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# Press Release

## MG&E New Rooftop Solar Array Goes to Work

A century later, sun power sparks the return of power generation at the Middleborough electric station.

Middleborough, October 9, 2009:

The Middleborough Gas & Electric Department, founded 116 years ago to harness energy from a water wheel in the Nemasket River, is now converting electricity from sunshine using an 80 panel solar array on the substation garage roof. The new glass panels lay at an optimal angle for sun catching but are barely visible from Wareham Street, one story below.



The 16.8 Kilowatt array, one of the largest physical installations thus far by a Massachusetts municipal utility, will produce up to 2,200 kilowatts hours of electricity in a typical sunny summer month – enough to power 4 -5 average customer homes. The array supplies the power to the electric division offices at the substation, potentially providing up to half the office energy use. The project also demonstrates the actual costs and production of current solar technology, serving as an educational resource for local schools and anyone who is considering their own installation.

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The Department's General Manager, John Granahan, is inviting customers to watch and learn about solar installations using this experience. "Will this solar array pay for itself? It will, but how quickly will depend on what happens to the cost of electricity," said Granahan. "What we want to do is show what it really takes to support this new technology here in Middleborough. Our customers can learn from our effort. And we want to make some of the power we use is as clean and green as possible. We hope this will make the future of solar energy a little brighter too." The Department has applied to use zero-interest Clean Renewable Energy Bonds to help spread the cost of financing the \$130,000 project over time.

Visitors to the administrative office on Main Street can now see a web-based display in the lobby showing actual data coming from the array. Charts display how much energy is being produced, refreshing every 15 minutes and showing accumulated production over time. The display also estimates the carbon offset by producing this energy without burning fossil fuels. Web surfers at home can log onto this display at [Solrenview.com](http://Solrenview.com), then clicking on Live Sites, then click on Great Northern Electric for the Middleborough site. It is a public site for all to view.

The Middleborough Gas & Electric Department is a public utility, owned by the town of Middleborough and serving over 4,000 natural gas customers in Middleborough and over 14,500 electric customers in Middleborough and neighboring Lakeville.