



*Office of Mayor Lawrence J. Morrissey  
LEADING BOLDLY, WORKING TOGETHER*

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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### **CITY OF ROCKFORD WATER DIVISION GOES GREEN**

ROCKFORD – May 30, 2012 - The City of Rockford held a ribbon-cutting ceremony today to commemorate the completion of the Well 31 Solar Panel Installation Project. The project consisted of the installation of 150 solar panels on top of the City’s water reservoir at 1780 Bell School Road (southeast corner of Bell School and Rote Roads).

“We are pleased to see this project completed. It further demonstrates Rockford’s commitment to be leaders in the development of solar energy,” said Mayor Larry Morrissey.

The solar panels that were installed were purchased by the City of Rockford Water Division from Wanxiang America Corporation New Energy Division. The purchase was part of an incentive package to bring Wanxiang to Rockford in 2009. Incentives were also provided by Winnebago County, the Greater Rockford Airport Authority, and the State of Illinois.

Michael Schaal, General Manager of Wanxiang America Corporation said, “Projects like this one are becoming more common as the desire for clean energy continues to rise.”

The solar panels were manufactured at Wanxiang’s new production facility in Rockford. The 150 solar panels are configured in ten rows of 15 panels; which takes up about half of the area on top of the water reservoir. Each panel faces due south and the vertical angle of panel can be adjusted to account for seasonal changes in the position of the sun. The rack system holding the panels was designed, manufactured,

and installed by Renewable Energy Alternates (Northbrook). Homer Chastain & Associates and Larson & Darby Group (Rockford) provided engineering services to the City for the project.

Each panel is capable of producing 280 watts of power. That represents a total of 42 kilowatts of power. The electricity generated by the solar panels supplies a portion of the electricity needed to operate the water facility. According to the Rockford Water Superintendent Tim Holdeman, “the cost of electricity to run our pumps represents one of the water utility’s largest operational expenses”. Holdeman added, “It is our intent to continue to find alternative sources of energy which will further reduce electrical costs.” City of Rockford Water Division personnel will operate and maintain the solar panels.

Rockford Mayor Larry Morrissey is an ardent supporter of renewable energy to reduce greenhouse emissions. “This project demonstrates the City’s active involvement in supporting renewable energy business in Rockford and improving air quality for our citizens,” he said.

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