



Solar Energy

Considerations for Installing a Solar Photovoltaic System

Installing Solar Panels on Your Home Can:

- Reduce your electric bill via net metering;
- Generate and sell solar renewable energy credits if you own or lease your solar PV system;
- Increase the value of your home;
- Support economic growth through the creation of green jobs in Pennsylvania; and
- Protect the environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Recommendations

Thinking about installing a solar photovoltaic (PV) system at home? Here is a guide to assist in the process:

1. Make your home more energy efficient before installing a solar PV system.
2. Research before investing, leasing or entering into a power purchase agreement for a solar PV system.
3. Learn about permitting and zoning issues/requirements before installing a solar PV system and understand how the system interconnects with your electric utility's distribution system.
4. Review your current annual energy usage to help determine what size solar PV system to install. For a general point of reference, 1 kW of installed solar generating capacity might reasonably produce about 1,300 kWh of electricity in most areas of Pennsylvania.
5. Calculate the upfront costs.
6. Search for incentives, rebates and tax credits.
7. Be sure you know and understand what your responsibilities are if you purchase, lease, or sign a power purchase agreement for a solar PV system. This includes your costs associated with the municipal permitting and inspection process, connecting to the electric utility's distribution system, maintenance and any repairs to the solar PV system, as well as anticipated electric bill impacts.
8. Choose a reputable solar contractor/installer registered with the PA Attorney General with either [North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners \(NABCEP\)](#) or [UL PV certification](#). Try to get at least three quotes or proposals with references.

Resources

To better understand the basics of solar energy, how to get started and what questions to ask the solar installer, consumers can read the [Residential Consumer Guide to Solar Energy](#) or watch the educational videos listed below:

- [Rooftop Solar Financing 101](#) introduces three common solar financing methods - loans, leases, and power purchase agreements - and briefly explains some of the advantages and disadvantages of each.
- [Choosing a Solar Installer](#) offers advice for customers in selecting a solar contractor, questions that customers should ask a solar contractor, and information that should be included in a solar contractor's bid.
- [Will Solar Panels Save You Money?](#) Discusses key questions homeowners should explore when assessing whether going solar makes financial sense, including how the cost of solar compares to savings from solar, how the federal tax credit works, and the extent to which a homeowner's electricity bill can be offset by solar.
- Neither the PUC nor electric utilities offer a list of vendors or installers. Interested consumers can find a list of installers at this website: [Directory of PA Solar Electric Installers.pdf](#)

Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120
www.puc.pa.gov
1-800-692-7380

For people with speech or hearing loss, dial 7-1-1 (Telecommunications Relay Service)

