



# San Francisco Bay Area's largest public-private solar project now complete at 10.5 MW

By Kelly Pickerel | April 19, 2018

Project partners MCE and sPower commemorated Earth Day 2018 early with a ribbon cutting for MCE Solar One, a 60-acre solar farm in Richmond, California, that provides enough renewable electricity to serve 3,900 MCE customers annually.

"MCE's 10.5-MW solar project will reduce greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to taking more than 680 cars off the road annually," said Supervisor John Gioia, who also serves on the California Air Resources Board. "California is leading the nation in addressing climate change, and this project demonstrates how local projects can achieve environmental justice objectives and support our state's goal of 100% renewable energy by 2045."

The event coincides with MCE's launch of service to more than 200,000 customers in Concord, Danville, Martinez, Moraga, Oakley, Pinole, Pittsburg, San Ramon, and unincorporated Contra Costa County. MCE homes and businesses with Light Green 50% renewable energy service now benefit from a more renewable electricity option that costs 2 to 5% less than PG&E.

"In today's economic climate where many struggle with the rising cost of living in the Bay Area, MCE is committed to making renewable energy available to everyone through affordable rates and job opportunities with fair wages and career pathways," said Dawn Weisz, CEO of MCE. "The Bay Area has a rich history of industrial labor and innovation, and we're seeing this trend continue to thrive as innovative green jobs evolve into the cornerstone of California's new economy."

MCE Solar One supported 341 jobs and maximized local economic benefits through the City of Richmond's 50% local workforce hiring requirement, in which Richmond-based contractors, suppliers and union labor were employed. MCE partnered with

RichmondBUILD, which has successfully graduated hundreds of students and placed an impressive 80% of its graduates into well-paying jobs, to train and hire skilled, local graduates for the project. In addition, approximately \$1.8 million was spent on project materials purchased or rented in Contra Costa County, further supporting the local economy.

“MCE’s commitment to working with unions, paying prevailing wages, and hiring locally sets an important standard that can be replicated throughout the state with the growing number of community choice programs who are putting steel in the ground to supply their customers with new California renewables,” said Steve Weisinger, Overaa Construction Project Manager/Estimator, Member of Carpenters Local Union #152.

Conceived by the Richmond community to integrate renewable energy and solar facilities in the Chevron Modernization Project, MCE Solar One repurposes 60 acres of a remediated brownfield site generously leased by Chevron to MCE for \$1 per year. The project was partially funded by MCE’s Deep Green 100% renewable energy customers, who pay a penny per kilowatt-hour premium for pollution-free wind and solar power produced in California. Half of this premium is then used to help fund the build out of local solar projects like MCE Solar One.

“sPower was excited to work with MCE, Chevron, and the City of Richmond to bring this project online,” said Hans Isern, SVP of Power Marketing with sPower. “MCE and the City of Richmond will be closer to their clean energy goals, and we’re proud to help bring jobs, energy, and other benefits to the local Bay Area communities.”

MCE Solar One’s array incorporates many U.S.-made materials, including Solectria central inverters, ballast blocks from Universal Precast Concrete in Redding, California, I-beam posts used for tracker foundations, aluminum frames for the Schletter racks on the landfill ballast system, and all of the disconnects and panel boards by Eaton.

“MCE Solar One produces enough renewable energy to serve nearly six percent of Richmond’s electricity load,” said Mayor Tom Butt of Richmond. “I’m proud that we’re not only generating electricity close to home, but that collaboration between MCE, sPower, Chevron, Cenergy Power, the City of Richmond, RichmondBUILD, and local unions makes this the largest public-private solar partnership in the Bay Area.”

*News item from MCE*