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MATT STANLEY / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER  
Matt D. Snedcker of Jackson Geothermal drills a 540-foot well to be used as part of a heating and cooling system at a 170-year-old Newtown building being "greened" before becoming the headquarters for the Creative Strategy Group, Inc.

## Businesses sensing opportunity in environmental tax credits

Tax credits are available for properties that use solar energy, fuel cells, small wind turbines and other forms of renewable energy.

By JOHN ANASTASI  
STAFF WRITER

The Obama administration is banking on alternative energy, betting it will push the economy toward recovery, stimulate job creation, reduce reliance on foreign oil and help the environment in one fell swoop.

The federal government has created tax credits for properties that use solar energy, fuel cells, small wind turbines, geothermal systems and other renewable forms of power. The stimulus act established a 30 percent tax credit — capped at \$1,500 — on home weatherization projects like purchasing energy efficient windows and doors and installing solar and geothermal heating systems.

Sensing opportunity, new small businesses are cropping up and existing ones are adapting their operations to help meet the rising demand for products and services that are covered by the credits.

"There are a lot of people with a lot of interest now," said Danielle Heying, project manager at Morrisville's Jackson Geothermal HVAC and Drilling LLC. "It's becoming more mainstream and people are getting educated about what is involved with geothermal and how much they can save."

In April, Jackson Geothermal installed a closed-loop heating system in Newtown at a 175-year-old farmhouse that Lower Makefield's Creative Strategy Group Inc. is renovating and plans to relocate to this summer.

"We decided to go geothermal because of the environment and because, in the long-term, we'll save on our electric bill," said

Evan Connolly, CEO of Creative, a marketing and communications agency. "So we thought it was a good financial decision as well."

The tax credit has been a real boon for Bensalem's Accu-Weld, which employs about 140 people and manufactures windows that meet the Obama administration's criteria for the tax credit. Its products are sold through a network of dealers and distributors.

Company President John Haddon Jr. previously said that, aided by the stimulus act, the company could double its workforce in the next few years.

But it isn't just the companies that install and manufacture items that are eligible for administration tax credits that are seeing green because of the national focus on green.

F. Scott Woodrow is chief operating officer at Sustainable Waste Solutions in Franconia, a landfill-free solid waste disposal company that takes corporate and commercial clients' waste to Covanta Plymouth Renewable Energy, an energy-from-waste facility in Conshohocken.

Woodrow said the company, which just changed its name from Specialty Waste Solutions, was spun off from a French company in 2004.

"We do about 830 tons per month," he said. "Three years ago, it was half that."

It has 75 clients, most in Bucks and Montgomery counties, but most of its work comes from pharmaceutical companies like Upper Gwynedd's Merck & Co. Inc. and Teva Pharmaceutical Industries, which has facilities in

### Some area solar and geothermal installers

- Jackson Geothermal HVAC and Drilling LLC, Morrisville: 215-295-2823, <http://jacksongeothermalofpa.com/>
- Greening The House LLC, Newtown Township: 215-968-2628, <http://www.greeningthehouse.com/>
- Geier's Air Works, Bristol Township: 215-239-9449, <http://geiersairworks.com/>
- Carney Plumbing, Heating and Cooling, Hatfield Township: 215-822-9029, <http://www.carneyphc.com/>

Montgomery Township, West Rockhill, New Britain Township and Horsham.

"We just hired a third driver and ordered a fourth truck," said Woodrow. "It's definitely gaining momentum."

Green Packaging Inc. of Lansdale makes biodegradable packing material, an environmentally friendly alternative to bubble-wrap, and various corrosion and rust inhibiting substances, said Wayne Seifert, who founded the company in 2007.

"It was something that separated my business from others in the same industry," he said. "I've always been an outdoorsman and interested in helping the environment."

At first, Seifert said, he felt like he had cornered the market, but others quickly joined him.

"It's definitely a growing field," he said.

John Anastasi can be reached at 215-949-4170 or at [janastasi@phillyburbs.com](mailto:janastasi@phillyburbs.com).