

# “ E ” NEWS

## Local Solar Company Gains Certification

### Local Solar Thermal Manufacturer Awarded Certification After Long Delays

*RREAL Solar Air Heat Collectors awarded highest efficiency*

Brainerd Lakes area based RREAL (Rural Renewable Energy Alliance) was recently awarded a much anticipated third-party certification for the solar air heat collectors they manufacture. And, much to their delight, the 3 collectors they manufacture were awarded highest efficiency in their class. Certification will allow the Pine River manufacturer to sell the collector around the United States. Many States, including Minnesota, prohibit the sale and installation of uncertified solar thermal collectors. Certification will also make incentives and rebates available for end users.

Minnesota is one of the few states with a cash rebate for solar air heat through the Department of Commerce, with up to \$4000 cash back for residential systems, and commercial rebates anticipated soon. These incentives are available only for the installation of certified solar air heat collectors.

RREAL experienced significant delays in the testing and certification process, which took over 2½ years to complete. While the paperwork for testing began in October 2007, and the collectors were submitted soon after, the testing laboratory did not begin their procedures until winter 2009 following a personal visit by RREAL's Executive Director, Jason Edens. "The renewed interest in solar thermal in the US apparently took them unawares," Edens commented. "They were not prepared, and the backlog is stifling innovation, because manufacturers can't afford to sit on technology for 3 years while waiting for the required certifications. By the time 3 years is up, further improvements will have been developed, yet manufacturers aren't able to incorporate the changes without being required to get re-certified." He adds, "We're ecstatic to have finally been awarded certification."

RREAL became an Original Equipment Manufacturer in 2007 with the invention of the patent-pending Solar Powered Furnace. Having installed a variety of solar air heat collectors since 2000, RREAL gained insight into what worked well and what didn't. In 2005, RREAL decided to invest in designing their own collector with the goals of making installation easier, improving efficiency, broadening applicability to both residential and commercial settings, and reducing overall cost and environmental impact by manufacturing locally. An intense research and development project ensued, resulting in the most efficient solar air heat collector on the market. "You don't have to take our word for it anymore, now that we have the award certification," Edens muses, grinning.

If you would like additional information on RREAL's Solar Powered Furnace, SRCC certification or the available federal, state and local solar thermal incentives, please contact RREAL: 218-587-4753 or [info@rreal.org](mailto:info@rreal.org).

- printed directly from the RREAL press release

### CERTs CAMPAIGNS:

GREEN UP YOUR FLEET!

<http://www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org/community-projects/campaigns/project-green-fleet>

LEDs can save up to 90% on electrical costs. At this point, LEDs are not cost effective due to the high up-front costs. Keep an eye on these!



### Informational Energy Websites:

[Xcel Energy](#)

[Brainerd Public Utilities](#)

[Crow Wing Power](#)

[Minnesota Power](#)

[Energy Star](#)

[Energy Smart](#)

[Office of Energy Security](#)

[Clean Energy Resource Teams](#)

[DSIRE](#)

### Energy Tip of the Month:

**Conservation IS a renewable source of energy! It is the first step towards energy independence.**

### Check out these local BLOGs and websites!

[Silent Power](#)

[CERTs](#)

[RREAL](#)

## Renewable Energy and Sustainability for Women

The Clean Energy Resource Teams' Central Region (CERT) and The Central Minnesota Alternative Energy Regional Collaborative (CMAERC), a Region Five Development Commission program, has created a new opportunity for women to **social network**. This new unique group will enhance awareness of renewable energy, energy efficiency and conservation in a fun and engaging atmosphere. Learn about local initiatives, players and businesses in the sustainability realm! The second gathering will be held **July 29, 2010 from 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. at Prairie Bay**, Brainerd. RSVP required due to limited seating. All women interested in participating please contact Angela Headlee at [aheadlee@regionfive.org](mailto:aheadlee@regionfive.org) or 218.894.3233.

## Neighborhood Energy Workshops (NEWs)

### Northland Arboretum NEIGHBORHOOD ENERGY WORKSHOPS (NEWs)

The Clean Energy Resource Teams' Central Region (CERT) and The Central Minnesota Alternative Energy Regional Collaborative (CMAERC), a Region Five Development Commission program, has teamed up with The Northland Arboretum, Brainerd, to provide FREE Neighborhood Energy Workshops (NEWs). These workshops will assist homeowners in reducing their energy consumption by presenting valuable efficiency and conservation tips and techniques. Save Energy, Save Money! Watch for upcoming dates to be held **at Northland Arboretum** in Brainerd. RSVP required due to limited seating and free energy reduction gifts.

If interested in participating in this no cost workshop please contact Angela Headlee at [aheadlee@regionfive.org](mailto:aheadlee@regionfive.org). NEWs are made possible through a partnership with local utilities including Brainerd Public Utilities, Minnesota Power and Xcel Energy. Look for more NEWs coming to your area!

### Upcoming Area Events:

- **Fall 2010:** Northland Arboretum NEWs (Neighborhood Energy Workshops)
- **August 4, 2010: 4:00-8:00 pm.** St. Francis Campus, Little Falls Green Fair Folk Festival, Little Falls, MN.
- Check out Happy Dancing Turtle for Energy Efficiency Home Improvement classes <http://www.happydancingturtle.org/index.php/classes-a-activities.html> coming soon!

To remove your name from our mailing list, please email: [aheadlee@regionfive.org](mailto:aheadlee@regionfive.org).

Questions or comments? E-mail us at [aheadlee@regionfive.org](mailto:aheadlee@regionfive.org) or call 218.894.3233