

North Madison Volunteer Fire Company

Protecting lives and their fire stations' solar panels.

The North Madison Volunteer Fire Company located in Madison, Connecticut proudly defends over 3,000 homes, several commercial complexes as well as thousands of acres of forest. In the spring of 2016, department members voted in favor of installing solar panels on the roof of their station. As a volunteer fire department with approximately 50 members, the decision allowed them to stabilize future electric costs assuring that operating funds would be available for purchasing new fire equipment and investing in training.

However, solar panel fires have been on the rise throughout the United States. Up until now, the only way to spot a fire on a solar panel is from a passing motorist. Without federal or local regulations for fire detection, solar panels are left vulnerable to triggering catastrophic damage. Recognizing the importance of having a reliable fire detection system to monitor the solar panels, members of the North Madison Fire Company looked for suitable options as a proactive measure. "It is vital for us to ensure that this facility has the best protection so that we can continue to fulfill our mission and protect the lives and property of those that we serve," said Don Macmillan, North Madison Fire Chief.

After an exhaustive search, Protectowire CTI Series Linear Heat was ultimately selected as the fire protection of choice. Protectowire CTI Series Linear Heat Detectors robust design is the ideal choice for solar panel installations. Unlike traditional spot heat detectors, the CTI Series Linear Heat Detector can be placed directly on the underside of solar panels providing immediate proximity detection. The CTM-530 control module LCD will display the exact location and temperature of an overheat or mechanical damage to the linear heat detector.

Since solar panels are installed outdoors, this means they are subjected to hail, high winds, lightning, ice, bird nests, rodents as well as other natural forces that can damage the panels or its components. The CTI Series Linear Heat Detector will only issue an alarm condition when its fixed temperature has been reached.

As the Massachusetts-based solar panel company installed the panels, they simultaneously installed the CTI Series Linear Heat Detector. Once the installation was complete the fire company was able to easily integrate the Protectowire CTM-530 control module onto an SLC of the addressable fire alarm control panel already operating in the facility. Today, the station has a single zone of approximately 1000 linear feet providing detection throughout the solar panel array on the roof. A zone map of the rooftop installation enables the fire company to quickly identify a failing panel assuring a quick response if ever needed.

For more information about the North Madison Volunteer Fire Department please visit (www.nmvfc.org).

Questions?

If you have further questions please visit protectowire.com or call **781-826-3878**.