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## **Outpost Natural Foods Goes Solar Mequon store to be site of 56-kilowatt rooftop system**

MILWAUKEE, WI (October 8, 2015) Outpost Natural Foods will begin installation this month on a solar panel system that will cover the rooftop of its one-year old Mequon store. The project is part of the 45-year old co-op's ongoing efforts to decrease its overall carbon footprint. The full solar installation represents the first of its kind for Outpost. Construction is planned to begin mid October 2015 and will be completed and fully operational by December 31.

### **Project details**

Sunvest Solar Energy Solutions of Pewaukee is the project developer and installer. The 56.32 kW system is anticipated to generate about 67,300 kWh of energy annually, or roughly 10% of the energy use at Outpost's Mequon store location. Canadian Solar panels can each generate 320 watts of power.

Total project cost is \$152,054. A grant from Wisconsin Focus on Energy for \$31,343 will help to offset the project costs. Energy cost savings on the system will average \$7,458 annually in today's energy market.

### **Energy savings, offsets and benefit to the environment**

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) is the most prevalent greenhouse gas pollutant, comprising nearly 82% of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. Fossil fuel-fired power plants are the largest source of U.S. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and account for 32% of U.S. total greenhouse gas emissions in 2012. The size of the Outpost installation is projected to offset the co-op's annual carbon footprint by 46.4 metric tons, or the equivalent to avoiding all the carbon emissions generated from burning 49,846 pounds of coal.

Fifty percent of Outpost's energy use will continue to be offset by renewable energy credits (REC). This combined with other organization-wide energy cost saving measures has landed Outpost on the United States EPA's Top 30 Retail List representing the largest green power users among retail partners, nationally, within the Green Power Partnership.  
([www3.epa.gov/greenpower/toplists/top30retail.htm](http://www3.epa.gov/greenpower/toplists/top30retail.htm))

### **Co-ops and sustainability**

Like many co-ops, Outpost embraces the challenge to move its operations and actions towards sustainable models and to understand and manage the impact they make on the earth and in the community. They annually publish a Sustainability Report indicating 11 key areas where the organization's operations and community outreach strive to meet their proposed goals.  
([www.outpost.coop/userimages/ONF-FY14SustainabilityReport.pdf](http://www.outpost.coop/userimages/ONF-FY14SustainabilityReport.pdf))

Outpost's Mequon store, opened in spring 2014, was designed for and built using state of the art green building technology, including rain gardens with native plants to manage storm water runoff, material reclamation from the existing site, energy efficient lighting, heating and cooling systems and raised gardens to grow food used in the store's café. The rooftop was designed for a future solar panel installation. When completed, the new solar array will be the largest of it kind in Ozaukee County.

Outpost's sustainability manager, Jessy Servi, says, "This project furthers Outpost's mission and helps the co-op reach its energy goals. We are proud to be a leader in sustainability in our community and beyond."

***About Outpost Natural Foods Cooperative***

*Serving the greater Milwaukee area since 1970, Outpost Natural Foods Cooperative operates four convenient store locations in Metro Milwaukee as well as a Market Café at Aurora Sinai Medical Center. A pop-up grocery store is scheduled to open mid October 2015 on Milwaukee's North side at 17<sup>th</sup> & North Ave. Co-owned by 21,000+ individuals from Southeastern Wisconsin, Outpost employs nearly 500 people, is a union employer represented by UFCW local #1473, as well as publishes an award-winning food and dining magazine (GRAZE). Outpost is the fifth largest cooperatively owned natural foods grocer in the country by sales volume. [www.outpost.coop](http://www.outpost.coop)*

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