



PROJECT IDEA & GOALS

Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council (SWFRPC) is partnering with the National Association of Regional Councils, the Mid-America Regional Council, Meister Consultants Group, the Council of State Governments, and eight regional councils on the U.S. Department of Energy SunShot Initiative Rooftop Solar Challenge Solar Ready II Project. Through this award, SWFRPC is striving to implement solar best management practices, training materials, and additional proven implementation strategies in the SWFRPC region. Together, with support from our local governments, SWFRPC will achieve more streamlined and standardized solar practices, resulting in measurable improvement in SWFRPC's solar market conditions. The project will ultimately achieve measurable improvements in solar market conditions, will engage 40,000 residents nationwide through online consumer market research panels, and will provide new solar market access for ten million people across the U.S.

TALKING POINTS

THE CASE FOR SOLAR

Why should you invest in solar?

- Solar is an incredibly abundant and free energy resource that hits your home and business every day.
- In many parts of the country where they are taking advantage of available incentives, the cost to generate electricity from a solar installation can be cheaper than buying electricity from the utility.
- Unlike your utility rates, which are heavily dependent on volatile fossil fuel price swings, solar costs are predictable and consistent.

Who is already investing in solar?

- **The U.S. military** is one of the largest buyers of solar energy systems; it has installed enough solar to power 22,000 homes.
- **For-profit businesses** including Walmart, Costco, and Apple are investing in solar as a cheaper alternative to electricity from the utility. Over 3.3 GW of solar has been installed on 32,800 commercial facilities, enough to power 550,000 homes. Walmart alone has installed enough solar to power almost 15,000 homes.

Why promote solar in your community?

- **Solar creates economic value** - It is a \$12 billion industry in the U.S.
- **Solar creates jobs** - As of November 2013, there were over 142,000 solar jobs in the U.S., nearly a 20% increase since the 2012 census. During this time period, solar created jobs at a rate that was ten times faster than the overall economy's employment growth. In 2013, Florida ranked 7th in the nation in solar jobs. (Solar Foundation)
- **Solar is flexible** - It can add economic value to currently underutilized rooftops, brownfields, and landfills.

Myth busters:

- **Reliability:** PV technologies have been around for over 40 years. In 2012, the solar market grew 76%. There currently is enough solar in the U.S. to power over 1.2 million homes.
- **Available Sun:** Solar can be successful in all 50 states, including areas with high precipitation, cloudy days, and extreme weather. Germany receives roughly the **same amount** of sunlight as Alaska and is the world leader in solar.

FINANCING

Financing options for solar are similar to the available financing options for a car:

- **Option 1:** Pay in full upfront for the installation and receive (almost) free electricity for the life of the system (25+ years), plus all incentives.
- **Option 2:** Take out a bank loan to pay for the system upfront. Pay back your loan based on the terms. Receive (almost) free electricity for the life of the system (25+ years) plus all incentives.
- **Option 3:** Lease the system from a third party. Pay little to nothing upfront. Pay a monthly flat lease payment, or buy the electricity as it is produced through a power purchase agreement (where allowed). The third party takes the available incentives.

THE SOLAR READY EFFORT

What is the Solar Ready II Team doing in your region?

- Streamlining permitting processes and eliminating unnecessary regulatory barriers while continuing to uphold the safety, health, and welfare of your community.
- Expanding the availability of financing options for solar projects.
- Lowering adoption costs to make it even more affordable to install solar.