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ARiES Energy, SMS Energy Group announce working agreement to expand large-scale solar projects in the Southeast

Energy firms to collaborate on renewable power services for commercial, utility customers

Knoxville, Tenn. — ARiES Energy, a renewable energy firm, today announced a working agreement with SMS Energy Group of North Carolina that will expand both firms' power services throughout the Southeast.

Under new venture, SMS will utilize ARiES Energy's knowledge of the renewable energy industry, particularly in installation of solar PV power, and related financial incentives. The professionals at SMS Energy Group, in turn, are specialists in the construction and maintenance of electrical substations for the electric power industry, which is the fastest growing market for solar energy installation. SMS has also completed several solar PV installations in the Carolinas for both its electric utility and industrial clients.

"Given our shared interests, it makes sense as ARiES expands outside its home state of Tennessee that we build a relationship with a partner like SMS, whose utility customers are increasingly understanding the importance of renewable energy to their power generation capabilities," said Harvey Abouelata, president of ARiES Energy.

SMS Energy Group also has operations in South Carolina, which is one of several new target markets for ARiES, as well as Georgia. ARiES will soon open a South Carolina office; it is evaluating the Aiken, Columbia, Greenville and Spartanburg, South Carolina markets. The office will initially be home to one full-time salesperson, but ARiES expects to hire several more employees there by the end of 2017.

"We've been in the utility business for 18 years. Throughout that time solar energy is one of the most rapid changes we've seen in the industry and we're glad to be expanding our services to customers through an experienced partner like ARiES," said Talmadge Brown, president of SMS Energy Group.

Jonathan Hamilton, who joined ARiES earlier this year as customer service manager, will lead the Southeast expansion. This includes evaluating candidates to fill the South Carolina sales position. Experienced sales professionals are encouraged to apply through the ARiES website at www.ariesenergy.com/careers.

Supportive legislation at the state level and sustainability commitments from area power distributors like Duke Energy and SCE&G are contributing to a robust clean energy economy in South Carolina.

“We have momentum in growing a clean energy industry in our state, and ARiES Energy’s expanding its work in South Carolina with SMS Energy Group is helping keep that momentum going,” said Patty Pierce, Executive Director of the South Carolina Clean Energy Business Alliance (SCCEBA).

“We are proud to have ARiES Energy as a SCCEBA member because they are proven leaders in the renewable energy arena.”

SCCEBA is a broad-based business alliance that fosters the development of a clean energy industry in South Carolina. Its goal is to remove barriers and create opportunities for clean energy industry growth in the state.

The expansion and related hiring surge are the latest in strong growth period for ARiES Energy.

The company in August broke ground on Tennessee’s first utility-scale community solar installation. The 1.37 megawatt project is expected to be complete by October and will serve a 35,000-member electric cooperative.

About ARiES Energy

[ARiES Energy LLC](#) (Alternative Renewable Innovative Economic Solutions for Energy) is a leading energy contractor founded in 2011 to deliver simple, profitable and responsible renewable energy solutions. ARiES develops strategies to avoid rising energy costs and provide the quickest return on investment for our clients by leveraging a combination of incentives, grants, and appropriate technologies. www.ariesenergy.com

ARiES is a wholly owned subsidiary of [PHG Energy](#), a Nashville-based company offering design and construction for clean technology gasification and waste-to-energy systems. www.phgenergy.com

About SMS Energy Group

[SMS Energy Group, Inc.](#) is a minority-owned full service electric utility contractor that provides construction, maintenance, engineering and purchasing services to investor owned utilities, cities and municipalities, electric cooperatives and industrial clients. We specialize in electrical substations, transmission and distribution lines, electrical distribution systems and renewable energy solutions. Our industry experienced management team and well-trained staff have a solid track record of completing projects per customer technical specifications, and on time and within budget. SMS Energy Group is proud of its accomplishment of consistently winning new business from clients based on the quality of its work