



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 16, 2009

MAYOR JERRY SANDERS **FACT SHEET**

SAN DIEGO IS CALIFORNIA'S LEADING SOLAR CITY

Environmental Policy Group Says City Leads in Sun-Made Power

San Diego ranks first among California cities for use of solar energy, according to a report just released by Sacramento-based Environment California Research & Policy Center.

The group's study – the first to compare solar-energy penetration among California cities – shows San Diego leads the state in both the number of solar energy installations as well as in amount of electricity generated using photovoltaic panels.

With 2,262 installations generating nearly 20 megawatts of electricity, San Diego has 874 more rooftop solar generating systems installed than Los Angeles – nearly four times San Diego's size – and generates close to three times as much power from the sun as San Francisco.

According to the report, less than a decade ago, there were just seven solar roofs in San Diego and fewer than 500 solar roofs statewide. Today, California boasts 51,000 solar roofs – more than double the number of solar roofs installed in the state just three years ago.

“We're really excited by what the top ranking says about San Diego,” said San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders. “The city committed to using more renewable energy at our own facilities and putting policies in place that would encourage our residents and businesses to adopt solar energy. Our No. 1 spot is a reflection of that decision to be leaders in clean energy.”

Six years ago, the San Diego City Council set a goal of having 50 megawatts of solar power within the city limits by 2013, with 5 megawatts generated at city-owned facilities. So far, the city has 15 solar-power systems installed, totaling about 1.2 megawatts – most of it at the Alvarado Water Treatment Plant. On Tuesday, the City Council approved an additional 800-kilowatt system at the Otay Water Treatment Plant.

Combined with its aggressive energy-efficiency efforts and biomass generation at the Miramar Landfill and Point Loma Wastewater Treatment facility, the city's energy initiatives save taxpayers millions of dollars in energy costs each year.

San Diego also is committed to helping residents and businesses find cost-effective ways to invest in solar energy, including its solar-friendly regulations such as fast-tracked permitting for buildings that use solar power. In December, Sanders announced that the city would take advantage of new state legislation allowing municipalities to create a solar-financing program that offers low-interest, 20-year loans for solar installations.

The program removes a major barrier to investing in a residential solar-power system by allowing the loan obligation to transfer to the new owner upon sale of the home. A pilot of the program, dubbed the San Diego Clean Generation program, is expected to launch this fall with several hundred participants. San Diego will be the first large U.S. city with such a program.

“San Diego has embraced energy innovation for the benefit of our citizens,” Sanders said. “Our use of renewable energy and our very aggressive energy-efficiency efforts save taxpayers millions of dollars in energy costs each year, and as more San Diegans install solar power systems, they'll save on their utility bills, as well.”

The full report is available online at:

www.sandiego.gov/mayor/news

###