

Solar Power in Albuquerque

Largest photovoltaic system in New Mexico to power Veteran's Health Care System

The Albuquerque, New Mexico, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Health Care System has taken great strides to ensure future sustainability and development. A 3.2-megawatt Solar Photovoltaic (PV) System, paid for with \$19 million in stimulus funds, will ultimately offset the overall energy usage of the VA medical center from 20 to 25 percent.

The State's veteran's health care system, which supports discharged military members throughout New Mexico and southwest Colorado, has selected Eaton Corp., in partnership with Kyocera Solar, to design and install the turn-key PV system, which will become New Mexico's largest such system when it is completed this fall.

The project will solidify New Mexico's Veteran Services Department's goal to be the premier veterans' service provider and advocate in the nation, assisting veterans, their widows and their children in establishing the privileges to which they are legally entitled.

The VA designated the Albuquerque site based on results from feasibility studies to determine the optimal locations for on-site renewable energy projects with an overarching goal of increasing renewable energy consumption to 15 percent of annual electricity usage by 2013. Car port and roof-mounted arrays will be implemented, as well as a building-integrated system that will reduce the medical center's overall demand from the grid.

"The solar energy will be directly converted to usable electricity by being converted from DC to AC by the use of inverters in the system, and then tied directly into our electrical distribution system," said Bob Bruick, energy engineer, New Mexico VA Medical Center.

Procurement of the project was made possible initially by funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, initiated in order to spur economic activity and investment in long-term growth. Through the federally aided process, Eaton had achieved U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) contracting rights to provide ancillary services related to power distribution equipment and also service rights to installation and site preparation for power distribution equipment. The GSA schedule provided justification for the expenses of the project and through the projected offset of total energy usage.

Eaton was specifically chosen by the New Mexico Department of Veteran's Affairs through a negotiated rate process due to the company's wide spectrum of readily available solutions and services designed to reduce energy consumption and because of the company's global leadership in power quality assurance.

Eaton was able to provide all the grid-connected



A parking lot for doctors and nurses at the VA healthcare facility in Albuquerque now includes solar panels to provide a design capacity of 1,016 kW.

photovoltaic power equipment needed for such a large project – approximately 12,000 solar panels – through a contracting agreement with Kyocera Solar, working under a U.S. GSA contract for alternative and renewable energy solutions. By managing all electrical aspects of the project, Eaton was able to completely provide all of the strategic coordination for the equipment, design and installation services necessary to manage and monitor a functioning solar power system.

"Eaton is now fully engaged in the sustainable energy market," said Paul Cody, vice president and general manager, Electrical Service and Systems Division, Eaton Corporation.

The contract is one of several recent agreements that Eaton has reached with government organizations. An \$8 million project for the San Antonio Military Medical Center on the Fort Sam Houston Army base in Texas includes hybrid electric power systems for 35 fuel-efficient shuttle buses purchased by the U.S. General Services Administration for use on U.S. military bases. Eaton also provides energy conservation at the United States Postal Service (USPS) Eastern Facilities Service Office at postal facilities in North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania and South Carolina.

"We are investing in clean energy and other renewable energy projects for our medical centers to reduce our environmental footprint," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "The transition toward these renewable energy sources helps VA continue to be a leading example in 'going green' in the Federal government."