



Darden Restaurants Dedicates Solar Panel Installation at Corporate Headquarters

ORLANDO, Fla., Feb. 20 /CSRwire/ - Darden Restaurants recently unveiled a 1.1 megawatt solar panel installation on the rooftop of its Restaurant Support Center (RSC) in Orlando (see video [here](#)). Representing the largest private solar array in Florida, the system will generate enough power to subsidize 15 to 20 percent of the RSC's annual usage – the equivalent of taking the campus off the power grid for nearly two months.

“One of our key goals at Darden is to create significant social value in the communities where we do business,” said Drew Madsen, president and COO of Darden Restaurants. “We do that not only through volunteerism, charitable giving and other philanthropic activities, but also through our approach to sustainability. Not only is sustainability ‘the right thing to do,’ we believe it’s a smarter way to run our business.

“Harnessing the power of the sun is a smarter way to fuel our operations at our RSC and complements the other sustainable elements that make up the design of our headquarters facility. It allows us to diversify our power source and lower our energy costs while helping ease the burden on the community’s supply of power, lessening the overall strain on the electric system on hot Florida afternoons.”

The solar installation is expected to produce up to 1.9 million kilowatt-hours of electricity per year, equaling the average annual energy usage of approximately 163 homes while reducing carbon emissions by more than 1,300 metric tons annually.

“Progress Energy applauds Darden’s dedication to sustainability,” said Vincent Dolan, president and CEO of Progress Energy Florida. “Alternative energy will play an important role in meeting our customers’ long-term energy needs, and strategic investments such as Darden’s will help ensure the most efficient use of solar technology.”

Opened in September 2009, Darden’s RSC facility is the largest building in Florida to receive Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification for New Construction (NC). It includes a number of energy-efficiency features, including an all-glass exterior that lets in daylight, but not heat; a U-shaped floor plan that limits western exposures; motion sensors to turn off lights in vacant rooms; and a “daylight harvesting” system that monitors natural light levels and automatically dims artificial lighting as appropriate.

For more information about Darden’s commitment to sustainability, visit www.generationcommitment.com.

About Darden Restaurants

Darden Restaurants, Inc., (NYSE: DRI), the world’s largest full-service restaurant company, owns and operates more than 1,900 restaurants that generate over \$7.5 billion in annual sales. Headquartered in Orlando, and employing 180,000 people, Darden is recognized for a culture that rewards caring for and responding to people. In 2012, Darden was named to the FORTUNE “100 Best Companies to Work For” list for the second year in a row and is the only full-service restaurant company to ever appear on the list. Our restaurant brands – Red Lobster, Olive Garden, LongHorn Steakhouse, The Capital Grille, Bahama Breeze, Seasons 52 and Eddie V’s – reflect the rich diversity of those who dine with us. Our brands are built on deep insights into what our guests want. For more information, please visit www.darden.com.

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For more from this organization:

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