



Solarize Philly

A citywide program to lower costs, simplify the process, create jobs and help all Philadelphians go solar at home

How does Solarize Philly work?

The Philadelphia Energy Authority (PEA) will select participating solar companies through a careful vetting process. All participating companies will agree to reduce the price of rooftop solar further and further as more households sign up. PEA will work with solar equipment manufacturers to negotiate similar discounts across the whole program. We will ensure installers are reputable, contracts are standardized with key consumer protections, and equipment is high quality with appropriate warranties.

The initial signup period will open July 1, 2017 and run through September 30, 2017. Interested homeowners get a free solar assessment and project quote. If they choose to move forward, their final price will be discounted based on the final number of sign-ups. The more households moving forward, the lower the cost will be to all participants.

PEA will help the developers keep the costs low by bundling neighborhood installations, reducing marketing and outreach costs, and working with the Office of Sustainability, L&I and PECO to keep the process moving as quickly as possible. We will also work with developers and lenders to provide financing when needed.

Going solar through Solarize Philly helps fund solar training at the School District of Philadelphia and helps low and moderate income (LMI) families in Philly go solar too. Sign-ups for interested LMI households will open this fall.

Why is Solarize Philly important?

- 1) **Reduce energy costs.** Solar is a smart investment. The savings from solar typically pay for the upfront cost in about 10 years. After that, you will save significantly on your electricity bill. Also, energy prices will inevitably rise over the next 25 years. As they increase, your solar becomes more valuable, and keeps your energy prices low and predictable for the life of your panels.
- 2) **Create jobs.** Residential solar development is labor-intensive, so it creates lots of local jobs. PEA projects Solarize Philly will create 75 jobs in 18 months. Solar creates 15 jobs for every 100 households that participate. And with over 120,000 eligible rooftops citywide, that will add up quickly! These are good-paying, living wage careers that do not require a college degree.
- 3) **Support your community.** Solar brings people together and empowers communities. Participating in Solarize Philly will keep the dollars you spend here in your own city, and will help us train the next generation of solar installers and developers. Solarize Philly will also help low

and moderate income households put solar on their own rooftops, which will help reduce utility costs and empower diverse participation in the clean energy economy.

- 4) **Combat climate change.** Solar reduces the need for dirtier energy, supporting cleaner air and reduced rates of asthma. It cuts carbon emissions, helping Philadelphia meet its goal of 80% carbon reduction by 2050, and lowers your environmental footprint.

What will Solarize Philly accomplish?

By solarizing 500 homes, we will:

- Increase solar power on Philadelphia rooftops by 2.5 megawatts, or a 25% increase
- Subsidize over 100 low and moderate income households to install solar on their own rooftops (increasing low and moderate income participation in solar by over 250%)
- Expand solar job training programs into Philadelphia public schools
- Create 75 good, living wage jobs

We are starting this summer with a 6-week Intro to Solar Installation program at the School District. Moving forward, we hope to be able to offer a solar installation elective with the School District this fall, building off of Youthbuild's existing solar training program. We will also work with other partners citywide to identify, support and promote opportunities for adult solar installer training.

Why hasn't solar already taken off in Philly?

A few reasons. First, Pennsylvania doesn't provide any tax incentives and has a very poor market for renewable energy credits, so the cost here is higher than in other states. Second, the permitting process with L&I and interconnection process with PECO has been long and difficult. In the last year, the Office of Sustainability has worked with L&I to create a streamlined solar permitting process, and PECO has taken enormous strides to staff up and test new interconnection technology, so both should be hugely improved by this summer.

Third, there's a lot of consumer uncertainty. Solar is new, can be confusing, and prices can vary dramatically depending on the company, your roof, the equipment you choose, the financing vehicle, and on and on. **Solarize Philly will make this much simpler.** We will make sure you're getting the best prices, the right equipment, a fair, clear and easy to understand contract, and will ensure that now is the best time to go solar.

Is this a new concept?

Definitely not. PEA is building on the success of solarize programs across the country, and even here in our own backyard with Solarize Greater Media, Northwest Philadelphia Solarize Coalition and Solarize Center City. Successful solarize programs have been completed in Portland, OR, New York City, Westchester, NY, Western Pennsylvania (Solarize Allegheny), Northern Virginia, Michigan, Rhode Island and many more places.

Learn more at www.solarizephilly.org, call Laura Rigell at 215-686-4483, or email solarize@philaenergy.org.