



Department of Public Works
Engineering Division
Robert F. Phillips, P.E., City Engineer

City-County Building, Room 115
210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard
Madison, Wisconsin 53703
Phone: (608) 266-4751
Fax: (608) 264-9275
engineering@cityofmadison.com
www.cityofmadison.com/engineering

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GreenPower Program installs 12th solar array in City, Mayor ‘flips the switch’

The City’s newest solar array is collecting energy after Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway “flipped the switch” on the array’s inverter, Aug. 23, 2019, during a press conference at Goodman Maintenance Facility.

The City’s Engineering Division GreenPower Program trainees and electricians installed the solar inverters and arrays, which will produce enough power equivalent to powering twelve homes, 24/7, for an entire year, just showing how impactful and powerful the project is from a sustainability perspective.

During the press conference, GreenPower Trainee Sarah Burns, who helped install the Goodman arrays, shared her experience on how the program has impacted her future career and interest in solar technology. Burns is an undergraduate student studying industrial engineering.

“I’ve learned a lot in this trainee program with the City,” Burns said. “This project and being a part of this team has really reinforced my hopes and efforts and dreams to continue to work on sustainability. I love that the City has so much passion and our Mayor has so much passion for seeing new efforts and money going to GreenPower and sustainability in the City.”

The GreenPower Program is in its fourth year. GreenPower is a solar job training pilot program aimed at preparing participants for employment opportunities in the rapidly growing solar energy industry.

“I just really love the GreenPower Program,” Mayor Rhodes-Conway said. “We are teaching folks who are interested in careers, engineering, and electrical engineering, solar and renewable energy or even more broadly in the engineering fields, that we’re helping prepare folks for those careers, and they’re getting well trained and learning safe practices.”

The 9-month GreenPower program was designed to provide classroom training in basic photovoltaics (PV) and safety along with on-the-job training performing installation of PV systems at various City facilities, like Goodman Maintenance Facility.

“I want to really applaud our City Engineering Division, and particularly Master Electrician Matt Parks, for their leadership in this program, to make sure when we talk about good jobs and clean energy that we are actually living that here at the City,” Mayor Rhodes-Conway said.

This project is the 12th solar array the GreenPower program has installed, but this project is the 23rd City building in Madison with solar, according to Focus on Energy Advisor Joel Roltgen. The Goodman solar project will provide roughly 35 percent of the building’s electricity consumption.

“I love that we’re offsetting millions of tons of carbon dioxide through our renewable energy efforts,” Mayor Rhodes-Conway said.

Focus on Energy also presented an incentive check of \$11,250 to the City to go toward the project. In the last year, Madison has saved 4 million kilowatt hours of electricity with solar projects.

“I think it’s important for us to push the envelope as far as we can with renewable energy to meet our goals and protect our city and the world from climate change,” Mayor Rhodes-Conway said.

Contacts:

Hannah Mohelnitzky, City of Madison Engineering Division

608-242-6003

hmohelnitzky@cityofmadison.com

Katie Crawley, City of Madison Mayor’s Office

608-266-4611

Kcrawley@cityofmadison.com

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