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## **IKEA POWERS-UP SOLAR ENERGY PANELS AT COLLEGE PARK, MD STORE**

**COLLEGE PARK, MD** – IKEA, the world's leading home furnishings retailer, today officially plugged-in the solar energy system installed at its store in College Park, Maryland. The 148,200-square-foot PV array consists of a 1,196-kW system, built with 4,984 panels. IKEA College Park's program will produce approximately 1,571,800 kWh of clean electricity annually, the equivalent of reducing 1,195 tons of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), eliminating the emissions of 213 cars or powering 135 homes yearly (calculating clean energy equivalents at [www.epa.gov/cleanenergy/energy-resources/calculator.html](http://www.epa.gov/cleanenergy/energy-resources/calculator.html)).

This investment by IKEA reinforces the company's long-term commitment to sustainability and confidence in photovoltaic (PV) technology. IKEA owns and operates each of its solar PV energy systems atop its buildings – as opposed to a solar lease or PPA (power purchase agreement) – and this College Park installation represents the 15<sup>th</sup> completed solar energy project for IKEA in the United States, with 22 more locations underway, making the eventual U.S. solar presence of IKEA nearly 85% and a total generation of 30.8 MW.

For the development, design and installation of the College Park store's customized solar power system, IKEA contracted with REC Solar, one of the largest U.S. solar electric installers with more than 8,000 systems built nationwide.

"We at IKEA believe in the never-ending job of striving to improve the sustainability of our day-to-day business," said Tracie Wiesman, IKEA College Park store manager. "The IKEA coworkers in College Park are excited to help contribute to this goal with our newly operational solar energy system. We appreciate the support of the City of College Park, PEPCO and REC Solar, our partners in this project."

IKEA, drawing from its Swedish heritage and respect of nature, believes it can be a good business while doing good business and aims for its operations to minimize impacts on the environment. Globally, IKEA evaluates all locations regularly for energy conservation opportunities, integrates innovative materials into product design, works with Global Forest Watch to maintain sustainable resources, and flat-packs goods for efficient distribution. Specific U.S. sustainable efforts include: recycling waste material (paper, wood, plastic, etc.); incorporating environmental measures into the construction of buildings in terms of energy-efficient HVAC and lighting systems, recycled construction materials, skylights in warehouse areas, and water conserving restrooms; and operationally, eliminating plastic bags from the check-out process, phasing out the sale of incandescent light bulbs and facilitating recycling of customers' compact fluorescent bulbs. IKEA also is installing electric vehicle charging stations at nine stores in the Western U.S.

Located on 30 acres at the Route 1 exit off I-95/495 south, the 371,000-square-foot IKEA store opened in June 2003. In addition to 10,000 exclusively designed items, this College Park store presents 43 different room-settings, three model home interiors, a supervised children's play area, and a 450-seat restaurant serving Swedish specialties such as meatballs with lingonberries and Gravad Lax plates, as well as American dishes. Other family-friendly features include a 'Children's IKEA' area in the Showroom, baby care rooms, preferred parking and play areas throughout the store.

IKEA strives to be 'The Life Improvement Store,' and since its 1943 founding in Sweden, has offered home furnishings of good design and function, at low prices so the majority of people can afford them. There are currently more than 330 IKEA stores in 40 countries, including 38 in the U.S. IKEA incorporates sustainable efforts into day-to-day business and supports initiatives that benefit children and the environment. For more information, go to [IKEA-USA.com](http://IKEA-USA.com).

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