
BP SOLAR MOVING 320 MANUFACTURING JOBS OFFSHORE



Citing the falling costs of solar panels, BP Solar is moving its manufacturing plant in Frederick, Md. to “lower-cost” facilities in China and India that will eliminate 320 jobs. The move is part of a restructuring plan to cut costs, the company said. According to a report from the Associated Press, the price of solar panels has plummeted nearly 50 percent in the past 18 months, which has put solar energy in line with that provided of fossil fuels. Yet, CEO Reyard Fezzani reported a boom in global demand for solar power is expected. He said this to explain the job cuts in Maryland: “We are scaling up our supply chain to serve this rapid growth here in the U.S., in the European and Asian markets. Apparently that supply chain does not include solar panels for the U.S. being made in the U.S. Said state Sen. David Brinkley, who called the move “a big hit” to the area’s economy: “They’re obviously going to be making the solar cells somewhere, but they’re choosing physically to relocate and not be here, and that’s indicative of, I guess, the environment — the business environment and the economy.” BP Solar is a San Francisco-based unit of London-based BP PLC. BP Solar announced its global sales rose more than 26 percent in 2009 and the company expects sales growth exceeding 50 percent in 2010, the AP reports.

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