



ROOFTOP SOLAR • IS IT RIGHT FOR MY HOME?

Many home owners are considering whether or not rooftop solar is right for them. This guide serves as a starting point for public power community customers when considering rooftop solar.

Know Your Home

- Recognize that purchasing solar panels has a significant upfront cost and has ongoing maintenance obligations.
- Understand how much electricity your home uses by reviewing your monthly and annual kWh usage.
- The more energy efficient your home, the less solar panels you will need to power it. Generally speaking, making energy-efficiency upgrades to your home will have a quicker rate of return than installing solar panels.
- Understand the condition of your roof and when you anticipate the need to replace it. Is your roof under warranty and if so, will the installation of solar panels affect the warranty?
- For best results, solar panels should be oriented toward the south, free from obstructions. Does your roof allow for this orientation? Is your roof shaded by nearby structures or trees?

Do Your Homework and Ask Key Questions

- Consult with your public power utility regarding rooftop solar options, necessary building and/or electrical permits, registration(s), utility metering and interconnection requirements.
- Consider whether your roof will need to be replaced during the term of the solar contract. If so, how will this impact the panels?
- What will be the impact on your homeowners insurance?
- Research solar installers via the [Better Business Bureau](#).

Finance

- Understand the costs and risks involved with owning the solar array vs. leasing vs. financing.
- How is the financing structured (length and interest rates)?
- Are there local, state or federal incentives or tax credits available? If so, how are they accessed?
- What is the anticipated return on investment and what are the associated assumptions?
- Are there any production guarantees associated with the system?
- What happens with the equipment, contract and warranties if you sell your home?

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Understand the equipment and installation process

- What is the warranty on the panels and inverters?
- Who fulfills warranty claims and is there an additional cost?
- Solar System questions:
 - o What are the proposed system specifications?
 - o What will be the system size, in kW?
 - o What solar panel modules will be used and what is their warranty?
 - o Inquire with your vendor about the highest efficiency tilt for your panels or installing tracking arrays to enable the panels to follow the sun as it moves.
 - o What inverters will be used and what is their warranty?
 - o Does your electrical panel need to be upgraded? If so, is that cost included in the quote?
 - o What is the system design layout?
 - o What is the anticipated annual production, in kWh per year?
 - o What is the anticipated monthly production compared to your previous 12-months of usage?
- While most solar systems operate automatically and stay clean with enough rain, you may want to schedule an annual inspection to ensure optimal performance. Is this service included in the agreement?
- Does the system include batteries to provide backup power in the event of a power outage? How long will the batteries provide power? Research and understand the battery manufacturer, technology, integration with your solar panels and in-home electrical panel. What is the battery warranty?
- Who will contact the local utility to obtain necessary permits and registrations?

Your Public Power Utility

- Remember to keep your public power utility involved.
- Your public power utility is best equipped to provide guidance regarding rooftop solar considerations.
- Public power utilities are committed to their customer-owners and long-term community goals.
- Public power utilities are local, responsive, accessible and committed to serving you.

Additional Resources



A personalized solar savings estimator, powered by Google Earth imagery. Simply search your home to discover your solar savings potential! Click [here](#) to start.