

Governor signs bill to ease small-scale renewable energy generation

Mon, 2012-10-01 15:52

CalCAN

California farmers, school districts and commercial energy users got a boost with the Gov. Brown's signing of Senate Bill 594, which removes barriers to on-site renewable energy production. The California Climate and Agriculture Network (CalCAN), a coalition of sustainable agriculture organizations, supported the bill. Senate Bill 594, authored by Sen. Lois Wolk (D-Davis), will allow Net Energy Metering (NEM) customers to aggregate the electrical load of their meters.

The new law will ease the production of small-scale distributed renewable energy production in the state. "California farmers produce more renewable energy on their farms and ranches than their counterparts in other states, but obstacles still exist," said Jeanne Merrill, policy director with CalCAN. "The governor's action today moves us closer to developing more on-farm renewable energy production throughout California."

Farmers and ranchers typically have multiple meters on their property. Current California law prohibits the power generated from an on-site renewable facility to be counted against other meters. Consequently, farmers would have to install a separate facility for each meter, which is extremely inefficient and cost prohibitive; thus limiting their ability to cost-effectively generate renewable energy. Senate Bill 594 addresses this issue and eliminates the need for multiple facilities.

"The governor just made it easier and more affordable for growers like me to produce renewable energy," said Russ Lester, owner of Dixon Ridge Farms in Winters, Calif. "California agriculture can help the state reduce greenhouse gas emissions and produce clean energy. Senate Bill 594 is an important step forward."

Senate Bill 594 will move California closer to meeting the governor's goal of 12,000 megawatts of distributed renewable energy generation in the state.

For more information on Senate Bill 594, please see: <http://bit.ly/oNrofT>.

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