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ATR pole-mounted solar power generators installed at Howard County complex

Will provide educational tool as well as clean power source

December 22, 2011, Ellicott City, MD – A new, clean energy source has just sprouted next to the seat of Howard County government -- in the parking lot of the George Howard Building in Ellicott City. Howard County has installed three lightpole-mounted, sun-tracking solar power systems made by Columbia-based Advanced Technology & Research Corp. These systems use GPS technology to literally follow the sun, enabling their solar panels to produce over 30% more power than fixed solar arrays. The public can follow how much clean power is being produced and how much greenhouse gas emission is being avoided on a monitoring display right in the building's lobby and over the internet.

The installation of these Single-Panel Tracker (SPT) devices is intended to demonstrate the potential of this technology for more widespread use on parking lot and roadway lighting poles of governments and commercial property owners. The technology is designed to support expansion to dozens or even hundreds of devices per site, all connected to the existing utility grid and providing clean power generation close to where the power is used.

“As a Howard County business, ATR especially appreciates the County’s willingness to host this installation of our Solar Power Pole to help demonstrate the utility and versatility of this green, energy-saving product,” said Dr. Jackson Yang, the company’s founder and CEO. “The County has been very supportive of ATR’s efforts to contribute to the area’s technology and manufacturing economy and create local jobs.”

“Having these sun-tracking solar power systems at County government headquarters is a win-win for us,” said Howard County Executive Ken Ulman. “We get to showcase the technology of a Howard County based firm, and ATR’s solar poles fit in well with the many energy-efficient programs we have already implemented throughout the government complex.”

“ATR’s SPT product is intended mainly for government and commercial owners of outdoor lighting systems,” says Rob Lundahl, ATR’s Vice President for Energy Systems and Automation. “The unit utilizes lightpoles as a mounting structure with convenient access to the utility grid,” Lundahl continued. Power produced by the tracker is fed to the grid to offset what is needed from the utility and capture savings at current utility rates. By taking advantage of existing infrastructure such as poles and wiring, the SPT can be cheaper to install than if new, dedicated infrastructure were required. “If the lightpoles are



sufficiently big and beefy, two solar panels can be mounted to a single tracking unit, doubling power production and improving economics further,” Lundahl added.

The SPT system is a good example of “distributed power generation,” in which the energy is produced locally rather than from a remote source, cutting down significantly on power transmission losses, says Lundahl. And the fact that the trackers can be installed on a pole or on just about any other vertical structure guarantees a very small footprint on the ground.

“Our pole-mounted systems also make a highly public statement about renewable energy that rooftop systems frequently cannot make,” says Lundahl. “By being visible in this case to anyone coming to do business at the Howard Building, they help demonstrate the County’s commitment to promoting energy independence and cutting greenhouse gases,” he adds.

Beyond clean energy production, says Lundahl, the SPT offers additional potential for messaging – be it public, corporate or nonprofit – through snap-on covers on both sides of the tracker mount. “These easily changed side panels can be used for logos, revenue-generating advertising or other messaging, depending on who deploys them and where,” Lundahl says.

About ATR

Advanced Technology & Research Corp. (ATR) is a Maryland-based engineering firm with a 38-year history of excellence in military systems, robotics and automation equipment. Over the past three years, the company has developed a suite of solar power systems for small-scale commercial and residential applications. All ATR Solartech systems feature state-of-the-art sun-tracking technology for enhanced energy production from photovoltaic panels, mounts designed for vertical structures, small footprints and strong aesthetics. Produced in Maryland, ATR Solartech products include distributed solar power generation systems for lighting and utility poles, ground-mounted systems for residential clean energy production, solar-powered electric vehicle charging stations, and the solar components of hybrid wind-solar systems.

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ATR Solartech, a unit of Advanced Technology & Research Corp. (ATR), is a Maryland company designing and manufacturing innovative solar energy products for the world market.