the Solarize Rhode Island program since it supports the Town’s goal of increasing the use of renewable energy,” said Bristol Town Administrator Antonio “Tony” A. Teixeira. “This program will directly help the residential and commercial property owners in Bristol by giving them easier access to renewable solar energy for their buildings.”

“The Town of Warren is pleased with this opportunity to participate in Solarize Rhode Island,” said Warren Town Council President Joseph A. DePasquale. “We look forward to helping our residents and property owners take advantage of the savings and opportunities associated with the program and to continue doing our part to promote clean and renewable energy.”

For more information and/or to register, visit the SolarFlair and Direct Energy Solar booths at the [Rhode Island Home Show](#) this weekend or visit [www.solarizeri.com](http://www.solarizeri.com).