



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LIFECARE RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

## Connecticut Lifecare Community Makes Golden Years Green

### *Essex Meadows Adds Solar to List of Environmental Amenities*

**ESSEX, Conn. – October 8, 2008** – Many of us who were born after 1950 assume sustainable living is something invented in recent decades. That would be news to today's retirees, for whom 'reduce, reuse, recycle' was a way of life long before 'carbon footprint' became a household expression.

So, perhaps it's not so strange to see Essex Meadows, a retirement and lifecare community on the Connecticut shoreline, that has chosen to 'go green.'

Essex Meadows' list of environmental amenities includes geothermal heating and cooling, native-plant meadows instead of lawns, and an environmental committee of residents whose goal is to implement the principles of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) by promoting energy-saving lightbulbs, water conservation and a host of other environmentally friendly practices.

The community's latest green project is the installation of a solar energy system. Designed and installed by Gloria Spire Solar of Bedford, Mass., the system's 616 solar panels will cover approximately 9,000 square feet of roof space and will generate 128,282 kWh (kilowatt hours) each year.

Essex Meadows Executive Director, Jennifer Rannestad says that the decision to go solar is partly about sustainable living and also partly a matter of good economics.

"Our residents are very forward-thinking," Rannestad says. "Not only do they care about the environment, they also are sharp business people who are concerned about the high cost of energy and want to do something about it."

The new solar system will offset up to 6 percent of the community's power needs and will supplant the generation of 99 tons of carbon dioxide emissions each year—equivalent to the green house gases removed by 20 acres of forest.

While the 'green' benefits of the system begin immediately, it should pay for itself in approximately eight years and will save Essex Meadows nearly \$1 million in electrical costs over its 30-year life span. The system was made possible, in part, by a \$459,719 grant from the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund.

Gloria Spire CEO, Mark Goodreau says he expects to see more retirement communities following the Essex Meadows example as they discover that solar is a feasible and affordable investment.

"As we grow older," Goodreau says, "most of us become more keenly aware of the legacy we are leaving to future generations. A big part of that legacy should be a clean environment and a strong economy. Solar power serves both of those goals."

Essex Meadows officially will dedicate and turn on their new solar system during their 20th anniversary celebration on Tuesday, October 28.

#### **About Essex Meadows**

Essex Meadows is one of New England's premier retirement communities—a dynamic community with a dedicated staff of professionals who consistently maintain the highest level of resident satisfaction in both hospitality and healthcare. Essex Meadows offers residential cottages, apartments and a healthcare center along with assisted living and skilled nursing, providing for a complete continuum of care. We also rely on one of the most respected and experienced management companies in the business, Life Care Services LLC. For more information, visit [www.essexmeadows.com](http://www.essexmeadows.com) or contact us at 860-767-7201.