

Florida PSC Highlights Solar Array for National Energy Awareness Month



During National Energy Awareness Month in October, Florida Public Service Commission (PSC) Commissioner Jimmy Patronis highlighted a small business, VizCo-US in Monticello, that is powered by the sun. A facility tour and press conference featured VizCo's innovative solar array and recognized the energy efficiency efforts of its CEO Chris Cantolino.

"Energy Awareness Month reminds us how our energy habits can make a difference to reduce our energy usage and our utility bills," said Commissioner Patronis. *"We highlight and celebrate the contributions of VizCo—a business committed to advancing energy innovation and efficiency—as we recognize the importance of renewable energy in our nation."*

Commissioner Patronis was joined by Senator Denise Grimsley, Representative Halsey Beshears, and Jefferson County Commissioners at the event and tour of VizCo's 1.004 MW, 3,280 solar panel photovoltaic ground-mounted system that powers its 40,000 sq. ft. manufacturing facility. VizCo's solar system produces 1,450,000 kWh of electricity annually, enough energy to power 138 households per year, and saves 536 tons of CO2 from being emitted.



VizCo CEO Chris Cantolino, passionate about creative Florida manufacturing and economic efficiency, said, "Solar photovoltaic is a smart business choice. Reducing and controlling operational costs increases a business's competitive edge. We use a lot of energy, but we try to be extremely efficient and appreciate being recognized for our efforts."



The PSC's net metering rule allows solar power generators, such as VizCo, to tie into the power grid and gain credit for the power they contribute. Any excess energy that VizCo produces during daylight hours is credited against any electricity used at night, on rainy days, or during other periods when its electric consumption exceeds its solar system's output. VizCo's utility, Duke Energy Florida, LLC (DEF), then bills VizCo only for its "net" energy use. VizCo is the only manufacturing facility in the state fully powered through net metering, according to DEF.



VizCo produces plastic injection-molded drip pans, alarms, and pipe grips for water heaters. The company is currently working with Wilson & Associates to obtain an energy grant to further its vision to manufacture essential homeowner products powered by renewable energy.

Since its inception by a presidential proclamation in 1991, the U.S. Department of Energy has sponsored Energy Awareness Month in October to promote smart energy choices, while also highlighting economic and job growth, protection of our environment, and increased energy independence. The PSC observes Energy Awareness Month annually with events to promote energy efficiency and conservation.