



Super Earth and Girl Scouts Flip the Switch

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Girl Scouts and Green Mountain Energy Company Unveil New Solar Array
Dedication held today for state's first Girl Scout building to be powered by solar energy

HOUSTON (Sept. 12, 2009) – Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council's (GSSJC's) office building is a lot greener now that it is being powered partly by solar energy, thanks to Austin-based Green Mountain Energy Company (Green Mountain). GSSJC's roof now boasts a new solar array system which will help reduce its carbon footprint and energy costs, while at the same time providing an educational component for girls. Green Mountain donated the 10.08 kilowatt (kW) photovoltaic (PV) solar- panel system.

Green Mountain's Super Earth mascot; Green Mountain's Senior Vice President, Paul Markovich; Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council Board Chair, Mary McIntire; Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council President Mary Vitek; Nicole Robinson, Director of the City of Houston Digital Inclusion Project; Amie Frances of Houston Council Member Jarvis Johnson's office; members of the community; and Girl Scouts of all ages were on hand today to officially "flip the ceremonial switch" of the solar array. GSSJC is located at 3110 Southwest Freeway in Houston.

The solar installation is the first of its kind in Texas for a Girl Scout Council building. The Green Mountain Energy[®] Solar at Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council is 2,068 square feet and was built with 56 solar panels that convert sunlight into pollution-free electricity. It is estimated that the solar array will provide the organization \$300,000 in electricity savings over its 30-year lifetime.

"Green Mountain Energy Company is proud to partner with the Girl Scouts, an organization that not only represents leadership and character, but is also deeply committed to the environment and the benefits of renewable energy," said Paul Markovich, senior vice president of Residential Services, Green Mountain Energy Company. "Donating solar systems like this helps Green Mountain give back to the Houston community where our customers and employees live, work, play, and attend school, while supporting our mission to change the way power is made."

Green Mountain funded the new GSSJC solar array through its Big Texas Sun Club[®], a unique program in which Green Mountain's Texas customers can choose to support solar energy installations in Texas by paying an additional \$5 on their monthly- electric bill (for information, visit www.bigtexassunclub.com). This is the 19th solar project built in Texas, and the sixth one in Houston, thanks to the *Big Texas Sun Club*. With this installation, Green Mountain will be responsible for creating nearly 181kW of new solar energy capacity in Texas since 2002.

"Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council is thrilled to partner with Green Mountain to set an example for others and demonstrate our commitment to being good stewards of the environment," said Mary Vitek, GSSJC president. "This array will allow us to reduce our carbon footprint, but also teach girls the importance of conserving the environment and working together to tackle a real issue. The impact will be felt for years to come."

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The array is expected to produce more than 19,000 kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity a year and will reduce nearly 27,000 pounds of carbon dioxide annually. This is equivalent to not driving nearly 30,000 miles, or planting about 1,600 trees.

The solar array will help educate Girl Scouts and visitors about the benefits of solar energy. A sign about the benefits of renewable and solar energy will be displayed in the lobby of the GSSJC building and a monitoring web site will also be linked to the array and display real-time energy output data.

The solar panels were installed by Houston-based Standard Renewable Energy (SRE). This was SRE's 9th solar array installation for Green Mountain and the *Big Texas Sun Club*.

Other GSSJC Environmental Activities

During today's event, GSSJC also dedicated its new reflective roof. The energy efficient overlay will help GSSJC lower cooling costs by 20 percent. Cost savings will help supplement and grow existing environmental, nature, science, technology, engineering, and math programs for girls. The reflective roof project was made possible by Shell Oil Company, El Paso Corporation, Ed Rachal Foundation and Madison Charitable Foundation.

Additionally, GSSJC was selected as one of 10 councils nationally to pilot the Forever Green Project– a troop -based community action project on greening local schools and communities. Funded by Girl Scouts of the USA, this project encourages girls to complete green assessments and then implement green projects in their local communities. During today's event, GSSJC recognized green projects that are girl-led, demonstrating the power of girls working collectively and taking action on an important social issue.

About Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council

Girl Scouts is the premier leadership organization for girls. Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. Chartered by GSUSA to provide Girl Scouting locally, Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council is one of the largest Girl Scout councils in the country serving more than 65,000 girl members and 17,000 adults in 26 southeast Texas counties. For more information call 1-800-392-4340 or visit www.gssjc.org.

About Green Mountain Energy Company

Green Mountain, the nation's leading provider of cleaner energy and carbon offset solutions, was founded in 1997 "to change the way power is made." The company is the longest serving green power marketer in the U.S. Green Mountain offers consumers and businesses the choice of cleaner electricity products from renewable sources, such as wind and water, and carbon offset products. Green Mountain customers have collectively helped avoid over 4.9 million tons of CO₂ emissions. For more information, visit GreenMountain.com.

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