

Solar Considerations

If you're considering installing solar panels, you'll find there are lots of options. As you're reviewing your choices, it helps to ask these questions. You'll be able to answer some yourself, and use the resources at right to answer the rest.

Location

- How well will my location work?
 - Roof faces south/southwest?
 - Minimal shade (now and in future)?
- Will I own this property long enough to realize financial payback?
- What size system will my location support?
- What size system do I need?

Own or lease?

- Should I own the system or lease it?
 - Verify financial analyses
 - Get second opinions and/or multiple bids
- What are the terms of the lease or contract?
 - How long will it last?
 - What is covered?
 - Are there penalties?
 - What happens if I move?
 - How are disputes resolved?
- How do I verify claims and information?

Choosing a contractor

- How do I choose a contractor?
 - Examples of past work?
 - Verified by third parties?
 - Online reviews?
 - Do I have at least three bids?



Where to find answers

There are lots of reliable resources to help you understand your solar options.

- PortlandGeneral.com: General resources; Net Metering information.
- Energy Trust of Oregon: Financial calculators & project tools. Find contractors; request bids. Cash incentives and tax credit information.
- Oregon Department of Energy: State tax credits and other general solar information.
- U.S. Department of Energy: Federal tax credits and other general solar information.
- Solar Oregon: Free solar workshops, process overview, videos and references to Oregonians who have installed solar.

Solar Considerations

Pricing

- Do I understand the total price of installing solar on my property?
 - Do I fully understand my contract?
- What incentives and tax credits will I qualify for?
 - Energy Trust incentives
 - State of Oregon tax credits
 - Federal tax credits
- Can I install solar myself to save money?
 - What codes and operation requirements do need to comply with?
 - Will I still qualify for incentives and tax credits?
- How do I compare my current energy costs with what they will be if I install solar?
- How many bills will I have?
- What is Net Metering and how does it impact my costs?
 - How much of my electricity use can I offset with Net Metering?

After installation

- How do I maintain a solar energy system?
 - Are there maintenance costs?
- How long will my system last?
 - Panels?
 - Inverters?