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Press Release: Solar Panels October 29, 2013

The Melrose Public Schools will go partially solar with the installation of new solar panels on the roofs of Melrose Veterans Memorial Middle School and Melrose High School. Melrose will buy the electricity from the panels at a lower rate than the City pays to National Grid.

“This is the future, right here on the roof of Melrose High School,” said Mayor Robert J. Dolan. “These solar panels are providing electricity to run the school. I anticipate that over time, solar energy will become a more and more important part of the energy picture for cities and towns throughout the Commonwealth. With this installation, we are preparing for our future.”

Project highlights:

- 301kW of solar panels have been installed on the roof of Melrose High School and Melrose Veterans Memorial Middle School by developer Ameresco, Inc.
- Combined with existing 50kW solar on the middle school, the solar array as a whole produces 351 kWh of electricity.
- Melrose will buy the electricity it produces at a rate that is less than what we pay National Grid over the 20 year contract term, resulting in annual utility budget savings
- The City incurs no capital cost for this work.
- The solar arrays and online production data are a great teaching resource for environmental science classes in grades 6-12. Students will be able to see the energy output in real time on monitors inside the schools.
- The panels are installed and will be connected to the grid by the end of 2013
- Ameresco's services were procured via a regional Energy Services Agreement coordinated by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and owner's representative services provided by Cadmus, with funding assistance from the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) Green Communities Grant Program.
- In addition, Ameresco is the energy services provider currently working on energy efficiency upgrades in 20 city and school buildings that will reduce energy usage by 16% - the energy savings they guarantee fund the project over the 14 year term.

“Governor Patrick has laid out nation-leading goals for renewable energy and energy efficiency in the Commonwealth,” said DOER Commissioner Mark Sylvia. “The city of Melrose, one of Massachusetts’ designated Green Communities, is demonstrating the benefits of adopting efficiency and renewable energy by reducing environmental impacts, keeping more municipal energy dollars in the community and providing a valuable educational tool for Melrose students. I applaud the city for its leadership.”

“We commend the City of Melrose for its leadership in embracing a renewable energy solution for its schools,” said Michael J. Daigneault, Vice President, Ameresco. “The solar generation provides a great opportunity for students to experience clean energy and sustainable practices as part of their daily curriculum.”