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## OU to install solar powered system

By **Jeff Samoray**, OU Web Writer

For the first time in its history, Oakland University will be installing a system that produces a significant amount of electricity from solar energy. The 10-kilowatt system, which will be installed on the roof of the newly constructed university student apartments community center, will provide enough electricity to power the equivalent of five typical homes.

This endeavor, called the 10 Kilowatt Photovoltaic Public Demonstration Project, became possible when OU received a \$100,000 grant from the **State of Michigan Energy Office**.

"I always had an interest in alternative energy sources and believe there will be a greater demand for them in the future," said Jim Leidel, OU energy manager and photovoltaic project manager. "There has been very little activity in Michigan as far as alternative energy sources, except for some wind power generated near the Straits of Mackinac. But this system is going to be good for the university. Once it is installed, it will be one of the largest building integrated systems in the Midwest."

The project is a collaboration between OU, Oakland Community College, Berkaert ECD Solar Systems LLC and consultant Robert Pratt. Leidel currently is sending out bids for installation of the system, and work should proceed by spring. The project must be complete by June 30, 2003, in order to receive the grant from the state.

"The system will look like dark blue metal shingles on the roof of the building. They will consist of stainless steel and silicone modules with a rubber backing and a plastic, weather-tight enclosure for the wiring," Leidel said. "I like the building-integrated design and believe it will save some electrical costs. The system will provide whatever power is being used in the community center building at any one time and perhaps export power to another area in the student apartment complex. It's really meant to be a demonstration project and both OU and OCC will study this system in their engineering and technical programs."

For more information on the project, visit Oakland University's **Energy Management** Web site.

### SUMMARY

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