



## **RESIDENTIAL SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC REBATE PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND QUALIFICATIONS**

Austin Energy's Residential Solar Photovoltaic ("PV") Rebate Program is designed to help implement customer-owned, grid-tied, PV technology by offering financial incentives that offset the initial investment. By implementing PV technology, residential customers help the City of Austin reduce the need to generate additional power, lower long-term investment costs for new electric facilities, and also enhance our city's environment.

### **Eligible customers**

- Rebate applicants for existing construction must be an Austin Energy customer with a residential electric utility account at the service address where the PV system is to be installed.
- Rebate applications for new construction must be signed by both the builder and homeowner stating which party is entitled to the rebate funds. New construction applications must also provide verification that the home is within the Austin Energy service territory.
- PV systems must be connected to an electric service panel associated with an Austin Energy residential electric utility account.
- Rebate applications must meet all applicable requirements, including these guidelines.
- Participation in the Solar Rebate Program does not affect customer participation in other Austin Energy conservation programs.

### **Rebate Funding**

- The rebate amount will be calculated as: [Number of PV Modules] x [STC Rating per Module (Watts)] x [CEC rated Inverter Efficiency] x [Rebate Level].
- The standard rebate level for qualifying equipment is currently \$1.10 per Watt.
- Batteries are not covered under the rebate.
- Rebate cap:
  - The total rebate allowed for each individual project is limited to \$15,000 within one fiscal year.
  - The maximum rebate is 80% of invoice cost.
  - The total lifetime maximum solar rebates that any single residential site may receive is limited to \$50,000.
- If the customer's application is approved, Austin Energy will issue a Letter of Intent (LOI) for the project. Austin Energy makes no financial commitment to applicants until a signed LOI is issued.
- Rebate funding is offered on a first-come, first-served basis and is subject to program budget constraints. A LOI will be issued only if the program budget is sufficient to accommodate the project.
- Existing construction LOIs are valid for 120 days. New construction LOIs are valid for 180 days.
- Requests for LOI extensions must be submitted prior to LOI expiration, in writing, accompanied by a detailed explanation of the reasons for the delay. Extensions are subject to approval at Austin Energy's discretion.
- Rebate funds will be paid within 4 to 6 weeks after the system passes final inspection(s) and all required documentation is submitted.
- Customers have the option to receive the rebate or assign the rebate directly to the PV system installer/supplier or other third party.

***The Austin Energy guidelines and rebate levels are subject to change at any time, without notice.***

## Installation and Warranty Requirements

- Systems must be installed by an Austin Energy-registered PV installer. A list of registered installers can be found on Austin Energy's website.
- All inverters and solar modules must be new, and all systems installed must carry a 10-year warranty from the installer, a minimum 10-year manufacturer warranty on inverters in residential applications without battery back-up, and a minimum 20-year manufacturer warranty on solar panels.
- Only eligible PV modules and inverters qualify for incentives under the Austin Energy program. As a list of eligible equipment, Austin Energy adopts by reference those listed by the California Energy Commission on its website: <http://www.gosolarcalifornia.org>
- ***Austin Energy is not a manufacturer, supplier or guarantor of the PV system or installers, and Austin Energy, whether by making available a list of registered installers and equipment sources or otherwise, has not made and makes no representations or warranties of any nature, directly or indirectly, express or implied, as to performance of the installer or reliability, performance, durability, condition or quality of the PV system selected and purchased.***
- All PV systems must be interconnected to Austin Energy's electrical grid, at customer's expense. The PV system must comply with current City of Austin guidelines governing interconnection with electric grid and any subsequent revisions to the guidelines.
- Work must be performed in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations (including building permits in any non – City of Austin areas, if required) along with manufacturer's standards and City of Austin/Austin Energy guidelines.
- All installers must obtain an electrical permit for a solar installation. Licensed electricians must perform all electrical interconnections after obtaining appropriate electrical permits.
- In some municipal jurisdictions within the Austin Energy service territory, building permits are required for all PV system installations. Within the City of Austin, PV system installations on flat roof structures or mounted in a manner that is not in alignment with the contour of the roof must also obtain building permits. For installations not in alignment with the contour of the roof in jurisdictions where building permits are not issued, an engineer stamped drawing is required by the Austin Energy inspector prior to scheduling an electric inspection.
- Contractor must include all costs, including any required service upgrades (such as service panel, weatherhead, wiring, etc.), in the original bid. A separate permit may be required for service upgrades.
- All roof penetrations must be flashed.
- Clamping attachments (such as S-5 Clamps) must be rated by the manufacturer to be compatible with the roofing system
- Roofing system must have a minimum of ten years of usable life remaining. Removing and re-installing PV systems can be costly. If re-roofing is required, PV system removal and reinstallation is at customer expense.
- AC & DC surge protection is required, if the inverter used has built-in surge protection, documentation must be provided.

