

# Connecting and Building Clean Renewable Generation

Under the GEA, distributors can own and operate renewable projects up to 10 megawatts. They can also own and operate co-generation facilities and be involved in energy storage projects. Distributors are also required to connect qualified renewable generation projects in their communities through the Feed-in Tariff (FIT) and microFIT program.

## **Feed-in Tariff and microFIT Program**

Whether this means connecting a customer who wants to install solar panels on their roof or connecting larger renewable community wind and bio-mass projects, the distributor's role is a critical one.

This groundbreaking program was launched on October 1, 2009 and sets out standard rules, contracts, pricing, domestic content rules, and streamlines environmental and municipal approvals.

- March 10, 2010 – 510 FIT projects under 500 kW receive contracts – representing 112 megawatts, or enough to power 13,000 homes
- April 8, 2010 – 184 FIT projects over 500 kW receive contracts, or enough to power 600,000 homes

The microFIT program is intended to encourage development of micro-scale renewable energy projects under 10 kW. It's geared to homeowners, farmers, small business owners, institutions such as schools, and for small scale community cooperative projects. We expect that most of these projects will be rooftop solar installations, but they could also be small scale biogas, biomass, landfill gas, waterpower and wind projects as well.

There are a number of critical steps that must be taken by proponents in order to get their project connected and it's a process that requires a close working relationship with the local distributor.

## **Current Issues/Challenges**

- Access to capital is a related and critical challenge for distributors who are concerned about the sufficiency of accessing capital for GEA needs, including renewable projects. It comes at a time when capital markets have witnessed weakness and volatility through an economic downturn.