

Let the sun shine in



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Lava Hot Springs Mayor Marshall Burgin stands by the newly installed solar panels outside the Lava Hot Springs Fire Department on Friday.

Solar cells installed at Lava fire station

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LAVA HOT SPRINGS — The Lava Hot Springs Fire Department will soon use its small, unassuming fire station as a means of getting into the clean energy business.

The city has partnered with Rocky Mountain Power to install two high-efficiency solar modules at the fire station to generate about 2,920 kilowatt-hours of electricity per year.

The \$35,000 project has been funded jointly by the city of Lava Hot Springs and Rocky Mountain Power's Blue Sky renewable energy program.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony

FAST FACTS

Based in Salt Lake City, Rocky Mountain Power's Blue Sky energy program was named Green Power Program of the Year by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy in 2007.

The DOE ranks the program third in the nation for the number of customers buying renewable power, and third in the nation for renewable power sales.

To learn more about Blue Sky, go to www.rockymountainpower.net/bluesky or call 1-800-769-3717.

to mark the installation project is scheduled for 10 a.m. on Thursday at the Lava Hot Springs Fire Station, which is located at 10125 E. Maughan Road.

Mayor Marshall Burgin said the city paid \$5,000 toward the purchase and installation

of the two panels, and a grant through the Blue Sky program funded the remainder of the project.

"We wanted a system that could not only provide cost benefits to the city, but one that could be monitored and serve as

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an educational tool for Lava Hot Springs residents, other communities and Idaho State University," Burgin said.

The solar energy system is expected to power the fire station and pay for itself in five to eight years, Burgin said.

Rocky Mountain Power spokesman Jeff Hymus said the Blue Sky program provides a way for customers to support renewable energy.

The solar modules at the fire station are connected to the power grid through a metering agreement with Rocky Mountain Power. The system will allow the fire station to lower its annual electric bill and receive credit for any excess power it generates.

Hymus said Rocky Mountain Power's residential and

business customers support renewable energy in the region and in local communities by purchasing certificates for 100 kilowatt-hour block increments of renewable energy for as little as \$1.95 per month.

The Utah-based company, which provides power to 982,000 customers in Utah, Wyoming and Idaho, then uses the certificates to purchase energy from local wind farms. About 31,700 Rocky Mountain Power customers in Idaho, Utah and Wyoming currently buy Blue

Sky renewable energy, Hymus said.

The project was first proposed by former City Councilman Mike Vice.

The firehouse's solar power system was designed by Keller Associates of Pocatello, and the solar modules and a meter were installed by Creative Energies, LLC of Lander, Wyo.

The station is home to 16 firefighters and 13 emergency medical technicians, all volunteers.