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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOR INFORMATION CALL

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## **“Solar Riverwest” Group Purchase Program Debuts TONIGHT**

Home and business owners in Milwaukee’s Riverwest neighborhood have an opportunity to take advantage of record low solar pricing through a new, limited-time solar group purchase program. The “Solar Riverwest” program can help residents invest in lower cost solar installations through the power of volume-purchasing.

Solar Riverwest is being led by the Riverwest Cooperative Alliance, with support from the City of Milwaukee’s solar program, Milwaukee Shines, and the Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA). The program will make it easier and more affordable for residents to add solar to their home or business. “When communities run their own volume purchasing programs, they reduce costs associated with a traditional solar installation,” said Amy Heart, the City of Milwaukee’s Solar Program Manager.

The city’s solar program, Milwaukee Shines, took lessons learned from similar programs in other communities, and is partnering with the Riverwest Cooperative Alliance to launch Milwaukee’s first group buy program in the Riverwest neighborhood. However, the program will be open to any City of Milwaukee residents.

“In Milwaukee, we know that you can never save too much money,” Alderman Nik Kovac said. “With this program, property owners can save on their future energy bills as well as on the installation of solar panels. On top of that, Riverwest residents who participate in this program will know they are helping to save the future.”

**-More-**

## **Solar Riverwest/ADD ONE**

“Riverwest’s track record for community involvement and commitment to working together to find solutions for a better environment makes this neighborhood a perfect spot to launch the initiative,” said Heart, who is also a resident of Riverwest.

### **How it Works:**

**Reduced Price:** Interested Riverwest neighbors come together to choose a contractor, purchase and install solar as a community, and save significant costs as a result of purchasing solar electric panels in bulk. By choosing only one or two contractors, and conducting its own education and outreach campaign, Solar Riverwest can deliver the solar contractors leads in a small geographic area in a short period of time.

“Past solar group buy programs in other communities have demonstrated that job grouping, a limited time period, and community-led education can sometimes contribute to saving an additional 15 to 20 percent off the cost of a solar installation,” said Heart. “This potential cost savings, coupled with attractive city, state and national tax credits and cash incentives, can bring the cost of solar electricity down to record low prices.”

**Education:** Solar Riverwest will help neighbors decide whom to hire, what to budget and where to start by offering quality consumer education. The Riverwest Cooperative Alliance will provide educational sessions with the Midwest Renewable Energy Association, teaching residents the basics of solar technology, an overview of financing and incentive solutions and how to determine if solar is right for a home or business.

**Support for Local Products:** Solar Riverwest also recognizes the importance of supporting the broader community. The program will work to ensure that solar installations utilize solar panels made by Milwaukee-based Helios Solar Works.

“Solar Riverwest” officially launches on **Monday, March 11 with a 7:00 p.m.** special event at **Riverwest Public House**. Home or business owners must enroll in the program by July.

For details on the program and upcoming education sessions, visit [www.SolarRiverwest.org](http://www.SolarRiverwest.org) or email [solar@milwaukee.gov](mailto:solar@milwaukee.gov).