1420 Walnut Street, Suite 650, Philadelphia, PA 19102
Phone: 215.732.5897, Fax: 215.732.4599
www.pennenvironment.org

For Immediate Release: March 10, 2011
Contact: Charley Dorsaneo, PennEnvironment, 214-500-1949, cdorsaneo@pennenvironment.org

Solar Hot Water Heating Could Cut Pennsylvania's Global Warming Pollution by as much as 274,351 Cars Off the Road

Harrisburg, PA—Pennsylvania could reduce pollution and dependence on fossil fuels through the deployment of off the shelf, cost-effective solar hot water technology, according to a new report by Pennsylvania.

By taking advantage of this cost effective technology to harness solar energy to produce hot water for homes and businesses, Pennsylvania could reduce global warming pollution by the equivalent of taking 274,351 cars off the road.

"By tapping the heat of the sun we can reduce the fossil fuels we use for our heating and hot water needs while putting people to work in our communities. We have long had the technology and the know-how to harness the free heat of the sun to get hot water, and more than ever we have a workforce that is ready to install these affordable solar panels on roofs across the state," said PennEnvironment's Charley Dorsaneo.

Solar water heating has the potential to reduce America's dependence on fossil fuels and curb pollution that causes global warming and respiratory problems. Solar water heating delivers a variety of benefits to the economy as well:

- Solar water heating could reduce energy bills by $9.9 billion annually, saving residential customers 3.2 percent and businesses 1.6 percent of their current energy expenditures.

- Solar water heating could reduce Americans energy bills by $9.9 billion annually. By eliminating the barriers to solar hot water, policy makers can help provide homeowners and businesses long-term savings and protect them from risks of wild swings in energy prices. Solar water heating increases America's energy security, reduces the environmental and public health costs of fossil fuel-related pollution, and creates jobs. Europe's solar thermal industry, for example, employs 40,000 people and brings in $4.1 billion in annual sales.

The report, *Smart, Clean, and Ready to Go: How Solar Hot Water Can Reduce Pollution and Dependence on Fossil Fuels,* based primarily on a study by the National Renewable Energy

Laboratory, provides a conservative estimate of America's potential to use residential and commercial solar water heating, and the savings in fossil fuel, electricity, and global warming pollution if that potential is fully realized.

The results of the report would come from only the smallest investments in solar hot water heating, but PennEnvironment called on state and federal officials to commit to aggressive steps to encourage the installation of solar water heaters on homes and businesses and to promote other solar water heating technologies that can make an even bigger dent in pollution and our consumption of fossil fuels. Solar hot water is particularly cost effective for large institutions that use a lot of hot water, such as hotels and large laundry operations.

"There are already thousands of homes and businesses saving energy and money by harnessing the sun for hot water," continued Dorsaneo. "These panels last for decades, so investing in them now builds a strong foundation for the future of our environment and our economy."

"Solar Hot Water is a proven, effective, mature way to heat water from the sun," said Jan Rushforth of Rushforth Solar. "Solar Hot Water makes sense: Installations bring jobs; heating water with the sun reduces fossil fuel use, investing in Solar Hot Water helps the climate. Blessed with wonderful subsidies now, the future is uncertain for Solar Hot Water in PA. Thanks to Penn Environment for writing an outstanding study: 'Smart, Clean and Ready to Go'!"

"That's the best part about using the sun to heat your water," concluded Dorsaneo. "With a small investment up-front, you can reduce your global warming pollution and enjoy lower energy bills year after year."