

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Grand Strand Solar Station dedicated in Myrtle Beach** State's largest solar project partners Santee Cooper, South Carolina Energy Office

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. – Officials with Santee Cooper and the South Carolina Energy Office today dedicated the Grand Strand Solar Station, officially launching the state's largest solar power installation and the newest facility in Santee Cooper's Green Power generating fleet.

The Grand Strand Solar Station has a rated capacity of 311 kilowatts generated by 1,325 solar panels. The panels are mounted on rooftops and an adjacent field at Santee Cooper's warehouse facilities on Mr. Joe White Avenue (10<sup>th</sup> Avenue North) in Myrtle Beach.

The station significantly increases Santee Cooper's solar generation and represents a 35 percent increase in total solar capacity for South Carolina.

The \$1.3-million project is unique because of its size, and also because of its funding. Solar power is more expensive than traditional generation, and Santee Cooper secured a \$475,000 grant administered by the South Carolina Energy Office to pay part of the cost; the grant was funded through the U.S. Department of Energy as part of 2009's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Santee Cooper Green Power revenues, provided by customers who voluntarily purchase Santee Cooper Green Power, provided another \$500,000, with the balance coming from the utility's capital budget.

"This Grand Strand Solar Station is a pioneering project for Myrtle Beach and the entire state, in terms of scope and the way it was funded, and I'm proud of Santee Cooper's role in bringing it online," said Lonnie Carter, Santee Cooper president and CEO. "Santee Cooper is implementing renewable generation that makes sense for our customers from a cost and reliability standpoint. We wouldn't be celebrating this station without the South Carolina Energy Office, and I thank them for their support."

Ashlie Lancaster, director of the South Carolina Energy Office, said: "We are proud to partner with Santee Cooper and applaud their efforts to incorporate renewables into the grid and to educate the community about energy sources such as solar power. The SC Energy Office is committed to growing our local energy economy, and we are delighted that Santee Cooper's recent accomplishments contribute to this goal."

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The Grand Strand Solar Station was installed by Sunstore Solar Energy Solutions and includes a pull-off area and signage to accommodate visitors who want to learn more about solar power. The solar panels are designed to withstand winds of 130 miles per hour and one-inch hail at 52 mph. The Grand Strand Solar Station will avoid more than 14.8 million pounds of greenhouse gas emissions over the life of the panels.

Santee Cooper has 184 megawatts of renewable energy online or under contract, including 28 MWs of Green Power it generates through landfill biogas, wind and solar resources. Santee Cooper Green Power is certified by Green-e to meet stringent environmental standards. Santee Cooper sells its Green Power to customers at a premium of \$3 per 100 kilowatt-hours, and that money is reinvested in new renewable generation like the Grand Strand Solar Station.

The South Carolina Energy Office (SCEO) provides a broad range of resources designed to help citizens, businesses and public entities save energy and money. In recent years, the SCEO has helped save South Carolina over \$250 million through public and private energy-saving measures and new energy technologies. The SCEO is a unit of the South Carolina Budget and Control Board. Additional information can be found at [www.energy.sc.gov](http://www.energy.sc.gov).

Santee Cooper is South Carolina's state-owned electric and water utility, and the state's largest power producer. The ultimate source of electricity for 2 million South Carolinians, Santee Cooper is dedicated to being the state's leading resource for improving the quality of life for the people of South Carolina. For more information, visit [www.santecooper.com](http://www.santecooper.com).