

INTERESTED IN SOLAR FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Corn Belt Energy is committed to helping our members find affordable, reliable and safe energy options. We are here to help you, our member. Below are some questions you should consider when looking into residential solar.

Is solar a good option for me?

Maybe. Whether and how much you will benefit from a residential solar array depends on the following:

- How much you pay for electricity
- How much electricity you use
- Your roof or location planned for ground mount
- State and local incentives for solar development
- Your solar contractor/installer

Are there other things I should consider before installing solar?

Maybe. Below are some questions to consider.

- Does the placement location face south or west and is it shaded?
- If the solar is roof mounted, will you need to replace your roof sometime during the life of the panels?
- Does installing solar on your roof void the warranty of your roof?
- Have you explored all of your energy efficiency options? We can help you reduce your overall energy use through our energy efficiency programs.
- Does your community have restrictions?

Will solar panels provide electricity in the event of an outage?

No. Without a battery system and a "smart inverter," most rooftop arrays do not provide power during outages.

What should I know before I sign a contract?

If you are purchasing a solar array, be sure to ask the following:

- What is the total installed (turnkey) cost of the system?
- What is the payback period? What are the assumptions underlying that estimate?
- Will I need to finance the array?
- Who gets the renewable energy credit?
- Will I receive "free" electricity once panels are paid for?
- Does the company offer warranties on panels and inverters?
- What are the details of the service contract?
- Will I still receive an electric bill from my electric cooperative? (Please note: Corn Belt Energy members will always have a minimum electric bill.)
- What assumptions are being made and did you verify them?
- Is the company available locally in the event parts or service is needed?
- In most cases, solar is a significant financial investment. While many of our members are satisfied with their solar purchase, we have members who will never achieve the payback. Have you verified and confirmed the payback period?
- Did you check references?
- Did you receive multiple estimates from different companies?

If you are leasing panels in a rooftop array, be sure to ask the following:

- What is the upfront cost of the system?
- Are there other customers in the vicinity with comparable systems? How much electricity are their systems producing?
- Who gets the renewable energy credit and for how long?
- Can the lease be transferred if I sell the house?
- Does the lease company have the right to run a credit check?

As a consumer, how can I protect myself and my investment?

Research. When you make the decision to invest in residential solar, you are making a significant financial investment. Be sure to do your research on the company and ask the following questions:

- Are the installers North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Electric trained and certified?
- When was the company established and how much solar has it installed to date?
- Can your company provide a list of the projects and references for them?
- Is the company accredited with the Better Business Bureau? If so, what is the rating?
- Does the company maintain a physical presence locally in the event follow up is needed?
- Will they be there when you need repairs?

Is Corn Belt Energy partnered with or affiliated with specific solar companies?

While we are not affiliated with any solar contractors, Corn Belt Energy wants to help our members make informed decisions about energy. We cannot make specific recommendations in regard to vendors. However, the Illinois Commerce Commission has a web link at <https://www.icc.illinois.gov/emdb/ucdb/search> that can help find vendors authorized to work with distributed generation projects.

If you are considering a solar installation, we ask that you contact us at the beginning of the process to ensure you can speak with our staff about what to anticipate from your cooperative and expectations you may have regarding interconnection and future electric bills.

Call us today at 309-662-5330.



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