

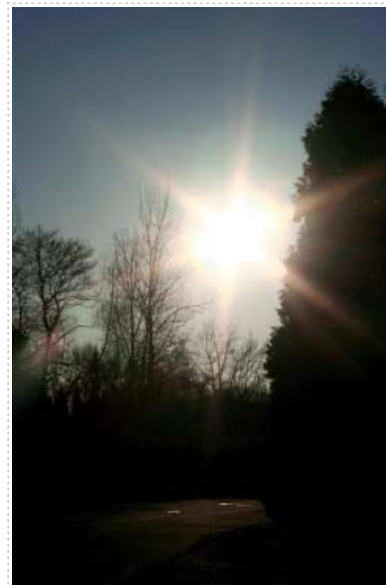
Solar power is promising for the area

BY JIM DINO (STAFF WRITER)

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JAMIE PESOTINE/Staff Photographer The sun shines brightly as it begins its descent in Hazle Township late Sunday afternoon. There are four large-scale solar energy projects proposed for the Hazleton area, including one proposed near Hazleton Municipal Airport.

With no fewer than four large-scale solar energy projects proposed in the Hazleton area, the question comes to mind: Is there enough sunlight here to power a solar plant?

A proponent of one of the projects and a green energy expert contends there is.

The true answer may not be that far off, as construction on the largest of the four projects is scheduled to begin in late spring.

Dr. Vera Cole, director of local power for the Mid-Atlantic Renewable Energy Association and the author of a handbook on renewable energy for the homeowner, said a national agency that measures sunlight found there is plenty of sunlight in the Hazleton area to support such a plant.

"The National Renewable Energy Laboratory said there is four to five kilowatt-hours per square meter of sun per day in Hazleton," Cole said. "Phoenix, one of the sunniest places in the country, has six to seven kilowatt-hours per square meter per day. In comparison, that's good."

That may be good news for Hazleton Mayor Lou Barletta, who wants the city to partner enXco to build a five-megawatt solar facility on 40 of 200 unused acres of land the city owns at the Hazleton Municipal Airport.

Meanwhile, CAN DO Inc., the Hazleton area's industrial and economic development organization, is investigating the feasibility of building a two-megawatt facility on unused land it owns.

And Romark Logistics is planning to build a two-megawatt solar facility on the roof of its facility along Route 924 in Humboldt Industrial Park.

But the largest planned solar facility is to be built in Nesquehoning, which, despite being just 10 miles away, is sunnier than Hazleton, according to an official with the firm behind the proposed 10-kilowatt plant.

John Curtis of Green Energy Capital Partners said Nesquehoning was chosen for what will be the largest solar facility east of the Mississippi River because of its excellent exposure to the sun.

"The sun is more significant in Nesquehoning than in Hazleton by 50 hours a year," he said. "If you look at the location of Nesquehoning on an historical data map, there is about 10 more minutes per day in Nesquehoning, which is about 50 hours a year more."

The area as a whole receives enough sunlight for a solar plant, Curtis said.

"The sunlight an area receives depends upon the latitude that area falls in," he said. "The lower the latitude - or the closer to the equator you are - the more sun you get. Germany is the leader in solar development in the world, and they are at a higher latitude than this area."

Cole explained that solar panels must be aimed a certain way, so as to maximize the sunlight they receive.

"The more sunlight they receive, the more electricity they will produce," she said. "They have to be pointed in a

southerly direction at a 40-degree angle to maximize their potential."

The Nesquehoning facility, which is being built on land owned by Kovatch Corp. along Route 54, will sell its power to PPL.

"Construction will begin in late spring and will be finished in 2011," Curtis said. "We should be operational by the first quarter of 2011."

The plant was to be built this year but delays in connecting the plant to the Pennsylvania-New Jersey-Maryland power grid delayed construction.

"It's a natural process but a very complicated process," Curtis said. "There are four stages to the process - a feasibility study, an impact study, a facilities study, and connecting. We are at stage three, the facilities study. The reliability of the plant to the grid has to be proved to prevent blackouts."

jdino@standardspeaker.com

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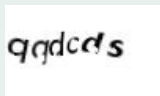
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Dear Diligence or lack of intelligence,

Photovoltaic power works even in overcast conditions. Might only generate about half of the electricity but it does generate a substantial amount.

No, I'm not saying NE has no rainy or cloudy days, I'm saying you and many other people in the NE are so quick to pass judgment and open up a can of worms you know nothing about.

So please re-read my earlier statement and do a little, just a little research before spewing ill-advised, ignorant words out of your mouth.

Not a naysayer, 02/01/10 4:38

Report

I guess I've been living around here too long.I'll believe all this when I see it.I have to go now and get a package ready for the new fantastic,state of the art, air freight terminal at the new Hazleton airport.Can anyone give me directions.

same old song and dance, 02/01/10 4:19

Report

Dear Not a Naysayer:

Please re-read Mr. Koromi's statement, obviously you are misinterpreting. Are you saying, "That NE has no

cloudy or rainy days"?????. Are you saying that all of our 365 days are bright and sunny?
Think before you speak.

Diligence ???, 02/01/10 11:21

[Report](#)

Alan,
What diligence have to done to make that statement? So what your saying is that the NE does not get
sunlight 365 days per year? Are you sure you don't just like opening you mouth to see your name on the SS
blogs?

Not a naysayer, 02/01/10 9:55

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John Curtis would be pushing solar power of course, that's his income. The northeast just does not receive
enough sunlight. Areas that receive more than 300 days of sunlight a year are having problems with the cost
verse energy put out from solar fields. The northeast can't feasibly sustain solar power.

Alan Koromi, 02/01/10 7:17

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