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UK Businesses Risk Penalties of up to £99M By Failing To Register for CRC Cautions Solar Gard
Britain's Efforts to Lead Europe in Climate Change Legislation Risks Falling at First Hurdle

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London, UK – September 2, 2010 -- Solar Gard, a solar control window specialist, is warning CEOs at thousands of Britain's largest businesses and organisations that they collectively face millions of pounds in fines if they fail to register for the Government's new Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) Energy Efficiency Scheme by the end of September.

The CRC Energy Efficiency scheme is the UK's mandatory climate change and energy saving initiative. It is central to the UK's strategy for improving energy efficiency and reducing carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions, as set out in the Climate Change Act 2008. Around 4,000 organisations currently qualify for the scheme and must register by September 30 or face financial penalties.

According to the latest data from the Environmental Agency, the body responsible for registration to the scheme, less than 45 per cent of the 4000 firms required to register have done so, despite the fact that registration for the scheme began last April.

Solar Gard estimates that if the remaining 55 percent of organisations required to register miss the September 30 deadline, they each face a £5,000 first-day fine, a collective first-day penalty of £11,000,000. Daily fines of £500 per company will continue for the next 80 days, potentially adding a further £88,000,000 in collective penalties. The total cost to these UK organisations could exceed £99,000,000 if they fail to register soon.

A recent survey of power and energy managers at some of the UK's largest organisations commissioned by Solar Gard, a solar control window specialist, found that over half (55%) did not realise their organisation would be affected by the scheme. Of those that knew that their organisation qualified for the scheme, less than half (45%) did not know when they were supposed to register.

Commenting on the findings, Ian Penfold, Solar Gard's UK architectural manager, said: "Britain's efforts to legislate how its economy can improve energy efficiency and reduce CO2 emissions are being closely scrutinised by governments across Europe. Either UK organisations are not taking the scheme seriously enough, or efforts to create awareness of the scheme have fallen short. Whatever the reason, British organisations are facing huge penalties that, as we emerge from recession, they can ill-afford."

Solar Gard's survey, carried out by Vanson Bourne interviewed senior facility managers responsible for power management at 100 of the UK's largest public and private sector organisations.

The survey also revealed that 33% of companies qualifying for the scheme did not know their annual energy usage, despite this being the basic metric for qualifying for the CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme. The survey helped identify some of the most common strategies being used by large organisations to reduce their energy usage. The most popular steps were also the simplest and ranged from turning off lights and IT equipment to opening windows rather than using fans or air-conditioning. The least common approach listed was solar control

window film that can reject solar energy from the sun and help keep a building cool, reducing the need for air-conditioning.

Although Solar Control window film can cut a building's cooling load by 30 percent, and reduce accordingly the energy required to air-condition the building, less than a quarter (23%) of organisations surveyed have to date installed it.

Solar Gard is offering the UKs largest energy users a free glazing energy analysis until September 30. This provides a first step in precisely measuring the reduction in solar heat gain through the installation of solar control window film, along with the subsequent reduction in carbon emissions required to power the air conditioning.

About Solar Gard

Solar Gard films are manufactured by Bekaert Specialty Films LLC, who develops, manufactures and distributes window films that provide solar control, safety, security, glare reduction, energy saving and C02 emission reduction solutions. The company's films are sold in 60 countries under the Solar Gard®, Panorama®, Quantum® and Solar Gard® Armorcoat® brands. Bekaert Specialty Films also manufactures films for the photovoltaic, electronics, medical, graphic arts and imaging, automotive and aerospace industries. Bekaert Specialty Films is strongly committed to environmental responsibility and has been recognized by the Clinton Climate Initiative and other energy experts. Headquartered in San Diego, California, Bekaert Specialty Films is a subsidiary of Bekaert (Euronext Brussels: BEKB), a global company headquartered in Belgium with annual combined sales of €3.3 billion, more than $4 billion.

More information on professionally-installed Solar Gard window film is available at www.solargard.co.uk. For media inquiries, samples or photography, contact solargard@touchdownpr.com.

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