

## Lakeview Nurseries Officially Going Greener with Solar Power on Earth Day

Lakeview Nurseries will "Go Greener" on Earth Day, April 22, with an official, "Throw the Switch" ceremony at 4 pm, turning on their new solar powered electrical generating system.

During the first two weeks in April, thirty-six solar photovoltaic panels will be installed on the roof of Lakeview Nurseries. The solar panels will provide Lakeview with 80% to 90% of their electrical needs. In conjunction with the "Throw the Switch" ceremony, Lakeview Nurseries will be offering tours narrated by their installer and certified contractor, Moss Hollow, LLC Energy Systems Design & Construction (<http://www.mosshollow.com>) taking place from 2-6 pm.

The "Throw the Switch" ceremony is the highlight of Lakeview's "Natural Solutions" 10-day event taking place April 17th-26th. The week will consist of educational workshops and product seminars that focus on gardens and landscapes. As a thank you to their customers, Lakeview will plant any tree that is purchased on Arbor Day, April 24, which is valued at a \$100 savings. For a complete schedule of the Natural Solutions events refer to Lakeview's website at <http://www.lakeviewnurseries.com>.

Lakeview Nursery received a grant for the solar powered electrical generating system from the Massachusetts Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program (AEEP). The AEEP funds those practices that promote energy efficiency, water conservation, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Lakeview Nurseries was selected, among hundreds of applicants, to participate in the program and was reimbursed by AEEP for a portion of the project's cost of materials. The solar powered system also qualifies for a rebate from the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative. The balance of the project is financed through the First Pioneer Farm Credit Union.

All are invited to attend Lakeview's "Throw the Switch" ceremony. MA State Representative Jen Benson, MA State Senator Jennifer Flanagan, representatives from the Department of Agriculture, Commissioner Douglas Peterson and Assistant Commissioner Scott Soares, along with Lunenburg Selectmen, and Lunenburg Town Department Officials are expected to be in attendance.

Back in February, Lakeview

spent the winter days prepping for the solar panel installation by enhancing the structural integrity of their building to support the enormous weight of the solar panels. In accordance with the initial design of the solar powered system, no additional building construction or expansion will be required. The Lakeview Garden Center, located on top of a hill and without obstructions, allows for optimum solar refraction.

Lakeview will reduce their carbon dioxide emissions by 1.9 pounds for each kilowatt/hour of coal-generated electricity that is saved. The solar powered system will directly impact air quality by reducing over 13,000 pounds of carbon dioxide emissions for each year the system is active.

"At Lakeview, going green for us is an ongoing process. We consistently strive to lessen our impact on the surrounding environment, and we will continue to look for ways to reduce our energy use," said Michelle Harvey, owner of Lakeview Nurseries.

Lakeview Nurseries has a long history of environmental stewardship dating back to its inception in 1954. Lakeview lessens their impact on the surrounding environment by composting onsite and producing their perennials in biodegradable pots. Another environmental conservation initiative includes working with their largest nursery stock vendor to return and to recycle all of their nursery pots. Lakeview transferred 50% of their crop production to drip irrigation systems, reducing their water usage, and has replaced the majority of their greenhouse covers with infrared refracting polyethylene film and thermal insulating films to further reduce their heating and energy usage.

### About Lakeview Nurseries

Lakeview Nurseries is an award-winning garden center, nursery, and landscaping company serving northern central MA since 1954 in Lunenburg, and since 2004 in Winchendon. As a third generation retail nursery, Lakeview has evolved into one of the largest and most complete nurseries in the northern central MA area.

Our aim is to provide the finest quality, the largest selection, and the best service possible to ensure that each and every visit is a pleasant shopping experience for our customers. For more information, please visit: <http://www.lakeviewnurseries.com/>



Michelle Harvey and Mark Bursch of Lakeview Nurseries standing on a roof with solar panels being installed.