

### **Ramblewood Solar Electric Generating Project-February 2009**

As part of our ongoing Capital Improvement Program, the Mount Laurel Municipal Utilities Authority has begun construction of a 529 kW Solar Electric Generating System. The facility is being built on 3.3 acres of Authority owned property located at 200 ½ Ramblewood Parkway and will consist of 2,254 SHARP 235 watt photo voltaic modules. The site was chosen and the facility sized to provide the necessary electric power for one of the Authority's main sanitary sewer pump stations and one of our principal ground water supply wells. In order to minimize the design cost for the project, the Authority teamed up with the students and faculty of the Rowan University Engineering Department to prepare the initial layout and size of the solar arrays. We also structured the bidding documents, so that the contractor was responsible for the final design of the facility, thereby ensuring the installation will be constructed utilizing the latest technology.

With the cooperation and support of Mount Laurel Township, the Authority aggressively pursued funding of this project through the New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. The Authority was one of the first applicants in Burlington County, and part of a small percentage of all applicants to be approved for funding under this program. Our total loan amount is \$4,438,400; however, \$2,219,200 (or 50%) was "forgiven" under the terms of the Federal ARRA program. Of the remaining monies, \$1,109,600 is being borrowed interest free, while the remainder carries current bond market interest rates ranging between 2 and 5%.

In addition to saving electricity cost for these two facilities, currently about \$ 90,000 per year, the Authority will be able to sell solar renewable energy certificates (SRECs) on the open market. These SREC are purchased by utility companies to offset the quantity of electricity they are required, by statute, to generate using renewable methods. SRECs are currently being traded for between \$400 and \$600 per kW.

The combination of electricity savings to operate the two facilities, the \$2.2 million grant, and the potential of selling over 500 SRECs for \$400 each, per year makes the Ramblewood Solar Electric Generating System a win/win project for the residents of Mount Laurel, the environment and the Authority. The system is scheduled to begin operating in late 2010.