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***For Immediate Release***

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## **“Solarize San Luis Obispo County” Helps Homeowners Save with Solar *2<sup>nd</sup> Solarize Program Launches Today***

**Atascadero, CA, June 23, 2014** – Business and government leaders gathered in Atascadero to celebrate the launch of “Solarize San Luis Obispo County,” a group-purchasing program for residential solar electric systems.

After the program’s astounding 107 solar installations in San Luis Obispo County last year, two local non-profits, the **Economic Vitality Corporation (EVC)** and the **Community Environmental Council (CEC)**, have partnered once again to bring the Solarize program to San Luis Obispo County for the second consecutive year. “The Solarize program strives to make the switch to solar power simple and affordable,” explained Jefferson Litten, CEC’s Solarize Program Manager.

The launch was held at the home of Ed and Irene Rush, who have been powering their home with a 5.72 kilowatt solar array that was purchased through last year’s program. Rush is enthusiastic about the ease of his Solarize experience, explaining, “I attended a free Solarize workshop, which explained the benefits of going solar and the process to do so. From that point, everything from meeting with the installers through the actual installation was a breeze.”

At the program launch, State Senator Bill Monning formally recognized the contributions of the Solarize program in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and helping the local economy. Last year’s San Luis Obispo program added 500 kilowatts of new solar energy to the county - preventing the release of over 140 metric tons of carbon dioxide pollution, equivalent to removing over 29 cars from the road for an entire year or not burning over 15,000 gallons of gasoline.

Litten notes, “We anticipate the same success this year. By offering homeowners education and a streamlined process at a group-purchasing price from local, vetted installers, we intend to help more residents gain the benefits of solar including monthly savings on energy bills. The Solarize program also strives to help local companies create more green jobs.”

EVC President & CEO, Michael Manchak, is confident that the program will positively impact our region again this year, stating, “Solarize San Luis Obispo County will help stimulate our economy by helping local companies in the areas where jobs are needed. The program increases the community’s awareness about solar and the benefits it can provide – thereby boosting the number of solar installations throughout the county. The EVC’s countywide Economic Strategy and Green Energy Cluster applaud the Solarize program, which has increased the number of solar installations across the county. Solarize programs help all contractors in the solar field by creating more consumer awareness and greater demand.”

This year, Solarize San Luis Obispo County features two locally-owned, family businesses with long histories in the County, **Electricraft** and **Solarponics**, both of which were present at the event. The companies were selected as partners for the program based on a broad range of criteria and have agreed to offer special pricing to homeowners who sign a solar contract through the program by September 20, 2014.

Solarize San Luis Obispo County will be available to homeowners for three months, beginning June 17, 2014 through September 20, 2014. During this time, homeowners can switch to solar at a fixed, group-purchasing price from either of the two installers.

As part of the program, EVC and CEC will host free educational workshops across the County to help inform homeowners about solar technologies, energy efficiency, solar financing options, and the Solarize program. "A vital component of Solarize is education," noted Litten, "Many homeowners are not aware that they can start saving right away by switching to solar. As the community learns about the benefits of solar, the entire industry benefits and more homeowners start saving money."

Anyone interested in learning about solar is encouraged to attend one of the upcoming workshops:

<p><b>Thursday, June 26</b>  <b>6:30 - 8:00pm</b>                  SLO Elks Lodge                  222 Elks Lane                  San Luis Obispo</p>	<p><b>Tuesday, July 1</b>  <b>6:30 - 8:00pm</b>                  Pavilion on the Lake                  9315 Pismo Avenue                  Atascadero</p>	<p><b>Monday, July 21</b>  <b>6:30 - 8:00pm</b>                  SLO Elks Lodge                  222 Elks Lane                  San Luis Obispo</p>	<p><b>Wednesday, July 23</b>  <b>6:30 - 8:00pm</b>                  Centennial Park-Live                  Oak Room                  600 Nickerson Drive                  Paso Robles</p>	<p><b>Thursday, August 7</b>  <b>6:30 - 8:00pm</b>                  Portuguese Hall                  707 Huasna Road                  Arroyo Grande</p>
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Solarize SLO County participants will also help support the EVC and the CEC and their missions in the community. Included in the purchase price of each system will be a fee to help both organizations continue to bring beneficial programs to the Central Coast and to be self-sustaining.

To learn more or apply for Solarize San Luis Obispo County, homeowners can go to [SolarizeSLO.org](http://SolarizeSLO.org) or call 805.963.0583 x 105. Homeowners can also find more information on Facebook at [facebook.com/cecsolarize](http://facebook.com/cecsolarize).

**About the Economic Vitality Corporation**

Economic Vitality Corporation (EVC) is a regional non-profit, economic development organization committed to developing a vibrant and sustainable economy throughout San Luis Obispo County. We connect businesses with resources to help them become established and grow. Since 1994, the EVC continues to provide world-class business resources for a thriving community. [sloevc.org](http://sloevc.org).

**About the Community Environmental Council**

Since 1970, the Community Environmental Council (CEC) has led the Central Coast region – and at times California and the nation – in creative solutions to some of the toughest environmental problems. Today CEC is focused on moving the Central Coast away from dependence on fossil fuels in one generation. Find CEC on the web at [cecsb.org](http://cecsb.org), on Twitter @CECSB and on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/CECSB>.

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