

Communication Services Department
5334 South Prince Street
Littleton, Colorado 80166-0001
Phone: 303-710-7893
Fax: 303-738-7894
www.co.arapahoe.co.us

For release: May 10, 2007

Contact:

NICHOLE PARMELLY

Communication Services Specialist II

Direct: 303-636-1945

Mobile: 303-710-7893

Email: nparmelly@co.arapahoe.co.us

Arapahoe County turning green ***Arapahoe County installs solar panel in low-income home***

Aurora, Colo --- On Wednesday, May 9, one Aurora couple received a very special gift that will help them for years to come. That gift was a solar panel installed by Arapahoe County's Weatherization Division in an effort to help them conserve energy and lower their utility bills.

Arapahoe County identified Jean Janice and his wife Suzie as ideal candidates for their alternative energy program. Jean hasn't been able to work in over a year. He's battling lung cancer but it's a flight he says he's going to win. "The chemo makes me so cold," he said. "This winter was especially difficult. My wife would pile blankets on top of me to try to keep me warm. We're thankful for this opportunity to make our utilities more affordable."

The pilot project will install six panels before the end of June in an effort to be more environmentally friendly and minimize energy consumption. Staff will monitor each panel's usage and analyze the cost/savings benefit of solar heating as a supplement to furnace heating.

"It's important to reduce energy consumption and use alternative forms of energy to reduce our dependency on finite resources," said Steve Elliott, Weatherization Program Administrator.

The panel collects solar energy and draws air in from the house, heats it between 20-40 degrees and then sends it back into the house. It is completely self-containing, meaning it doesn't use any electricity or gas. This type of solar heating works best in a location where participants spend most of the day at home, there is high energy consumption, and traditional forms of weatherization tactics are not effective.

The project is funded through House Bill 1200 and allows the County to provide this service through its Weatherization program at no cost to eligible residents. Also in attendance were Arapahoe County Commissioners Pat Noonan and Frank Weddig along with representatives from the Governor's Energy Office and the U.S. Dept. of Energy.

* * *