

## **Solar Energy – The future is here**

By Wayne Phillips, Wayne's Solar

For decades Americans have been an oil-dependant society. To be anything different was going against the norm and possibly difficult to do. Paying our high electric bills or gas bills was just something you did. Fast forward to today and times have changed. With crippled economies and rising unemployment, everyone is looking for alternatives in order to save their precious dollars. The most popular alternative that is becoming commonplace in Florida is without a doubt solar energy. The evidence is overwhelming and rightfully so. Here in Florida we are at a huge advantage. We enjoy substantial amounts of sunshine on a daily basis. What that means for solar consumers is daily free energy. Just open any local newspaper or magazine and witness for yourself how many companies are now “going green” or offering “green products” to consumers with an objective to save them money. With state rebates and federal income tax credits available, more and more people who were once considering using solar are now taking advantage of its endless effectiveness.

The most common and most easily understood solar energy system being utilized today is for heating swimming pools. On a countrywide scale there are over 300,000 solar heated pools in operation, and that number is climbing daily. Of course owning a swimming pool is a luxury, and owning a heated swimming pool is often a decision that is growing more complex for consumers with such an emphasis on saving money. Having a solar heating option is a win-win for swimming pool contractors and potential swimming pool buyers alike. If comparing solar to the other forms of pool heating such as natural gas, propane and electric it is obvious which system will save money. Solar heat has no operating cost making the simple payback period well under two years and typically closer to one year. Another comforting piece of mind is that most solar panels come with manufacturer warranties that range from 10 to 20 years and in some cases even lifetime. Warranties with those terms far exceed any conventional heater on the market. When talking with fellow contractors and potential customers about the various benefits and possibilities that solar has to offer it is clear that people are catching on. It seems daily I hear the common statement that “solar is the way of the future.” The simple fact is that the future is here.