



Connecting atypical

Contacting fixtures for optically atypical solar cells are gaining traction



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Assorted testing

Our market survey on cell testers explores innovative testing methods

Hope or Hype?

This year's EU PVSEC conference was largely dominated by one topic: Perovskites

IEA forecast

The IEA foresees PV accounting for 16 percent of global electricity supply by 2050

Module prices

European modules are still more expensive than Chinese modules despite price pressure

Solar Industry Assisting in Fight Against Climate Change

From an environmental perspective, few things threaten our nation's future prosperity more than climate change.

But there is growing hope. Every 3.2 minutes of every single day, the US solar industry is doing its part to help fight climate change by flipping the switch on another completed solar project.

The US solar market hit a major milestone in the second quarter of this year with more than half a million homes and businesses now generating solar energy. That's a remarkable record of achievement.

According to GTM Research and the Solar Energy Industries Association's (SEIA) Q2 2014 US Solar Market Insight Report^{#1}, the US installed 1,133 MW of solar PV in the second quarter of this year.

The residential and commercial segments accounted for nearly half of all solar PV installations in the quarter. The residential market has seen the most consistent growth of any segment for years, and its momentum shows no signs of slowing down.

Across the United States, cumulative PV and concentrating solar power (CSP) operating capacity has reached nearly 16 GW, enough to power more than 3.2 million homes.

But just as importantly, that's the equivalent to taking 3.8 million vehicles off American roads or shuttering five coal-fired plants.

Simply put, solar continues to soar, providing more and more homes, businesses, schools and government entities across the United States with clean, reliable and affordable electricity.

Showing continued strength, the utility PV segment made up 55 percent of US solar installations in the second quarter of the year. It has accounted for more than half of national PV installations for five straight quarters. In just 2 years, the utility segment has quadrupled its cumulative size, growing from 1,784 MW in the first half of 2012 to 7,308 MW today.

GTM Research and SEIA forecast 6.5 GW of PV will be installed in the United States this year.

Here are some of the report's key findings:

The US installed 1,133 MW of solar PV in Q2 2014, up 21 percent over Q2 2013, making it the fourth-largest quarter for solar installations in the history of the market.

Cumulative operating PV capacity has now eclipsed the 15 GW mark thanks to three consecutive quarters of more than 1 GW installed.

As of the first half of 2014, more than half a million homeowners and commercial customers have installed solar PV.

53 percent of new electric generating capacity in the US in the first half of 2014 came from solar.

Growth remains driven primarily by the utility solar PV market, which installed 625 MW in Q2 2014, up from 543 MW in Q2 2013.

The report also forecasts that PV installations will reach 6.5 GW in 2014, up 36 percent over 2013 and more than three times the market size just 3 years ago, while CSP will have its best year ever.

Today, the solar industry employs 143,000 Americans and pumps nearly \$15 billion a year into our economy. This remarkable growth is due, in large part, to smart and effective public policies, such as the solar Investment Tax Credit (ITC), net energy metering (NEM) and renewable portfolio standards (RPS). By any measurement, these policies are paying huge dividends for both the US economy and our environment – and should be maintained, if not expanded, given their tremendous success, as well as their importance to America's future. ● rr

^{#1} For more information about the Solar Market Insight Report, please visit www.greentechmedia.com (path: www.greentechmedia.com/research/usmi)



▲ Rhone Resch, president of the US Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA).

Sharp recently shut down module production in the US and the UK, where it owned a 200 MW and a 400 MW module factory, respectively. The company also recently exited from solar module production in southern Italy, where it produced thin-film panels through a joint venture with Enel Green Power and STMicroelectronics.

According to Bloomberg, Recurrent Energy has 4.3 GW of PV projects under development.

Norway-based solar company REC Solar ASA, which spun off from Norwegian solar producer Renewable Energy Corporation ASA (REC) late last year, signed another major module supply agreement in the US. Under the agreement, **REC Solar will supply an**

unnamed US-based EPC company with 85 MW of REC Peak Energy 72-cell modules for utility-scale projects being developed in the US. The modules are scheduled to be delivered to the EPC company between July 2015 and February 2016. Details about the target projects and the financial terms of the supply agreement were not disclosed.

US-based Amtech Systems Inc., which supplies automation systems for the PV, semiconductor and sapphire industries, announced that its solar subsidiary, Tempres Systems, received an order for its solar boron diffusion system from an unidentified Taiwan-based cell manufacturer. The value of the order was not disclosed, nor was the

planned delivery date. The system will be used in an n-type, next generation high efficiency cell production line. The unnamed company is the third Taiwan-based cell producer to purchase a boron diffusion system from Tempres.

US wireless service provider Verizon Wireless announced it will invest a further \$40 million to install PV systems at its network facilities across the US. Verizon contracted US solar company SunPower Corp. to install 10.2 MW of PV systems at eight Verizon facilities in five states this year. This investment will nearly double the amount of power generated by solar energy systems installed at six Verizon facilities last year. The new PV capacity will be installed at Verizon sites in California,