Solar Power Finds Its Place In The Sun

TUV Rheinland Group [1] has joined forces with Arizona State University (ASU) to create TUV Rheinland PTL LLC—a comprehensive state-of-the-art facility for testing and certification of solar energy equipment. This collaboration (a private venture) will be based in Tempe, AZ, which receives an average of 325 days of sunshine annually.

According to these organizations, ASU’s photovoltaic testing laboratory, established in 1992, has long been the only lab in the United States accredited for photovoltaic design qualification and type approval. This collaboration, however, will connect ASU’s lab facility to TUV Rheinland’s global network.

This venture will also expand upon the lab's testing capabilities in both volume and scope—by not only adding advanced test equipment, but also the capacity to test and certify photovoltaic panels and electrical components for Europe, Asia and North America. The lab, in turn, will provide TUV Rheinland with its university knowledge base, immediate entry to the U.S. solar testing market, and the lab’s experience testing photovoltaic panels in both simulated and real outdoor environments.

TUV Rheinland PTL LLC is additionally collaborating with Arizona’s largest electric provider, Arizona Public Service; the utility will provide 5 acres of outdoor testing space at its Solar Test and Research (STAR) Center for conducting outdoor endurance tests. Established in 1985, the STAR Center has earned a reputation as being a leader in the commercial development and proof of operation of emerging solar energy technologies.

TUV Rheinland North America President and CEO Stephan Schmitt says, “The potent combination of business, university and utility solar test assets will enable TUV Rheinland PTL LLC to be the first in the world to offer full-scale photovoltaic testing and certification across the entire component chain of photovoltaic systems. By adding this unique new capacity in the U.S. to TUV Rheinland’s existing photovoltaic laboratories in Europe and Asia, we are establishing a laboratory network that will deliver unprecedented service to the crucially important and rapidly growing solar industry."

In addition to the venture’s worldwide implications, the new testing facility is expected to produce local economic impact by attracting solar energy manufacturers and entrepreneurs to Arizona, boosting the state’s solar energy credentials and increasing employment in the solar energy industry. TUV Rheinland PTL's kick-off will culminate this month with a series of global events, according to those organizations involved.

Links:
[1] http://www.chem.info/http