

# Valley Springs firm makes transition to solar power

**By Nick Baptista**

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Diversified Refrigeration Co. headquarters located on Main Street in Valley Springs has gone solar.

West Calaveras County Supervisors Darren Spellman and Gary Tofanelli were on hand for a ceremony and tour Wednesday marking the milestone and said to their knowledge, Diversified Refrigeration is the first commercial building in the Valley Springs area to go solar.

In addition to paying PG&E for little or no electricity use, federal tax incentives allow the company to write off a substantial portion of the costs of the system. Diversified Refrigeration Co. owner Dan Cline said he expects to break even on his \$68,000 investment in about two years.

The solar system is geared to break even or pay for just a small amount for electricity usage since commercial operations do not receive pay for generating electricity.

“We can bank some of it, but it is a ‘use it or lose it program’ at the end of a year,” Cline said.

CitiGreen Solar & Foothill Electric based in Auburn installed the solar electric system. The company has been in business for 11 years, said Kelly Christopher of CitiGreen Solar, and provides all of the products and services necessary to make solar installation a simple turnkey transition for the client.

Diversified Refrigeration Co. has been in Valley Springs since 2003, Cline said. The company provides commercial refrigeration and cold-storage units in large-scale facilities such as distribution centers and large membership stores.

“We’re 100% international,” Cline said, with clients in The Philippines, Central and South America and the Caribbean.

The 7,500-square-foot building is situated on 1.3 acres. The firm has 30 employees, with five of them based in the Valley Springs headquarters.

Cline chose Valley Springs as his headquarters because it is close to his residence in Mokelumne Hill.

With the Diversified Refrigeration project, CitiGreen has now installed solar systems at 70 commercial sites and created 12 megawatts in solar capacity, Christopher said.

“Not only will Diversified Refrigeration realize financial benefits, they will also enjoy knowing they are making an environmental difference,” Christopher said.