NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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HEMPSTEAD HOMES SHINE FOR NATIONAL SOLAR TOUR

Fourteen solar-powered homes in the Town of Hempstead will be open to the public for free visits on Saturday, October 7th from 10 AM to 4 PM as part of the National Solar Tour & Green Buildings Open House on Long Island. Tour visitors can learn about solar and other forms of renewable energy directly from the people in their community, watch electric meters run backwards, and see the actual savings on utility bills.

These local open houses are part of an island-wide tour of about 100 sites that use solar energy for electricity or heat. The Long Island Power Authority (LIPA) and Renewable Energy Long Island (RELI) are co-organizing the tour on Long Island, with Northeast Sustainable Energy Association (NESEA) at the regional level and the American Solar Energy Society (ASES) at the national level. The tour is expected to attract tens of thousands of visitors nationwide and has been billed as the largest public renewable energy education event in the world.

One home available to tour, the Despara residence North Bellmore, features a large 10 kW solar electric system which has drastically reduced the owners' electric bill. Another, the Cody residence in Franklin Square, has a 5 kW solar electric system. Other homes on the Tour within the Town of Hempstead are located in Franklin Square, Uniondale, East Meadow, Lynbrook, Levittown, Seaford, and Oceanside.

"I love my solar panels", said Mike Despara. "It is one of the better investments I have ever made."

"I researched solar energy for seven years and when I finally got the system installed in May, I realized that it was the best thing I ever did," said James Cody Jr. "I'm only sorry that I did not do it sooner."

LIPA currently offers substantial, upfront cash rebates (up to $37,500) for the installation of solar electric systems. Combined with the new income tax credits, theses incentives can reduce the cost by 2/3.

"The annual Solar Tour is a great way for people to gain first-hand knowledge about the residential application of PV systems," said LIPA Chairman Richard M. Kessel. "LIPA's rebates go a long way toward making the installation of a residential solar system more affordable, and the enhanced state tax credits help lower the overall cost even further. We hope the Solar Tour will encourage others to join the ranks of Long Island's Solar Pioneers."

"The Solar Tour is really the best way to 'kick the tires' and talk to home and business owners directly to find out whether solar energy would work for your home or business", said Gordian Raacke, Executive Director of RELI.

The public may participate in this self-guided tour free of charge but will need to obtain a free Visitors Pass from RELI. The Visitors Pass and information on the tour and solar energy technologies & incentives are available at www.RenewableEnergyLongIsland.org or by calling (631) 537-8282.

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PHOTOS AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD:
Despara residence: http://lishines.org/solarregistry/propertyimages/1156795103.JPG
Cody residence: http://lishines.org/solarregistry/propertyimages/1157385505.JPG

To arrange pre-tour interviews and for location information, call RELI Program Manager Kathy Cunningham at (631) 537-8282 Ext. 0.