



**For Immediate Release**

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## **SHOREWAY ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER BEGINS USING SOLAR ENERGY** *Solar Project One of the Largest Installations in Bay Area*

**SAN CARLOS, CA - January 20, 2012** - Installation of 2,700 photovoltaic panels on the roofs of the Shoreway Environmental Center buildings in San Carlos has been completed and the facility is now using solar energy to meet half of its energy needs for the site. The solar project is one of the largest installations in the Bay Area, and is estimated to save approximately \$2.1 million in energy costs over the next 20 years for RethinkWaste.

The system is capable of producing approximately 740 kilowatts of electricity per hour – enough power to run nearly 6,000 60-watt light bulbs for eight hours, and is the largest of its kind in San Mateo County. Approximately 45% of Shoreway’s Transfer Station and MRF energy needs are now going to be supplied through the solar system, reducing carbon dioxide emissions by nearly 1.6 million pounds per year – the equivalent of removing 252 cars per year from the road.

“This is another significant milestone in our effort to demonstrate every day environmental solutions that also save money for the ratepayers,” remarked Kevin McCarthy, Executive Director of RethinkWaste. “This is also a great example of a public private partnership that truly works.”

The more than an acre and a half of panels has been installed on the roofs of Shoreway’s Transfer Station and Materials Recovery Facility (MRF, where recyclables are processed.) In addition, a series of solar panels have been installed alongside the visitors’ parking area to allow the public the ability to see what they look like as the ones on the roof are not visible. Informational kiosks and displays are under development related to the solar project and will become a part of the educational tours at Shoreway.

Fresh Air Energy-II, dba Ecoplexus, did the installation of the solar panels in December 2011 through a Solar Power Purchase Agreement (PPA,) which includes financing, owning, operating and maintaining the photovoltaic system. In return, RethinkWaste will host the system and purchase the electric output for a predetermined price for the length of the contract. The term of the contract is 20 years.

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MEMBER AGENCIES: Town of Atherton • City of Belmont • City of Burlingame • City of East Palo Alto • City of Foster City • Town of Hillsborough  
City of Menlo Park • City of Redwood City • City of San Carlos • City of San Mateo • County of San Mateo • West Bay Sanitary District

The estimated cost savings is based on Shoreway's energy needs and rising costs through Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) utility bills. PG&E's rates have risen 35% over the past five years, or a rate of 7% per year. In comparison, the Solar PPA fixes the rate of increase to 3% per year for the term. It would also cost approximately \$3.5-\$4 million for RethinkWaste to self-finance the installation of the photovoltaic panels and system.

The Solar PPA project is a result of the Silicon Valley Collaborative Renewable Energy Project launched in 2008 by Joint Venture Silicon Valley Network's Public Sector Climate Task Force, in partnership with the County of Santa Clara. The project evaluated collaborative procurement opportunities for a Solar PPA, with the goals of obtaining favorable pricing through a large-scale regional aggregate purchase and to allow smaller governmental entities to participate in a PPA that would otherwise be unable to participate due to the size of project sites. RethinkWaste Board of Directors approved the authorization of entering into the Solar PPA agreement with Ecoplexus in July 2011. Other agencies that made up the initial projects included in the collaboration along with RethinkWaste consist of the cities of Cupertino, Los Gatos, Milpitas, Morgan Hill, Mountain View, and Pacifica; the County of Santa Clara and the Valley Transit Authority.

The installation of the solar panels and use of solar energy will also qualify the buildings for LEED certification, and provide numerous other environmental benefits.

### RethinkWaste

Rethink Waste is a joint powers authority of twelve public Agencies (Atherton, Belmont, Burlingame, East Palo Alto, Foster City, Hillsborough, Menlo Park, Redwood City, San Carlos, San Mateo, the County of San Mateo and the West Bay Sanitary District) in San Mateo County, California and is a leader in the delivery of innovative waste reduction and recycling programs. RethinkWaste owns and manages the Shoreway Environmental Center which receives all the recyclables, organic materials, and materials (i.e. solid waste) collected in its service area. RethinkWaste also provides strategic oversight, support and management of service providers that collect, process, recycle and dispose of materials for its Member Agencies. RethinkWaste (i.e., South Bayside Waste Management Authority) was formed in 1982. For more information on RethinkWaste, please visit our website at [www.RethinkWaste.org](http://www.RethinkWaste.org) or follow us at [www.Facebook.com/rethinkwaste](http://www.Facebook.com/rethinkwaste) or [www.Twitter.com/rethinkwaste](http://www.Twitter.com/rethinkwaste).

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