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**GOVERNOR SIGNS LEGISLATION ENCOURAGING ENERGY SAVING  
IMPROVEMENTS FOR BUSINESSES AND HOMEOWNERS**

**PALM DESERT, CA** – Today in Sacramento, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed Assembly Bill 811 into law. The legislation, which allows cities and counties in California to make low interest loans to local homeowners and business owners for the installation of solar panels and other permanent energy efficiency improvements, becomes effective immediately because it passed both houses of the state legislature as an urgency measure.

The up-front costs associated with installing solar panels, upgrading to a high efficiency air conditioning and heating system, and making other energy efficiency improvements can be prohibitive. The new law can ease the financial impact of these worthwhile investments by allowing cities and counties to help finance them at low interest rates with repayment over time. Participating homeowners and business owners are allowed to repay the loans as part of their property tax bills. If the property is sold, the improvements and the outstanding loan balance will be transferred with the property to the next owner.

Palm Desert is the first city in the state to offer this benefit to its residents and businesses. To capitalize on the new law's passage, the City has created the Palm Desert Energy Independence Program. Loans offered to residents and business owners under this unique program are not dependent on credit ratings or the level of equity in their building. No credit checks or appraisals are required.

The Energy Independence Program's goal is to encourage more people to invest in solar power, high efficiency air conditioners, and other energy efficiency improvements, thereby decreasing energy demand, boosting power generation from renewable sources, and reducing energy costs. Assembly Bill 811 and the resulting loan program complement the City's Set To Save program and its goal of reducing energy consumption and demand in the community by 30 percent over five years.

Palm Desert's Office of Energy Management has already started an interest list for people who want to learn more about this new way to make their homes and businesses more energy efficient. For more information, please visit [www.cityofpalmdesert.org](http://www.cityofpalmdesert.org) or call the Palm Desert Office of Energy Management at 760-837-0287.

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