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Cell connecting devices for next-generation modules

Market survey on stringing equipment for cells with multiple bus bars



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What's worth seeing at the upcoming Paris show

Ribbon survey

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New batteries based on different technologies hitting the market

EU solar sales

Effects of European-Chinese trade dispute on PV business

US solar deployment jumps 15 percent in second quarter

This may go down as the »year of the sun« in the US. Today, America's solar energy industry remains on pace to achieve a record-shattering year.

A new market analysis by GTM Research shows the US market installed 832 MW of new PV installations in the second quarter of this year – a whopping 15 percent increase over the first 3 months of 2013.

There are now 9,370 MW of solar electric capacity in the US – which is enough clean electricity to power more than 1.5 million American homes, including the White House!

Here are some other key findings of the report:

The US residential market grew by 48 percent over Q2/2012.

Solar is now more affordable than ever. Average PV system prices have declined by more than 40 percent since the beginning of 2011 – and by more than 50 percent since the beginning of 2010.

What's more, average module prices have declined by over 60 percent since the beginning of 2011.

The US PV and CSP markets remain on pace for a record year in 2013. SEIA/GTM project that 4,400 MW of PV and more than 900 MW of CSP will come online throughout this year.

Today, solar employs nearly 120,000 Americans at 5,600 companies, most of which are small businesses spread all across America, making solar one of the fastest-growing industries in America.

Right now, there are 38 utility-scale, clean energy solar projects under construction in the US – utilizing both CSP and PV technologies – putting thousands of electricians, steelworkers and laborers to work, while also helping to reduce carbon emissions from power plants. These facilities, along with rooftop solar on homes, businesses and schools, will generate clean electricity for generations to come.

What's more, innovative solar heating and cooling systems are offering American consumers cost-efficient, effective options for meeting their energy needs, while lowering their utility bills. In short, the market forecast for solar in the US looks bright and sunny. ● rr



Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA)

▲ Rhone Resch, president of the US Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA), writes a monthly column on solar power in the US.

(PNM) has added solar energy to its Sky Blue green energy program. The PNM Sky Blue program, described as »an affordable way for customers to make the power supply greener,« was originally launched in 2003 as a voluntary program that let customers pay an additional fee to get a greater share of their electricity from wind power. Starting this fall, Sky Blue subscribers will begin getting power from 22,000 solar panels being installed exclusively for Sky Blue at a new PNM solar park. Subscribers to the Sky Blue program pay an extra 1.7¢ over the regular price of electricity for each kilowatt-hour of green energy consumed. Customers can choose to get up to 90 percent of their electricity from wind and solar. Regular PNM customers get some of their electricity from PV and wind power plants, but most comes from nuclear, natural gas and coal-fired power plants. New Mexico requires PNM to cover 10 percent of its retail energy sales with renewable energy in 2013 and 2014. This will rise to 15 percent in 2015 and 20 percent in 2020. To achieve these targets, PNM plans to add 23 MW (AC) of solar energy to the grid in 2014. This would raise its electricity production from large-scale solar by 30 percent to reach a cumulative installed capacity of 67 MW (AC). The 23 MW will come from three thin-film solar parks First Solar is building for the utility.

New York

US solar system integrator **EnterSolar** reports that the **New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NY-SERDA)** has awarded EnterSolar more than

\$6 million to facilitate the construction of 10 new PV systems ranging in size from 200 kW to 2.6 MW. The awards are being funding through the Competitive PV program set up under the NY-Sun Initiative. The projects, which require co-funding to access the state funds, are being developed with various businesses across New York. The Competitive PV program provides incentives for PV systems larger than 200 kW, with funding per project capped at \$3 million. EnterSolar said it intends to working with a number of businesses to participate in round 3 of the Competitive PV program.

Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean

Central America

The European Investment Bank (EIB) has agreed to provide \$230 million to support renewable energy programs in Central America. According to EIB, the financial resources will be used by the governments of Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica and Panama to support the installation of hydro-power, wind, geothermal and PV power plants. EIB expects the lending initiative to enable public and private sector investment of \$500 million. Energy efficiency projects will be also included in the scheme.

Dominican Republic

SolarWorld Industries America, a subsidiary of German manufacturer **SolarWorld AG**, has inaugurated the **largest operational PV in-**



Ref. Schulten / photo-pictures.com

▲ Three years after these Dominicans were trained on how to install solar panels, SolarWorld Industries America has inaugurated the largest operational PV installation in the Dominican Republic, a 1.5 MW solar array installed at Cibao International Airport.

stallation in the Dominican Republic, a 1.5 MW solar array installed at Cibao International Airport. The airport is located in the Cibao Region in northern Dominican Republic. Local installer Trace Solar SRL completed the project in late July using 5,880 SolarWorld Sun-module solar panels mounted atop the company's Sunfix Ground mount racking system. The project was developed under the Dominican Republic's renewable energy laws, which use tax incentives and net metering to encourage PV deployment.

Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico's Planning Board has authorized three PV projects with a combined capacity of 85 MW. The board first authorized a 20