

Solar PV in PA: Intro to the Design of New Construction & Retrofit Residential Systems

www.phrc.psu.edu



Pennsylvania Housing Research Center

- The Pennsylvania Housing Research Center serves the home building industry and the residents of Pennsylvania by improving the quality and affordability of housing.
- We conduct applied research, foster the development and commercialization of innovative technologies, and transfer appropriate technologies to the housing community.
- The PHRC is housed within the Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering at Penn State. For more information about the PHRC (publications, webinars, conferences), check out our website, phrc.psu.edu.



PHRC Housing Conference | March 13 & 14

- **Early Bird Registration is open!**
 - <http://bit.ly/2018PHRCHousingConference>
- **Conference & accommodations at The Penn Stater**
- **Session topics include:**
 - Codes
 - Construction
 - Design
 - Land Development



Continuing Education

• At end of the program, you can register for a certificate to receive the following credits for this session:

- 1.0 PA Dept L&I Contact Hour
- 1.0 PDH
- 1.0 AIA LU|HSW (PHRCWEB119)
- 1.0 ICC Contact Hour (0.1 CEU) (16586)
- 1.0 NARI hour/CEU



Solar PV in PA: Intro to the Design of New Construction & Retrofit Residential Systems

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AIA Info

Credit(s) earned on completion of this course will be reported to AIA CES for AIA members. Certificates of Completion for both AIA members and non-AIA members are available upon request.

This course is registered with AIA CES for continuing professional education. As such, it does not include content that may be deemed or construed to be an approval or endorsement by the AIA of any material of construction or any method or manner of handling, using, distributing, or dealing in any material or product.

Questions related to specific materials, methods, and services will be addressed at the conclusion of this presentation.



Description

- Pennsylvania's Alternative Residential Energy Provisions include solar photovoltaic systems as an optional entrance requirement. Building off PHRC's Energy Auditing 101 webinar in January 2018, this webinar will provide an overview of how to design new construction and retrofit solar photovoltaic systems for Pennsylvania homes. The webinar will include how to assess anticipated or actual home energy usage to evaluate sizing needs, how to conduct a solar site assessment for roof- or ground-mount applications, how to use tools like PVWatts for anticipated system output for grid-tied and off-grid systems, and how to place roof-mounted solar photovoltaic panels to comply with 2015 IRC 605.11 requirements.

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Learning Objectives

1. Review components of grid-tied, grid-tied with battery backup, and off-grid solar photovoltaic systems to reduce environmental impacts from site and source energy consumption.
2. Evaluate anticipated or actual source and site residential energy consumption for solar PV system sizing needs.
3. Learn how to analyze a site for solar PV system suitability, including for shading, economic feasibility, structural safety, and resulting anticipated energy output.
4. Review 2015 IRC code requirements that affect roof system placement for fire safety.

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Outline

- Brief introduction
- Component details
- System details
- Community solar overview

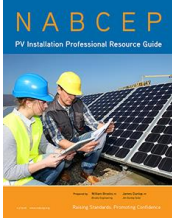


PHRC/2018 Jan 2018 PHRC Energy Auditing 101



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Solar Professionals



NABCEP

Raising Standards. Promoting Confidence.

1. PV Design Specialist
2. PV Installer Specialist
3. PV Installation Certified Professional

- PV System Inspector Certification
- PV Commissioning & Maintenance Specialist
- PV Technical Sales



10 <https://www.nabcep.org/resources>

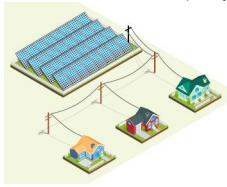
Two Scales

Onsite Production
(Distributed Generation)



<https://www.psu.edu/news/press-releases/2016/06/01/psu-gets-first-net-metered-residential-solar-system/>

Community Solar
(Distributed Generation or Grid-/Utility-Scale)



<https://www.energysage.com/community-solar/guide-how-it-works-benefits-for-homeowners-but-what-are-the-catch/>

Intro to Solar PV Systems

1. Photovoltaics

2. Power Conditioning Equipment

3. Balance of System Components



12 <https://www.energysage.com/solar/guide-how-it-works-benefits-for-homeowners-but-what-are-the-catch/>



<https://www.energysage.com/solar/guide-how-it-works-benefits-for-homeowners-but-what-are-the-catch/>

Solar PV System Design Principles

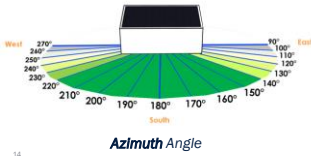
- 1. Face the sun
- 2. Avoid shading
- 3. Design for the year



