



Rural Development • Rural Business Service • Rural Energy for America Program

Solar Savings for Gardiner Grocery Store

Millions of visitors each year tour Yellowstone National Park. The North entrance to the park is the only entrance that is open year-round and is home to the small town of Gardiner, Montana.

The local grocery store, Gardiner Market, offers traditional items, plus gluten-free, organic, and local selections and is essential to the town of Gardiner, surrounding communities and tourists who visit Yellowstone National Park.

North Entrance Shopping Center, Inc., home of Gardiner Market, obtained grant funding through USDA, Rural Development’s Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) and Northwestern Energy to utilize an alternative energy source to lower their utility costs and increase the sustainability of their operation.

As with other grocery stores, a large amount of electricity is needed to run the coolers and display cases. The REAP grant funds were used to purchase and install a large 50kw PV solar system to offset the energy costs and reduce the store’s carbon footprint. Using energy from the sun versus fossil fuels helps combat greenhouse gas emissions and is earth friendly—another positive impact for the Market. The owners are passionate about making the Market and the regional economy sustainable for years to come. The addition of a solar electric system will allow the Market to continue to lead the community through their actions and encourage others to do the same.

Rebecca Demaree, owner of the store, is excited to take the savings from the lower utility costs and invest them in further improvements in the store. Demaree also wants to make her customers aware of the earth friendly action that the Market has taken. A monitor will be installed by the entrance to the store showing the amount of energy the system is generating.

Demaree said “if it hadn't been for the grant provided by Rural Development and the assistance provided by Northwestern Energy, they would not have gone forward with the project”.



Scott and Rebecca Demaree, owners of Gardiner Market and Orion Thornton, owner of Onsite Energy

Obligation Amount: \$35,975

Date of Obligation: July 6, 2015

Congressional District: Representative Zinke, At Large; Senators Tester and Daines

Partners: North Entrance Shopping Center, Northwestern Energy

Demographics: Local community of Gardiner and tourists of Yellowstone National Park

Impact: Reducing the carbon footprint at the same time ensuring the sustainability of a local food source for the residents and tourists of Gardiner, Montana