

3M Renewable Energy Division Expands Solar Weathering Capabilities

New facility will test a variety of products for the solar industry

3M today celebrated the commissioning of its newest outdoor Solar Weathering Center, located at 3M's Cottage Grove, Minn. facility. The outdoor Solar Weathering Center is an expansion of the company's existing state-of-the-art weathering facilities around the world. The center will be used to conduct various environmental testing of products used for the solar industry.

The Solar Weathering Center layout is tailored for side-by-side comparisons of solar energy systems utilizing a variety of 3M's products. These products include 3M™ [Ultra Barrier](#) Solar Film, 3M™ [Scotchshield™](#) Film Backsheets and 3M™ Solar [Mirror Film](#). The company will install approximately 100 solar photovoltaic (PV) and concentrated photovoltaic (CPV) modules at Cottage Grove in multiple arrangements. The center will also feature parabolic troughs to test products used in concentrated solar thermal systems and includes plans to add testing capabilities for BIPV (Building Integrated Photovoltaics) in the future.

The new outdoor Solar Weathering Center comes equipped with an automated data center and weather station to monitor the systems' output, temperature and humidity in harsh weather conditions. 3M researchers will analyze resulting data regularly to corroborate performance and direct future product development.

"For decades, 3M has vigorously tested the weatherability of its products in its accelerated Weathering Resource Center and at multiple outdoor sites worldwide, to optimize designs and ensure reliability and performance over extended periods of time. This expertise is crucial to the solar industry, where systems are expected to perform for 25 years or more," said Steve Hedrick, Technical Director with the 3M Renewable Energy Division. "We are confident our new outdoor Solar Weathering Center will allow us to further improve upon our exceptional solar product portfolio and better serve our global customer base."

Construction on the outdoor Solar Weathering Center began in late 2010, and 3M expects to complete all solar installations this summer. For more information on 3M's solar product offerings, please visit: www.3M.com/solar

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About 3M

3M captures the spark of new ideas and transforms them into thousands of ingenious products. Our culture of creative collaboration inspires a never-ending stream of powerful technologies that make life better. 3M is the innovation company that never stops inventing. With \$27 billion in sales, 3M employs about 80,000 people worldwide and has operations in more than 65 countries. For more information, visit www.3M.com or follow @3MNews on Twitter.

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