13

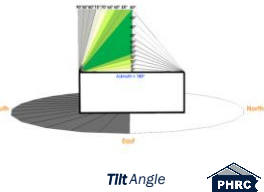
Principle #1: Face the Sun (Fixed array)

1. Orientation



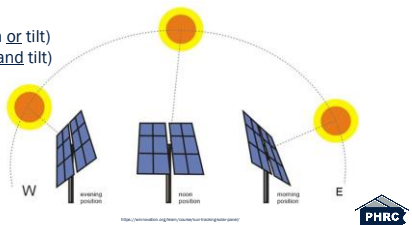
14

2. Pitch



Principle #1: Face the Sun (Tracking array)

- Ground mounted
- Single axis (azimuth or tilt)
- Dual axis (azimuth and tilt)



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Principle #2: Avoid shading

Site Shading

- 1. Surrounding buildings
- 2. Trees
- 3. Poles
- 4. Utility lines (existing)

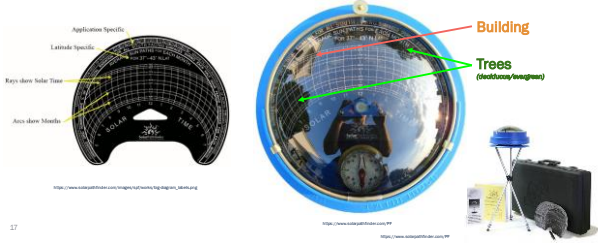


Home Shading

- 1. Dormers
- 2. Chimneys
- 3. Vent stacks
- 4. Landscaping
- 5. Utility lines (installed)



Assess Shading with Solar Pathfinder



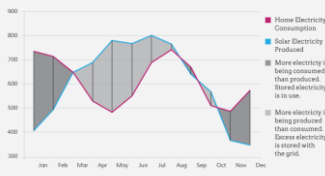
Google Sunroof



Principle #3: Design for the Year

- **Grid-Tied: Net metering policy**
 - Investor-owned utilities in PA required to offer this service
 - Grid as "energy storage"
 - Get credit for excess summer production in winter
 - Bi-directional meter
- **Design for annual production to match annual usage**
 - Only get cost of supply, not cost of distribution, for annual Net Excess Generation (NEG)

Net metering helps you balance your solar electricity use



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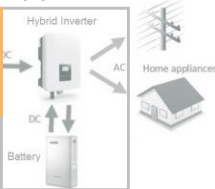
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Solar PV Systems

1. Photovoltaics



2. Power Conditioning Equipment



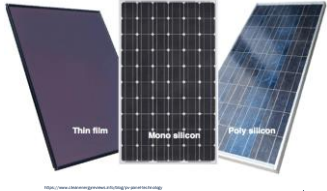
3. Balance of System Components



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Solar Photovoltaics

- 1. **Crystalline Silicon**
 - Monocrystalline
 - Polycrystalline
- 2. **Thin Films**
 - CIGS (Copper Indium Gallium Selenide)
 - CdTe (Cadmium Telluride)
 - Amorphous silicon
 - Organic photovoltaic cells



<http://www.enr.com/resources/digital-technology>



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Photovoltaics: Crystalline Silicon



<http://www.pv.com/resources/technology>

23

Photovoltaics: Thin Films



<http://www.solar.com/resources/technology>

<http://www.solar.com/resources/technology>

<http://www.solar.com/resources/technology>



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Thin Films: Solar Shingles



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Thin Films: Solar Shingles



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Hybrid: Tesla Solar Roof



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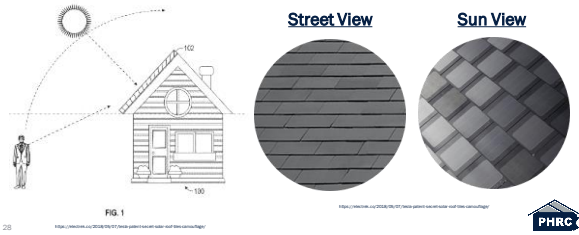
Panasonic

HIT

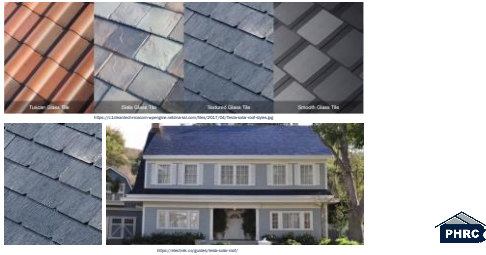
PHRC | www.phrc.com

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Hybrid: Tesla Solar Roof

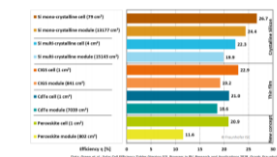


Hybrid: Tesla Solar Roof

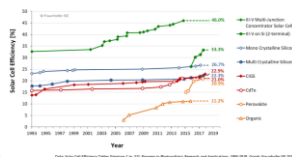


Solar Modules: Efficiencies

Efficiency Comparison of Technologies:
Best Lab Cells vs. Best Lab Modules



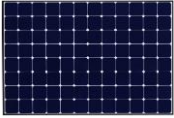
Development of Laboratory Solar Cell Efficiencies



