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Solar power continues to push its way into new markets, despite recession

Despite global economic chaos, renewable energy use, especially solar power, expanded throughout the world in 2010. Growth is continuing as innovations in technology improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness while governments provide regulatory incentives to use clean electricity. The findings were highlighted in two recent reports: The U.N. Environment Programme's (UNEP) 2011 Global Trends in Renewable Energy Investment report and the 2011 Renewables Global Status Report (GSR) from REN21, an international renewable energy advocacy group.

With \$211 billion invested in renewables last year, according to the UNEP report and \$94.7 billion in new investments in solar, the investments and markets for green energy are growing in the midst of the recession. The GSR notes that renewables provided 25 percent of the world's electricity by early 2011, including substantial growth in solar power generation. Solar power includes photovoltaic (PV) cells, which convert light directly into electricity using specialized materials; concentrated solar power (CSP), which uses mirrors to heat a substance to drive a generator or stores it for later use; and solar heating, which directly transmits thermal energy from the sun to heat water or air.

People are implementing solar particularly in those countries with the most attractive feed-in tariff subsidy programs. The cost of solar PV has fallen sharply -- 60 percent in three years -- and its power is now competitive with retail electricity in a few sunny countries. With added tax incentives, solar power is becoming an increasingly effective way for consumers to lower their energy costs and a more viable market for production and installation.

Extended Temp Forecast: Chicago Area

Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
67 - 85	76 - 91	76 - 89	72 - 87	71 - 88

Electricity Pricing Areas – On Peak Aug 2011

	July 26, 2011	Per kWh
PJM	West	\$.06815
Cinergy	Peak Monthly	\$.04894

ComEd Average Day Ahead LMP Electric Price

Time Period	Average per Kwh
Jul 1 - Jul 31, 2010	\$.04741
Aug 1 - Aug 31	\$.04628
Sep 1 - Sep 30	\$.02934
Oct 1 - Oct 31	\$.02702
Nov 1 - Nov 30	\$.02778
Dec 1 - Dec 31	\$.03545
Jan 1 - Jan 31, 2011	\$.03871
Feb 1 - Feb 28	\$.03581
March 1 - Mar 31	\$.03668
April 1 - April 30	\$.03448
May 1 - May 31	\$.03954
June 1 - June 30	\$.03851
July 1 thru July 25	\$.05015

Weather Tue: Partly cloudy. High around 85F. Winds NNE at 10 to 20 mph. **Wed:** Partly cloudy with isolated thunderstorms possible. High 91F. Winds S at 15 to 25 mph. Chance of rain 30%. **Thu:** Scattered thunderstorms. Highs in the upper 80s and lows in the mid 70s. **Fri:** Scattered thunderstorms possible. Highs in the upper 80s and lows in the low 70s. **Sat:** Mix of sun and clouds. Highs in the upper 80s and lows in the low 70s.

