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

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READY TO GO SOLAR? "ONE BLOCK OFF THE GRID" RETURNS TO SAN DIEGO , PARTNERS WITH HELIOWPOWER TO OFFER GROUP DISCOUNTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

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By Miriam Raftery

November 10, 2009 (San Diego) - One Block Off the Grid (1BOG), the nation's largest solar buying collective, today announced launch of its second solar community buying campaign to help San Diego County homeowners and small business owners purchase solar energy at group discount rates of \$5.29 per watt from now through February 12, 2010.

"That's the best price we've ever seen, by quite a bit," Brad Burton, head of product discounts for 1BOG, told East County Magazine. "We provide group discounts, typically about 15% off the marketplace, and we also streamline the process for large numbers of people who all go solar at the same time." Those going solar now can also take advantage of a 30% federal tax credit plus a statewide rebate, sharply reducing payback time for their solar systems.

The more who buy into the statewide rebate, the better it becomes, said Burton. A former cap on the federal credit was lifted last fall, making solar more attractive than ever. Previously, it took 10-15 years to earn back savings from investing in a solar system. Now, Burton reports, "We're seeing payback periods as low as five to seven years."

Moreover, the Governor just signed into law a feed-in-tariff measure to allow property owners to sell excess solar energy produced, with profits going to property owners, not utility companies. While details remain to be resolved (such as whether those sales will be at wholesale or resale rates), the payback period for solar will become even less in the future.

"Feed in tariffs are what has allowed Germany to be by far the most mature solar market in the world, because it makes the payback period significantly shorter," Burton said.

Started in San Francisco by a husband and wife team who organized friends and neighbors to negotiate group discounts on solar photovoltaic installations for their homes, the concept has spread nationwide. "They realized they had a powerful concept—if they group people together in a neighborhood, they would have power in numbers and could negotiate for discounts," Burton recalled.

1BOG held its first San Diego-area campaign last year. "We had about 950 people sign up with us and about 85 of them ultimately purchased. That represented about 10% of all solar installs in San Diego for 2009." Primarily geared toward homeowners, the program is available to small business owners, Burton confirmed.

A typical 5 kilowatt system would cost about \$26,500 under the program in San Diego. Financing is available, with payments typically less than what one saves on utility bills each month. Another option to make systems even more affordable is a lease program called SunRun. Under that program, however, SunRun owns the solar system and you purchase the power from them, with SunRun keeping profits from any excess power produced.

In addition to saving consumers money, 1BOG seeks to simplify the process and avoid the need for individuals to sit through hard-sells from multiple companies. 1BOG obtains competitive bids from the top companies in a region, seeking out the best competitive pricing as well as high quality products, a proven track record, and a viable business model to make sure the installation company will be around to service warranties provided.

HelioPower won the bid to provide installation and service throughout the entire San

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"We were thrilled to have been selected for the second time to serve the 1BOG San Diego Community," said Scott Gordon, Vice president of residential sales for Heliopower.

For details, see www.solarSanDiego.1BOG.org. For information on packages available and calculating cost of a solar system for your home, visit <http://SolarSanDiego.1bog.org/campaign-costs>. The company will offer a free webinar and online information system; details will be announced soon. To sign up, visit <http://SolarSanDiego.1bog.org/faqs-and-webinar/>.

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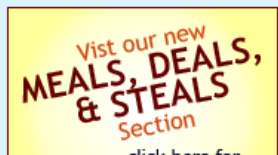
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Dr. Ida Greene, Ph.D,
Motivational Speaker,
Coach Author

idagreene@idagreene.com
(619) 262-9951

www.idagreene.com

