

Pharmaca Integrative Pharmacy partnering with Boulder's Independent Power Systems to Install Solar Paneling at Pearl Street Store
Panels to generate 5,400 kWh per year

BOULDER, Colo. (January 6, 2011) - Pharmaca Integrative Pharmacy, Inc., the nation's first and largest chain of integrative pharmacies, is set to become Boulder's only solar-power-producing pharmacy. The company just installed 20 panels on the awning outside of its downtown Boulder store, located at 1647 Pearl St.

The panels were installed by Boulder-based Independent Power Systems (IPS), and will generate approximately 5,400 kWh per year, offsetting nearly 100 tons of carbon dioxide over the next 30 years (equivalent to not driving about 200,000 miles). The 3.72 kW Sanyo Hit Double panels were selected both for their unique ability to generate electricity not only from direct sunlight on the front of the panel, but also from ambient light from reflected surfaces on the back of the panel. In addition, the partially transparent design allows sunlight to pass through the panel, creating a unique light environment at the entrance to the store. Monitors installed at the front entrance of the store, visible to both customers and passersby, will feature data about real-time energy collection and carbon offsets.

The installation is part of Pharmaca's commitment to the environment, and will complement the store's standard environmentally friendly building features, including bamboo flooring, recycled carpeting and low-VOC paint. Pharmaca also recently replaced the indoor lighting at the same downtown location with energy-efficient LED lighting, conserving an additional 29,000 kWh per year.

Independent Power Systems has designed and installed hundreds of residential and commercial solar electric systems in the Boulder area since 2006, and solar awnings have become a specialty. "I recognized at the initial solar evaluation that Pharmaca's existing awning structure was practically purpose-built for an IPS design," said design consultant Steve King.

"We were honored to work with a progressive, Boulder-based company like Pharmaca to help them meet their renewable energy goals," said Tony Boniface, president and founder of IPS. "We hope that this high-visibility system in downtown Boulder will generate curiosity and raise awareness about renewable energy."

Here are a few of the tips that experts from Independent Power Systems offer for those interested in in-home solar installation.

- South is always the optimal orientation for solar panel placement. East and west are also entirely viable orientations.
- Solar panels vary somewhat in their design and efficiency. For crystalline photovoltaic (PV) panels, efficiencies range from about 13 percent to over 19 percent. Depending on the size of the PV array (an average size is about 5.5 kW) and the electrical demands of a household, the system may even cover all of the electrical consumption.
- Most PV systems are tied to the electrical grid. When the sun is shining, the system can sometimes produce enough energy to power the house and feed energy back into the meter. Here in Boulder, if there has been a surplus of energy produced by the PV array, the utility company will write a check to the customer or simply bank the energy credit for when the home needs to pull energy from the grid.
- Normal rain and snowfall will keep PV panels clean enough. If dust, bird droppings or snow accumulate, panel-owners should carefully hose or clean off the panels to keep them working at maximum capacity.

For more information about the event, visit <http://www.pharmaca.com/pharmaca-boulder-colorado.aspx>.

About Pharmaca

Pharmaca Integrative Pharmacy Inc., founded in June 2000 and based in Boulder, Colo., is the nation's first integrative pharmacy chain offering traditional prescription-filling services alongside natural and complementary health solutions. The company owns 23 pharmacies in California, Colorado, New Mexico, Oregon and Washington.

About Independent Power Systems

Independent Power Systems (IPS) is a Boulder owned, NABCEP-certified solar electric contractor with more than a decade of experience and hundreds of successful residential and commercial installations, including Coors Field. Founded in 1996 by professional engineer and master electrician Tony Boniface, IPS offers unsurpassed technical expertise, complete customer service, and in-house design, engineering and installation. IPS is a winner of the SunPower Intelelegant award for technical and aesthetic excellence in solar design and installation. For more information, visit www.solarips.com.