Solar Modules: Measurements



JinkoSolar Eagle 60P **260 W** polycrystalline panel
65.00" × 39.05" = 17.6 ft2
260 W / 17.6 ft2 = **14.8 W/ft2**



Sunpower X21 **345 W** monocrystalline panel
61.4" × 41.2" = 17.6 ft2
345 W / 17.6 ft2 = **19.6 W/ft2**



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Solar Modules: Measurements



SunTegra **100W** shingle
52.06" × 19.75" = 7.14 ft2
100 W / 7.14 ft2 = **14.0 W/ft2**



SunTegra **67W** tile
52.00" × 13.75" = 4.97 ft2
67 W / 4.97 ft2 = **13.5 W/ft2**



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Solar Module Details

1. UL listed and labeled components

- Typically required for grid interconnection

2. Warranties

- Production Warranty
 - Min: Guarantee >80% production after 25 years
 - Best: Guarantee >92% production after 25 years
- Equipment Warranty
 - Average: 10-12 years without failing
 - Best: 25 years without failing



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String Inverters

- Different inverter specifications needed if grid-tied, grid tied w/ batteries, or off-grid
- Standard vs. hybrid inverters
- Sizing & specifications by NABCEP professional



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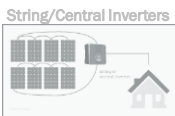
String Inverters: Locations



38

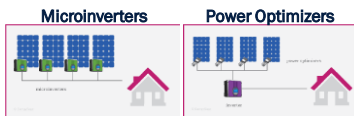
Power Conditioning Equipment: Inverters

NO SHADING ISSUES



- One central inverter for all panels of same orientation and slope

SOME SHADING ISSUES

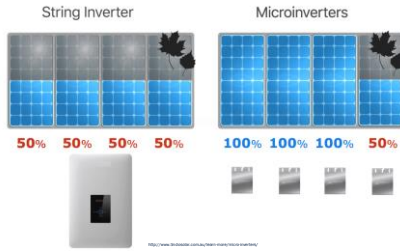


- Individual inverters for each panel (located under each panel)
- No central inverter needed
- Individual power optimizers for each panel (located under each panel)
- Still need central inverter

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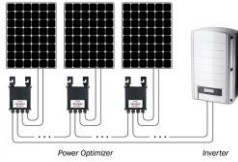


Inverters: Shading Issues



Microinverters & Power Optimizers

- **Pros:** Shading challenges, decreased installation time for integrated panel-microinverter assemblies
- **Con:** Access for serviceability



Power Conditioning Equipment: Batteries

- **Off-grid:** Required
- **Grid-tied:** Optional
 - Uninterruptible power supply (UPS)
 - Time of Use Rates (TOU)
- **Most common solar PV system battery types:**
 - Lead acid
 - Lithium ion



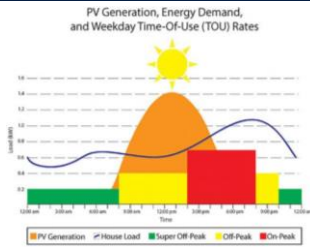
Uninterruptible Power Supply: Grid Outage

- Customers may ask for solar PV system when really are looking for an uninterruptible power supply (UPS)
- If grid-tied with NO batteries, **cannot** use solar PV system when grid is down
 - Safety for workers fixing the grid
 - Exception: SMA Sunny Boy with Secure Power Supply
 - Allows up to 2000W to be plugged in while system still producing solar energy (i.e. won't work at night)
- If grid-tied WITH batteries, will revert to battery storage

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Time of Use Rates



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Batteries: Lead Acid



Batteries: Lithium Ion



46 <https://www.12v-battery.com/product/50-12V-50AH-Lithium-Battery>

<https://www.energystorage.com/energy-storage-systems/tesla-powerwall>

Lithium Ion: Tesla Powerwall



47 <https://www.energystorage.com/energy-storage-systems/tesla-powerwall>

<https://www.energystorage.com/energy-storage-systems/tesla-powerwall>

Batteries: Space Considerations

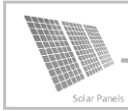
- **Number and size of batteries depends on customer needs**
 - Grid Tied: Typically sized for 1-2 days power outage
 - Varying loads per customer
- **Find out what battery types your NABCEP certified designer typically uses**
 - Depending on type and if installing indoors, may need a dedicated space with continuous active ventilation
 - May also install in garages or outside
- **Plan for adequate battery storage space**

