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CONTACT:

Sapphire Energy:

Beth Llewelyn, 206-406-5027, beth@zebrapartners.net, or

Perrin Kaplan, 206-909-0119 or perrin@zebrapartners.net

Sapphire Energy Selected as Clean Technology “Game Changer of the Year” for Public/Private Partnerships

Sapphire Energy Partnerships Include Linde and Monsanto, USDA and USDOE

San Diego, CA (Oct. 13, 2011) –Sapphire Energy, Inc., one of the world leaders in algae-based crude oil, today announced that the company has been chosen as a 2011 "Game Changer of the Year" in Clean Technology by Grow-California for its impact on California's green industry, in the category of Public/Private Partnerships.

“This Game Changer Award highlights the importance of public and private partnerships in accelerating the country’s transition to renewable fuels,” said Jason Pyle, Sapphire Energy founder and CEO. “In addition, the generous federal funding we have received shows the value the United States government sees in reducing dependency on petroleum and transitioning to renewable sources of energy. They understand the impact that algae-based fuel, at scale, can and will have.”

San Diego-based Sapphire Energy entered into two notable private partnerships this year. The company is partnering with Monsanto Company to discover genes that can be applied to agriculture, particularly in the field of yield and stress, and that can accelerate the road to producing energy from algae. A multi-year collaboration with the Linde Group focuses on development of low-cost, scalable CO₂ management systems to capture and transport the one key nutrient required in addition to sunlight for commercial algae production. Bringing the cost of CO₂ down is central to reducing the cost-per-gallon of algae-based fuel. “These partnerships leverage the expertise of these prestigious organizations, and enhance the capabilities of Sapphire Energy’s world class team of scientists,” added Pyle.

Sapphire Energy has received \$104 million in federal funding from the US Departments of Energy and Agriculture to build and operate the world’s first Integrated Algal Biorefinery (IABR) a 300-wet acre commercial demonstration project, to show the technology readiness and scalability of Sapphire Energy’s end-to-end, algae-to-energy system. Currently under construction near Columbus, New Mexico, the four-year commercial demonstration will show the technology readiness and scalability of “Green Crude,” a renewable alternative to fossil-based crude oil. It will be operational in 2012, and when it reaches capacity in the final phase of the commercial demonstration, it will produce 1 million gallons per year of Green Crude.

The "Game Changer of the Year" awards will be presented at the Clean Tech Innovation Conference at the Kaiser Center, in downtown Oakland, November 2nd and 3rd. Award winners, in 19 categories, were selected from more than 200 nominees.

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"The award winners are an elite group of clean tech innovators who represent California's path forward for maintaining its leadership role and the exciting economic potential the industry can provide for generations to come," said Jon Gregory, CEO, Grow-California, in announcing the awards.

Sapphire's Green Crude drop-in fuels -- jet, diesel and gasoline -- are completely compatible with existing infrastructure and engines. Sapphire's technology represents an approximate 70% reduction in lifecycle carbon emissions compared to petroleum-based equivalents.

Grow-California is dedicated to fostering jobs and creating wealth in California by connecting entrepreneurs, growth companies and market leaders with talent, capital and customers. For more information about "Game Changer" winners, visit: www.grow-california.com.

About Sapphire Energy

San Diego-based Sapphire Energy is pioneering an entirely new industry – Green Crude Production – with the potential to profoundly change America's energy and petrochemical landscape for the better. Sapphire's products and processes in this category differ significantly from other forms of biofuel because they are made solely from photosynthetic microorganisms (algae), using sunlight and CO2 as their feedstock; are not dependent on food crops or valuable farmland; do not use potable water; do not result in biodiesel or ethanol; enhance and replace petroleum-based products; and are low carbon, renewable and scalable. In December 2009, Sapphire was awarded nearly \$104.5 million as part of President Obama's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the USDA's Biorefinery Assistance Program 9003 authorized through the 2008 Farm Bill.

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