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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Santa Ynez Valley Residents Saving With Solar**

*"Solarizers" Enjoying Lower Bills From Newly Installed Solar Panels*

Local homeowners who switched to solar last year through the *Solarize Santa Ynez Valley* program are now enjoying huge savings on their electrical bills. The Solarize Santa Ynez Valley program, sponsored by the Santa Ynez Valley Alliance (SYVA) and the Community Environmental Council (CEC) helped 52 Valley homeowners go solar. The program offered Valley residents a discounted price for installing solar from two vetted installers, REC Solar and Solarponics, as well as free education and advice from an independent solar consultant.

CEC's Solarize Program Coordinator, Jefferson Litten, is enthusiastic about the program's success and notes that many homeowners raved about the program, "It was great to see so many Valley residents take advantage of last year's program. But I'm not surprised that the numbers were so high given that the Solarize program helps residents save money, supports local businesses, and increases the amount of renewable energy in the Valley. The homeowners I spoke with were all grateful for the education about solar and happy to be working with a vetted solar installer through the program."

Solvang resident, Donna Will, was one of the 52 "Solarizers" through the program and is now enjoying the savings from her family's 3.5 kilowatt solar array. "We save about \$100 a month on our PG&E bills. We are very happy solar owners." With recent drops in the price of panels and a 30% federal tax credit, solar has become not only accessible but actually a sound financial investment. Given these reduced upfront costs, an investment in solar like the Will's solar array can pay for itself in just five years. This short payback period coupled with the solar panels' 25 year performance guarantee now ensures that the Wills will receive years of free electricity by switching to solar.

The Santa Ynez Valley Alliance is also quite pleased with the program's success and happy to see the benefits the program has brought to the Valley. "The Valley Alliance is proud to have co-sponsored this very successful program. It is entirely consistent with our mission to reduce our carbon footprint. Programs like this help create a healthier environment, and a responsible stewardship of our natural resources," said Mark Oliver, President of the Valley Alliance.

Given the success of last year's program and warm reception by Valley residents, CEC and SYVA are planning on running a second Solarize Santa Ynez Valley program in 2014. For residents interested in learning about solar and for updates on a 2014 Solarize Program go to [www.SolarizeSYV.org](http://www.SolarizeSYV.org).