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For Immediate Release

## NORTH HEMPSTEAD SITES FEATURED on NATIONAL SOLAR TOUR

Two solar-powered buildings in the Town of North Hempstead will be open to the public for free visits on Saturday, October 3rd 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 clean energy directly from the people in their community, watch electric meters run backwards, and see the actual savings on utility bills.

These open houses are part of an island-wide tour of about 90 sites that use solar energy or other green building features. The National Solar Tour is organized on Long Island by the non-profit Renewable Energy Long Island (RELI) and by the American Solar Energy Society at the national level. Last year's tour attracted 140,000 visitors nationwide and has been billed as the largest public renewable energy education event in the world.

One home available to tour, the Samek residence in New Hyde Park, features an average size (6.7 kW) solar electric system which has reduced the owners' electric bill significantly. Another tour site is America's first Solar-Hydrogen Home at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point. This innovative building features a number of cutting-edge technologies. It was designed and built by NYIT/USMMA staff and students as well as solar contractors for the Solar Decathlon and showcased on the National Mall in Washington, DC in 2005.

"I think it's one of the best decisions I've ever made", said Sue Samek of New Hyde Park. "I haven't paid a penny for electric since it was installed. I haven't paid anything, they paid me."

LIPA currently offers substantial, upfront cash rebates (up to \$35,000) for the installation of solar electric systems. Combined with increased federal income tax credits and state tax credits, these incentives can reduce the cost by 2/3.

"The Solar Tour is really the best way to see first-hand what solar is all about and to talk directly to the owners to find out whether solar energy will work for you", said Gordian Raacke, Executive Director of Renewable Energy Long Island (RELI).

"The tour provides a unique opportunity to learn about the benefits of going solar," said LIPA President and CEO Kevin S. Law. "LIPA's nationally-recognized *Solar Pioneer and Entrepreneur Program* continues to help our customers reduce energy consumption and lower electric bills, diversify Long Island's energy portfolio, strengthen the local economy, and to transform the solar photovoltaic marketplace to help reduce our dependency on costly fossil fuels."

Visitors are encouraged to first visit one of the central tour hubs where they can pick up materials and participate in educational activities. The U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point is the central hub location for North Hempstead.

The self-guided tour is free of charge but visitors will need to obtain a free Visitors Pass from RELI. Every visitor will receive a free copy of the Long Island GreenGuide, a 64-page publication with handy information and a green business directory. The Visitors Pass and more information on the tour and clean energy technologies & incentives are available at [RenewableEnergyLongIsland.org](http://RenewableEnergyLongIsland.org) or by calling (631) 329-8888.

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PHOTOS AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD:

Samek residence (New Hyde Park): <http://sunshineisfree.org/solarregistry/propertyimages/1226428870.JPG>

USMMA Solar Hydrogen House: <http://sunshineisfree.org/solarregistry/propertyimages/1155144177.JPG>

To arrange pre-tour interviews and for location information, call the RELI Media Line at 516-313-6611.