



ISLAND GOLF COURSE USES SOLAR POWER

The folks at the Island Country Club in Plaquemine know some things about going green, and it's not just the lush putting surfaces their customers have become accustomed to that they're talking about.

The Island is home to Louisiana's largest solar energy project. Gulf South Solar of Baton Rouge, which sells and services solar energy systems, installed 160 Sharp solar panels on the south-facing roof of The Island's cart barn. Glen Clouatre, general manager of The Island, said the goal is for the solar energy system to produce 54,000 kilowatts hours per year.

"We were looking for innovative ways to cut costs and to save energy without causing any disruption of customer service to our members and guests," Clouatre said. "We changed all the incandescent bulbs in the clubhouse to compact fluorescent lamps. We installed solar panels to provide cost-efficient, environmentally friendly power to use throughout the facility. In addition, we installed timers on all non-essential outdoor lighting."

The solar system went live in late October and already The Island is seeing the benefits. In January, the kilowatt hour usage was down 31 percent. For the period

of November through January, there was a 42 percent decline in comparison to the year before.

Because of the Island's commercial standing, the company faces a demand charge from the power company if it uses 40 kilowatts or more of power at any given time of the day. The Island's power usage during the peak times of the day without the solar panels would lead to paying this higher charge.

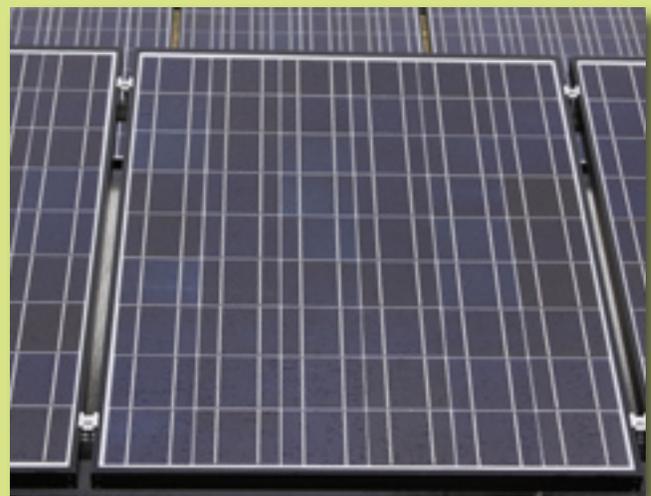
The solar energy system will help the Island fall well short of the demand charge. As an added benefit, the system is helping The Island reduce its carbon footprint. Since late October, the CO2 emission offset is more than 18,724 pounds.

In another environmentally friendly and cost-efficient move, the Island will soon have a solar-powered geothermal heating and cooling system. The open-loop system will take water from a nearby well and use it to heat and cool the facilities. The water is then routed back to the large irrigation pond which borders hole No. 18 at The Island. An additional 14 solar panels will be used to power the system.

"Our goal is to cut the heating and cooling costs by 50 to 60 percent," Clouatre said. "We'll be using less electricity and our carbon offsets will be even greater."



Solar panels at the Island Country Club in Plaquemine



Sharp solar panel