



324 East River Road  
Brainerd, MN 56401

Phone: 218/828-3705  
Fax: 218/828-8817

## NEWS RELEASE - For Immediate Release – Feb. 11, 2015

Contact: Jennifer Bergman, Executive Director, 218-824-3425  
Jennifer@brainerdhra.org

### **LOCAL PARTNERSHIP PROVIDES SOLAR POWER ENERGY SAVINGS TO BRAINERD FAMILY**

Brainerd, Minnesota—A Brainerd family will benefit from solar power energy savings through a partnership among Brainerd Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), Rural Renewable Energy Alliance (RREAL), Region 5 Development Commission (R5DC), and Brainerd Public Utilities (BPU).

The collaborative effort began when RREAL and Brainerd HRA partnered to install solar electric panels on a house owned by the Brainerd HRA. RREAL is a private nonprofit corporation that makes solar energy accessible to people of all income levels. The Brainerd HRA provides redevelopment and affordable housing opportunities to strengthen its neighborhoods. Together, along with a grant from R5DC and BPU's Renewable Incentives Program, they were able to provide the solar electric system at no cost to the family or the HRA. It is anticipated that the family will save approximately \$25 per month on their electric bill.

Installation of the solar electric Enphase System took place at the Brainerd residence the week of February 1<sup>st</sup>. The Enphase System includes a monitoring and analysis system that provides useful information and real-time performance tracking.

*"Through the use of this solar electric system, we're able to off-set about 70,827kW of energy. This equates to a savings of \$11,219 over the 30-year life of the system,"* explains Jason Edens, Director of RREAL.

Jennifer Bergman, Executive Director of Brainerd HRA, added, *"This project is a win/win. We are conserving energy and our low-income family will pay less on their monthly electric costs."*

###

Photos Attached:

Solar Panel Rendering.jpg  
Solar Panel Rendering2.jpg  
Installation.jpg

About Brainerd HRA:

Brainerd HRA's mission is to provide redevelopment and affordable housing opportunities to strengthen our neighborhoods. For more information about Brainerd HRA, visit [www.brainerdhra.org](http://www.brainerdhra.org).

About RREAL:

Dedicated to the mission of making solar energy accessible to people of all income levels, RREAL was established in 2000 as a private 501(c) (3) nonprofit corporation in Minnesota. Through our Solar Assistance Program, RREAL is pioneering the delivery of solar heat to low-income families as a lasting, clean and domestic solution to fuel poverty. Moving families from impoverished to empowered with solar heat, RREAL is transforming the way our nation delivers energy assistance. For more information, visit <http://www.rreal.org/>.





About Region 5 Development Commission:

The purpose of a RDC is "to insure the orderly and harmonious coordination of state, federal and local comprehensive planning and development programs for the solution of economic, social, physical and governmental problems of the state and its citizens...". RDCs provide a variety of technical assistance services to the local units of government based on the individual needs of their region. They partner with numerous state and federal agencies, obtaining and administering grants for programs and projects at the local level, and are recognized for their fiscal responsibility and capabilities in professional program management.

About Brainerd Public Utilities:

For more than 100 years, BPU has provided reliable electric, water and wastewater treatment services to the City of Brainerd. BPU provides power, water, and wastewater treatment within the city limits of Brainerd. BPU also provides wastewater treatment to all of Baxter area and power to some of the Baxter area.

BPU Renewable Incentives Program: BPU offers a rebate program for customers that install solar photovoltaic systems. Rebates are \$2 per watt, up to \$4,000. Systems are limited to 40 kW, in compliance with Minnesota's net metering policy. For more information about Brainerd Public Utilities, visit <http://www.bpu.org/>