## Solar Access Guidelines

- Austin Energy retains the right to deny rebates based on excessive shading or poor orientation of the proposed solar array. All solar access requirements must be met at the time of the final inspection.
- When evaluating the solar window for a central inverter PV system, the entire array must be assessed under the same criteria and comply with the standards set forth in this document.
- For systems using micro inverters each panel must individually comply with the standards set forth in this document.
- The identified solar window must have 6 hours of solar access per day year round according to the following criteria.

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- The solar window for systems oriented at 90° to 120° must have an Eastern “horizon view”\* and unobstructed solar access until 2:00pm solar time.
- The solar window for systems oriented at 120° to 150° must have a solar window that falls between the hours of 8:00am and 2:00pm solar time.
- The solar window for systems oriented at 150° to 220° may have a solar window that falls between the hours of 8:00am and 2:00pm or 9:00am to 3:00pm or 10:00am to 4:00pm solar time.
- The solar window for systems oriented at 220° to 250° must have a solar window that falls between the hours of 10:00am to 4:00pm solar time.
- The solar window for systems oriented at 250° to 300° must have a Western “horizon view”\* and unobstructed solar access from 10:00am solar time.

- Refer to the chart below for acceptable tilt angles and orientations.

Solar PV Rebate Table

Tilt/Azimuth	North west			Due West				Due South						Due East									
	300	290	280	270	260	250	240	230	220	210	200	190	180	170	160	150	140	130	120	110	100	90	
0°																							
5°																							
10°																							
15°	Shaded Azimuth's and Tilt Angles Qualify for Rebates																						
20°																							
25°																							
30°																							
35°																							
40°																							
45°																							
50°																							
55°																							
60°																							

- Dual orientations on one inverter are acceptable. However, both arrays must be assessed under the same solar window where the criteria for both orientations apply. For example if there are arrays at 90° and 270° tied to the same inverter there must be no shade on either array from dawn until dusk.

\* A horizon view must show that there are no obstructions to the applicable direction on the shade identification tool beyond a half hour increment inside the border of the pathfinder grid.

### Home Energy Efficiency Requirements

- Homes 10 years old or older must:
  - have completed the following measures through the Austin Energy Home Performance with ENERGY STAR®, or equivalent Austin Energy program, within the past 10 years
    - Solar Shading,
    - Attic insulation, and
    - Duct Sealing, or
  - meet or exceed energy efficiency levels in place, thereby excluding the home from participation in Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® or equivalent program, or

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- have received energy-efficiency improvements through the Austin Energy Free Weatherization program (for low-income customers) within 10 years, or
- have received an Austin Energy Green Building 5-star rating.
- NOTE: All dates related to participation in an Austin Energy Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® program or Free Home Improvements program will be the calendar year of participation.

### **Additional Requirements**

- Customer/applicant must transfer to Austin Energy all renewable energy credits (RECs) and other environmental attributes (other than tax credits) from power generated by PV systems receiving rebates from Austin Energy. If the proper documents are submitted proving that the RECs are required to achieve LEED certification, RECs may be retained by customer, and Austin Energy, as the REC aggregator, will reserve and finally retire the RECs on customer's behalf as required for LEED certification for the first two years following installation of the PV system at the service address. (See Austin Energy Renewable Energy Credit Agreement).
- Customer must sign the Renewable Energy Credit Microgenerator Listing Form.
- REC agreement must be disclosed to homebuyer upon sale of home, and Microgenerator Listing Form must be included in the home transfer documents for submitted to Austin Energy upon the transfer of the electric service to the new homeowner.
- PV system cannot be removed from Austin Energy service territory.
- Customer must sign the Solar Rebate Customer Agreement Form.
- Property deed restrictions must not prohibit the installation of solar photovoltaics on property.
- Austin Energy guidelines and rebate levels are subject to change without notice, and Austin Energy reserves the right to refuse any application/request for incentive payment that does not meet all requirements.

### **Rebate Refund**

- A refund of the rebate paid to the Customer shall become due to Austin Energy if the customer fails to ensure that the rebated equipment is properly maintained and operated at an Austin Energy metered address. The refund amount is calculated as: (Rebate paid) x ((10 – number of full years system was operational) x 0.1))
- The refund will be calculated by reducing the rebate paid by 10% per year for each of the ten years following final inspection and approval (first 10% reduction to occur on the anniversary date of rebate payment).

#### **Austin Energy – Power Saver™ Program – Residential Rebate**

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