

Press information

Swiss Solar Prize Awarded to 'Quimby Huus' Solar Power Project

Wheelchairs run on sunshine: Kyocera solar modules generate energy for electric wheelchairs

St. Gallen / Neuss, 20 February 2013 – Resource conservation and the promotion of renewable energy is something which affects us all. With this concept in mind, an exceptional solar project has been awarded the 2012 Swiss Solar Prize: The wheelchairs of ten inhabitants at Quimby Huus, an institution for the physically disabled in St. Gallen, Switzerland, are driven exclusively using solar power. A 3 kWp solar system comprising Kyocera solar modules is installed on the roof of the Quimby Huus, generating 3,000 kWh of electricity each year – enough to power the residents' electric wheelchairs all year round without creating any CO₂ emissions. This sustainable project is led by environmentally-committed Sandro Buff (30), who has been using a wheelchair himself for 16 years.

Electric wheelchairs tend to be powered by the main electrical grid and usually require two 12 volt rechargeable batteries. The idea behind the Quimby Huus solar project was to derive this power entirely from renewable energy. In order to realize this idea, a solar power system needed to be installed on the roof to free inhabitants from dependence on the main grid and secure an environmentally-friendly form of energy. The leader of the project, Sandro Buff, quickly gained the support of the Quimby Huus manager.

Mr. Buff conceived this project together with energy advisor Peter Grau and installed a 3 kWp solar power system including 12 Kyocera solar modules on the roof of the home. The project was fully funded by sponsors, and the environmentally-friendly power

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generated from this installation enables the residents to travel approximately 1,500 km per year in their wheelchairs, fuelled solely by the sun's energy. Moreover, an energy metre was installed to give inhabitants a clear picture of how much energy has been consumed, which increases their awareness of energy consumption and offers additional potential for conservation. The project also aims to serve as a motivation for others to implement their own initiatives.

Sandro Buff was awarded the 2012 Solar Power Prize for his exceptional commitment. He is convinced that everyone must "play their part in reversing energy trends," and says, "Together we can take on the challenge."

For more information about Kyocera: www.kyocera.eu

About Kyocera

Headquartered in Kyoto, Japan, Kyocera Corporation is one of the world's leading manufacturers of fine ceramic components for the technology industry. The strategically important divisions in the Kyocera Group, which is comprised of 235 subsidiaries (as of April 1, 2012), are information and communications technologies, products which increase quality of life, and environmentally friendly products. The technology group is also one of the largest producers of solar energy systems worldwide, with more than 3,0 gigawatts of solar power having been installed around the world to date.

With a global workforce of about 71,000 employees, Kyocera posted net sales of approximately €10.83 billion in fiscal year 2011/2012. The products marketed by the company in Europe include laser printers, digital copying systems, microelectronic components, finceramic products and complete solar power systems. The Kyocera Group has two independent companies in the Federal Republic of Germany: Kyocera Fineceramics GmbH in Neuss and Esslingen and Kyocera Document Solutions in Meerbusch.

The company also takes an active interest in cultural affairs. The Kyoto Prize, a prominent international award, is presented each year by the Inamori Foundation — established by Kyocera founder Dr. Kazuo Inamori — to individuals and groups worldwide who have contributed significantly to the scientific, cultural, and spiritual betterment of humankind (converted at present €500,000 per prize category).

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