



Aqua Pennsylvania Chairman Joined by Governor Corbett to Cut Ribbon at Largest Water Treatment Plant Solar Farm

1.8 megawatt solar farm is among largest in PA

BRYN MAWR, Pa.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Aqua Pennsylvania, Inc. (Aqua) Chairman Nicholas DeBenedictis was joined today by Pennsylvania Governor Tom Corbett and other state, local and environmental officials for a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the site of the utility's newest and largest solar farm. The 1.8 megawatt (MW) DC photovoltaic \$6.5 million, 6.5-acre solar farm provides power to the Pickering plant, the company's largest water treatment facility, serving nearly 500,000 residents of 27 municipalities in Chester, Delaware and Montgomery counties. It is the 8th largest solar installation in Pennsylvania.

The solar farm consists of more than 7,500 high-efficiency panels that convert sunlight into useful power, thereby, reducing the region's power generation requirements. The construction contract was partially funded with a \$1.5 million grant disbursement from the Pennsylvania Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA). The solar farm will reduce Aqua's grid-tied usage by 2.3 million kWh annually resulting in a direct economic benefit of \$207,000 per year in energy savings. In addition, the project will alleviate congestion on the PECO grid resulting in additional savings to all consumers by reducing line losses and congestion charges. The company has spent approximately \$75 million at the Pickering facility over the past decade. "That's one of the great things about solar farms," said DeBenedictis. "The benefits are widespread and reach beyond those who are directly served by the plant or the company."

"It's an honor to be involved in the ribbon cutting for the eighth largest solar power installation in Pennsylvania," said Pennsylvania Governor Tom Corbett. "This is a great example of how solar power can fit into our overall energy strategy, and is proof of Aqua Pennsylvania's forward-thinking commitment to their local communities."

Additionally, the region benefits from the environment-friendly features of this facility that allow us to produce power with greatly reduced emissions, thereby shrinking our carbon footprint and helping lower the need for the construction of new power generation facilities."

"I want to commend Governor Corbett for his energy policy, which has helped Pennsylvania to continue to be an energy-producing state by supporting the solar projects like the one we are here to celebrate today as well as the safe development of natural gas, which will help reduce our dependence on Middle East for petroleum. Aqua is preparing to turn its fleet from gasoline to compressed natural gas, or CNG, and has one vehicle already in service with plans to add others later this year," said DeBenedictis.

The Pickering solar farm is the company's latest installation—having built a 1.0 MW, 4.5-acre facility at its Ingram's Mill treatment plant in East Bradford Township in 2009 that serves 25,000 West Chester area residents. The Ingram's Mill solar farm has reduced grid-tied usage by 1.3 million kilowatt-hours during the past 12 months resulting in a direct economic benefit of \$130,000 annually in energy savings.

The annual environmental benefits of the new facility are that it:

- Avoids the equivalent of 51,450 gallons of gasoline, thereby reducing CO₂ emissions by 4.3 million pounds each year which is the equivalent emissions from 380 passenger cars; or
- offsets the equivalent need for 1,400 barrels of oil each year

"The public drinking water business was created out of concern for the environment and public health so it makes perfect sense to have a sustainable clean energy sources to power our water treatment plants. These projects will return great economic and environmental dividends to Pennsylvania and increase the Commonwealth's energy diversity," DeBenedictis said.

Aqua Pennsylvania serves approximately 1.4 million residents in 30 counties throughout Pennsylvania with more than one million in southeastern Pennsylvania.

WTRG

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