

# Power Press Release

## ON THE GRID, OFF THE GRID

*Commentary*

*By Ray Kosanke, National Sales Manager, Alpha Energy*

**Bellingham, Wash. March 20, 2007** – More than ever, individuals, and their communities are pitching in to reduce their dependence on fossil fuels (oil, coal and natural gas) and turning toward renewable energy. In order to attract more residents, communities are working to become part of those forward thinking groups of individuals who are planning for the future by applying the latest in conservation and new energy technologies while generating a return on their investment.

Whether by individuals or communities, there are numerous reasons for making the renewable energy leap. One is altruistic; by using renewable resources for power we help clean up our air, water and land while becoming less dependent on foreign sources of energy. We also leave our world a nicer place for our children and grandchildren. Another reason is to lower or eliminate an electric bill from the local utility. Generating electric power on homes, offices, large roof tops, parking canopies and unused open space helps the utilities of our country by removing some of the load from our century-old power grid. At the same time this renewable generation of electricity helps delay or remove the need to add additional power plants around the nation.”

As renewable energy grows even more efficient and easy to incorporate, Alpha Energy is working to make it accessible on any project from a major building project to a minor home redesign.

Kate Jensen worked overtime hours as a nurse for two years with the ultimate goal of taking her Flagstaff, Ariz. Home off the grid. In early 2006, she began working with Alpha Energy to install both solar and wind energy technology.

With the 7.1kW of power generated by her renewable energy system, Jensen is able to power any electrical device in her house, including her lights, refrigerator, television, furnace or a space heater.

While the system is not yet enough to power her home completely free of the power grid, enough power is produced during the summer months that she is able to sell the excess back to the power company and get a check from the power company instead of a bill. This system is just the beginning for Jensen, as she plans to add a water catchment system and go alternative with her next car purchase, either electric or bio-diesel.

Jensen may be ambitious with her desire to go off the grid, but she is not alone. Rising energy costs and worries of inconsistent power in all parts of the world are driving people to seek out an energy insurance policy. And Jensen is going about it smartly, by applying multiple and at times redundant renewable energy systems.

One benefit of renewable power systems is that by design and necessity, they are purely modular: big enough to provide emergency power to a small community, or small enough to power a single security light bulb. The next great thing about these systems is how they can be incorporated on or off the existing power grid.

The well-publicized power concerns in California impact its residents in the form of rolling blackouts and high energy bills. With unexpected blackouts creating workplace frustrations and serious security lapses, the State government is working to help combat its on-going energy shortages: California has joined many other states in offering rebates and tax incentives promoting solar energy installations. The city of Loma Linda, CA is taking advantage.

Already recognized as progressive in its energy and communications programs, Loma Linda looked to Alpha Energy to design an aggressive solar energy system to power all municipal buildings, as well as the community center and senior center. Additional power generated will be fed back into the existing power grid, at a profit. With more than 1600 solar panels mounted on the roof of city parking carports, the city is able to generate 430 megawatt hours annually. In generating this amount of power from a zero-emissions solar system, the reduction of comparable fossil fuel emissions is like removing more than 3,300 cars from the road.

But large-scale projects are not the only applications for renewable energy. Renewable energy systems don't need to change the world. Sometimes they just need to change the traffic light. Rather than becoming an overnight replacement for the century-old power grid, renewable energy can do the little things: backup power supplies, support security systems and generate power for remote installations.

The next sunrise, grab a little power from those rays to keep you and your home energized. When the wind picks up from the retreating storm, gather some electrons from the breeze to let you open your automatic garage door a few more times. Let the water running down the nearby stream charge the backup system to help keep a sensitive area secure.

Whether the motive is altruistic or financial, options are available and true renewable energy systems are now a reality. And Alpha Energy is working with the renewable energy technology of today and tomorrow.

**Alpha Energy, a member of The Alpha Group and a division of Alpha Technologies, is a full-service engineering and project development company for the distributed generation power industry. One of the nation's leading developers of turnkey photovoltaic systems for commercial, residential, institutional and remote (off-grid) applications, Alpha Energy is recognized as a market innovator in packaging renewable energy technologies.**

**The Alpha Group** represents a global alliance of independent companies that share a common philosophy – create world-class powering solutions for communication, commercial, industrial and renewable energy markets.

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