

**For more information:**

Rolf Wilkin

Owner, Eureka Pizza  
rolf@eurekapizza.com

John Gerrard

Owner, Sun City Solar Energy (Springdale, Ark. Location)  
jgerrard@suncityenergy.com

**For Immediate Release**

June 8, 2013

# **Solar-powered pizza coming to Arkansas**

## **Local pizza restaurant owner installing solar panels to power one of his locations**

FAYETTEVILLE, ARK.—Normally the idea of a green pizza might not be considered appetizing but Rolf Wilkin, owner of the Eureka Pizza chain, hopes that “green” pizza will help make his popular pizza even better.

His first store, located on Leverett Avenue in Fayetteville, Ark., will be what he believes the first pizzeria in Arkansas to use solar power. Installation is scheduled for June 12 and the public is invited to watch. There will also be a monitor in the store so that customers can see how much energy is created along with other statistics. The information, available in real time, will also be available on the company’s website, [www.eurekapizza.com](http://www.eurekapizza.com).

“We’re inviting people to use us as a laboratory for green energy,” he said.

Sun City Solar Energy from Springdale, Ark. will install the panels.

The SolarEdge panels are the best option for roofs that face east/west, Owner John Gerrard explained. The solar panel technology has drastically improved in the last five years and so has the usage. More companies are finding ways to conserve kilowatt hour usage as energy costs increase rapidly.

“Most energy experts say we will see increases in the double digits,” Gerrard said. “Over the last five years, it has doubled every year worldwide.”

The return on investment begins the moment the solar panels are activated, Gerrard said. Those savings, added to rebates and tax incentives make the project increasingly affordable for business owners.

“Businesses have a big advantage to do this,” Wilkin said. “Half of the incentives are because we’re a business. For the price of a used car, you can do the right thing. It makes sense from two sides. Before, businesses had to sacrifice the dollars to do the right thing.

“Now, you can have your pizza and eat it too,” Wilkins quipped. “We’ll see if the sun makes the pizza taste better.”

As home the \$4.99 Carryout pizza Eureka Pizza has always been a champion for helping families save money. That is partially accomplished by keeping a lid on operational costs, Wilkin said. The solar panels are expected to save \$300 to \$500 a month by reducing the amount of electricity the store has to use off the grid by about 30 to 50 percent.

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