



Itek Energy Pilots US' First Reusable PV Module Packaging Takeback Program

Itek Energy leads the US PV module manufacturing industry in providing reusable packing material and a takeback program for its customers.

BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON, UNITED STATES, March 30, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As part of a commitment to environmental stewardship, [Itek Energy](#) is piloting the first reusable PV module packaging takeback program in the United States. Looking for ways to improve shipping practices and increase the security of their product during transit, Itek adopted the European-designed EckPack system.

IDENTIFYING THE OPPORTUNITY

This system uses a sturdy black polypropylene piece which fits to each corner of the module. The corner pieces act as spacers as well as corner protectors. The pieces stack like Legos®, preventing the modules from coming into contact with one another and getting damaged in transit.

The corners work well for the purpose, and are made of recyclable material, but they offered a further benefit. Itek also noticed that approximately 90% of the polypropylene corners were undamaged and reusable after the initial use. Recognizing the opportunity, Itek implemented a return and reuse program that has proven very popular with customers.

"We wanted to develop a program to enable solar installers to easily and efficiently return the packing corners for reuse," says Evan Bush, Special Projects Coordinator at Itek Energy. "Our goal was to reduce waste and inefficiency, without adding a burden to our customers." Bush sent out communications to customers to gather feedback about such a program, and received an enthusiastic response.

HOW IT WORKS

Local participating customers are issued large totes that arrive with their shipment of PV modules. These totes can easily be taken to installation sites and used to store the corner pieces as they are removed from the modules prior to installation. The customer then simply swaps out a full bag for an empty one when they pick up their next order. For customers not close enough for will-call, Itek has established a relationship with Oak Harbor Freight Lines to provide pick-up and return of reusable packaging.

The program has been in place for approximately six months, and in that time, Itek has reused around 40,000 pieces – keeping over 5,000 pounds of plastic out of the waste-stream and ensuring that non-reusable pieces are responsibly recycled.

CUSTOMER RESPONSE

Pete Day from [Ecotech Solar](#) in Bellingham lauds the program as, "... a great way for us to close the gap on reducing single-use plastic in our operations and contribute to a working 'reuse' model. In short, it's an effortless process that keeps a hefty amount of plastic employed!"

Itek has also reengineered their shipping pallets to increase durability and reusability, and is working

out the details of a pallet return program for its customers, as well.

“The system is set up to make the return of pallets and EckPacks easy and infrequent,” says Patrick Daly of Olympia-based [South Sound Solar](#). “Itek’s program further exemplifies their commitment to creating a truly renewable industry.”

For more details about this program, contact Evan Bush, Special Projects Coordinator at 360-647-9531 x118.

About Itek Energy:

Itek is a fast-growing American solar manufacturer headquartered in Bellingham, Washington. Itek takes pride in providing the world with high-quality, assembled-in-America solar modules with an exemplary reliability record. Itek’s experienced team of engineers, operators, and leadership share a passion for solar energy and are committed to making a positive impact, from following sustainability best practices in their own facilities to empowering underprivileged communities with access to clean solar energy.

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