

# Miami One of First City Halls in America to Go Green

## Solar Panels to Power City Hall

By Lina Garcia

Miami has partnered with a leading environmental media company, EcoZone, and announced the creation of a new clean energy system that will power Miami City Hall. During a local ribbon cutting ceremony on April 2, USCM Vice President Miami Mayor Manny Diaz joined several corporate sponsors to unveil four state-of-the-art solar panels that will help power city hall and an interior energy-saving lighting retrofit for the entire structure.

"At Miami City Hall, we are going to help use the sun to save tax payer dollars by harvesting clean energy," said Diaz. "Public Private Partnerships leverage tax payer dollars so we can invest in other critical programs. With Green Initiatives we all win."

Prior to the announcement, Miami was honored in March and ranked #1 on the Forbes.com list of America's Cleanest Cities.

To jump start the project, city hall's interior lighting system was replaced with state-of-the-art energy efficient lamps and fixtures. Following the replacement of the lighting system, a publicly accessible, state-of-the-art photovoltaic system was installed on the facility's south lawn. Together, these

actions will reduce over half of the City Hall lighting load and cut the building's energy bill by an estimated \$9,000 per year. These energy management upgrades have been made possible by EcoZone funds.

In just four years, Miami has accomplished several environmental initiatives such as the City Hall Energy Efficiency Project, the Miami Green Lab, the Miami BayWash Program and the upcoming Miami Tree Canopy Initiative scheduled for May of this year. These projects demonstrate the city's commitment to environmental stewardship and smart energy management while improving quality of life for the residents of Miami.

Additionally in Miami, through the use of the AbTech Smart Sponge and its Florida distributor GlobeTec Construction, a water sanitizing product that acts as a fine filtration system for the streets, is now being utilized on city hall property as well as throughout the city. The device is installed inside storm water drains to trap debris, oil, pollution, and bacteria.

### Sustainable Initiatives in Miami

Diaz has launched a proactive and ambitious environmental program to clean streets, waterways, brownfields, storm drains, as well as improve air and water quality. His initiatives included the largest ever Adopt-A-Waterway project, Miami's first Citywide Tree Master Plan, and the introduction of a



Photo by Jorge R. Perez/City of Miami

**USCM Vice President Miami Mayor Manny Diaz overlooks new solar panels installed in Miami City Hall during ribbon cutting ceremony.**

Green Fleet – requiring all city vehicles to meet or exceed fuel-efficient standards.

- Diaz has also created the Miami Green Commission to bring together a cross section of local experts and community representatives that will help mold the city's environmental policy in the areas of Climate Action, Green Buildings, Urban Forestry and Bicycle Transportation.
- The mayor has spearheaded public-private partnerships to promote sustainable initiatives with a variety of groups, including the World Wildlife Fund, EcoMedia, and United States Green Building Council.

- Under Diaz's leadership, Miami has also participated in a series of environmental initiatives, including Earth Hour 2008, the City Hall Energy Efficiency Retrofit Project, and the Miami Green Lab.

For more information on Miami's Green Agenda, visit the website [www.MiamiGov.com/Mayor](http://www.MiamiGov.com/Mayor). To view a listing of green best practices including a best practice for Miami and ways in which cities across America are acting now to reduce carbon emissions in cities, visit: <http://usmayors.org/climate-protection/>.

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tor John McCain and of the Democratic candidates support the four proposals, with McCain supporters registering slightly higher numbers in three of the four. During the discussion, Palmer suggested that similar polling be done regarding Congressional representatives since they are the ones who do, or do not, pass gun safety laws.

### Responsible Firearms Retailer Partnership

Also during the summit a new partnership between Mayors Against Illegal Guns and Wal-Mart, the largest seller of guns in the nation, was announced. Wal-Mart has agreed to implement over time a 10-point code intended to ensure that guns do not fall into the wrong hands:

1. Videotaping the Point of Sale for All Firearms Transactions;
2. Computerized Crime Gun Trace Log and Alert System;
3. Purchaser Declaration;
4. Deterring Fake IDs;
5. Consistent Visible Signage Consistent Visible Signage;
6. Employee Background Checks;



Photo by Wendy L. Wilkerson

**At left, Jacksonville (FL) Mayor John Peyton testifying at Congressional Task Force hearing, with New York (NY) Mayor Michael Bloomberg.**

7. Employee Responsibility Training;
8. Inventory Checking;
9. No Sales Without Background Check Results; and
10. Securing Firearms.

### Congressional Hearing

Four mayors who participated in

the summit appeared April 15 before the House Task Force on Illegal Guns, a bipartisan group of members created in January 2007. The four mayors – Thomas M. Menino of Boston, Michael Bloomberg of New York City, John Peyton of Jacksonville (FL), and Sheila Dixon of Baltimore – discussed the situa-

tion in their cities and described the four "common sense" proposals the mayors adopted at the summit. They were joined at the witness table by New York Police Commissioner Ray Kelly and Boston Police Commissioner Ed Davis.

During the hearing, Bloomberg released an investigative report on illegal gun trafficking commissioned by Mayors Against Illegal Guns. The report is based on a review of information from more than 1,000 illegal gun prosecutions, involving the sale of 14,000 guns, and interviews with more than 100 people with intimate knowledge of every phase of the illegal gun trade. It includes 12 specific findings showing how some licensed gun dealers sell handguns to illegal traffickers through straw purchases.

The Task Force is co-chaired by Representatives Charles Rangel (NY), John Conyers (MI), Peter King (NY), and Mark Kirk (IL). King chaired the hearing. Others present at the hearing included Representatives Kirk, Chris Shays (CT), Carolyn McCarthy (NY), Tom Davis (VA), Jim Moran (VA), Xavier Becerra (CA), and Patrick Kennedy (RI).