Sol
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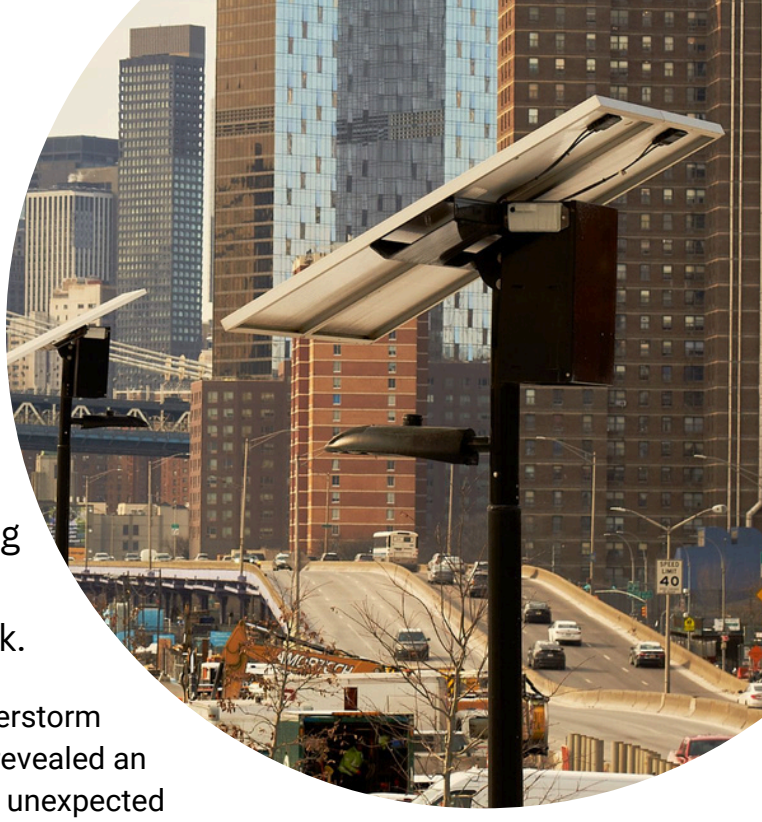
SOLAR LIGHTING BUILDS RESILIENCE AT NYC'S PIER 42



After experiencing the fragility of grid lighting first-hand, a team of landscape architects were inspired to try solar at a new urban park.

Sometimes it takes a crisis to motivate change. When Superstorm Sandy plunged Lower Manhattan into darkness in 2012, it revealed an uncomfortable truth about the city's infrastructure—and an unexpected solution shining just across the river.

While much of New York remained without power for nearly a week, the solar lights at Brooklyn's Marsha P. Johnson State Park stayed on, inspiring the landscape architects of a new waterfront park to rethink their approach to lighting.

"The architects of the state park were way ahead," says Noriko Maeda, a landscape architect at MNLA, the firm engaged to transform Pier 42 from a derelict industrial space to a much-needed urban park.

Maeda and her team met with the state park architects, who confirmed that the solar lights performed well at New York's latitude, were easy to install with no underground wiring, and provided critical, resilient light during emergencies like Sandy.

LOCATION
New York City

APPLICATION
Parks & pathways

PRODUCT
36 x EverGen

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The architects were sold, but they still had to convince the New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT), which oversees lighting in city parks. The DOT had never used solar lighting on a project like this and despite the state park's successful example, had reservations about whether the systems could match the performance and reliability of their grid-tied lights.

They invited Sol to meet with them to address these concerns and present their EverGen-M solar light. "I think they really appreciated the non-salesy, informative approach," said Maeda. "It's not always like that, and seeing the calculations and specifications helped them feel more comfortable."

The department moved ahead with a pilot program, installing two EverGens to test performance through all seasons and weather conditions. Ultimately, it exceeded expectations: the fixtures maintained consistent output from dusk until dawn, proved easier to install and maintain than traditional systems, and demonstrated the same resiliency that had impressed the architects during Sandy.

Pleased with the results, the DOT approved MNLA's design for Pier 42, which called for 36 solar lights to be installed throughout the parks pathways, playground, and gathering spaces. Since their installation, the systems have provided consistent illumination and safety to park users, while also helping the city cut costs, reduce emissions, and build resilience.

"I drive at night along FDR, and I can see the park lit up very nicely and brightly," said Maeda. "I'm not waiting for a Superstorm, but that would be the moment of truth."