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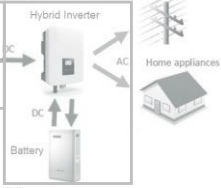


Solar PV Systems

1. Photovoltaics



2. Power Conditioning Equipment



3. Balance of System Components

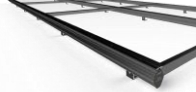


Racking: Roof Mount

• Rails (Unirac Solar Mount)



• Railless (Unirac Sunframe)



- Aesthetics
- Ease of installation
- Quality
- Installer preferences

• Railless (Unirac Sunframe Micro rail)



Roof Mount: Standing Seam Metal Roofs



Roof Mount: Tesla Solar Roof



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PHRC / www.phrc.com and under solar roof from EnergySource.com (not for sale)



Ground Mount

- **Fixed:** Standard Ground Mount or Pole Mount
- **Trackers:** Pole Mount



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PHRC / www.phrc.com and under solar mounting gear



PHRC / www.phrc.com and under solar mounting gear

Inverter Details

1. UL listed and labeled components

- Typically required for grid interconnection

2. Warranties

- Equipment Warranty
 - Average: 5-10 years without failing
 - Best:
 - String: 12 years
 - Microinverters: 12-15 years
 - Power optimizers: 25 years

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Outline

- Brief introduction
- Component details
- **System details**
- Community solar overview



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Zero Energy Ready Home Standard

Exhibit 1: DOE Zero Energy Ready Home Mandatory Requirements for All Labeled Homes

Area of Improvement	Mandatory Requirements
1. ENERGY STAR for Homes Baseline	<input type="checkbox"/> Certified under ENERGY STAR Qualified Homes Program Version 3 or 3.1 ^{10, 11}
2. Envelope¹²	<input type="checkbox"/> Fenestration shall meet or exceed ENERGY STAR requirements. See End Note for specific U, SHGC values, and exceptions. ¹² <input type="checkbox"/> Ceiling, wall, floor, and slab insulation shall meet or exceed 2012 or 2015 IECC levels ^{14, 15}
3. Duct System	<input type="checkbox"/> Duct distribution systems located within the home's thermal and air barrier boundary or an optimized location to achieve comparable performance ¹⁶
4. Water Efficiency	<input type="checkbox"/> Hot water delivery systems (distributed and central) shall meet efficient design requirements ¹⁷
5. Lighting & Appliances¹⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> All installed refrigerators, dishwashers, and clothes washers are ENERGY STAR qualified. <input type="checkbox"/> 80% of lighting fixtures are ENERGY STAR qualified or ENERGY STAR lamps (bubs) in minimum 80% of sockets <input type="checkbox"/> All installed bathroom ventilation and ceiling fans are ENERGY STAR qualified
Occupant Health	6. Indoor Air Quality
	<input type="checkbox"/> Certified under EPA Indoor airPLUS ¹¹
Future-Proofing	7. Renewable Ready
	<input type="checkbox"/> Provisions of the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home PV-Ready Checklist are Completed ¹⁸

www.energy.gov/eehv/buildings/zero-energy-ready-home



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Zero Energy Ready Home: PV-Ready Checklist

Area of Improvement	Mandatory Requirements
7. Renewable Ready	<input type="checkbox"/> Provisions of the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home PV-Ready Checklist are Completed ¹⁸

DOE Zero Energy Ready Home PV-Ready Checklist

DOE Zero Energy Ready Home National Program Requirements Description: Requirements 1 through 7 are mandatory for all Zero Energy Ready Homes. Requirements 8 through 10 are optional. All ENERGY STAR for Homes Qualified Homes must meet the ENERGY STAR for Homes requirements. For more information, visit www.energystar.gov.

1. Location: Homes in the north, east, and west must meet a minimum of 5 kWh/m²/day average solar radiation based on the location and orientation of the home. Homes in the south must meet a minimum of 4 kWh/m²/day average solar radiation based on the location and orientation of the home.

2. Homes are designed for installation from roof area within ±45° of true south as defined in the table below.

Latitude/Decline Angle (in the Northern U.S.)	Minimum Roof Pitch (in ° of True South)
< 20.00	1.00
2.0000	2.00
4.0000	3.00
6.0000	4.00
8.0000	5.00

3. Homes are designed for installation from roof area within ±45° of true south as defined in the table below.

- Min. sun requirements in the home's zip code**
5 kWh/m²/day average solar radiation
- Little to no shading on the home's site**
- Trees, tall buildings, power lines
- Dormers, vent stacks
- Free roof space +/- 45 degrees of true south**



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Zero Energy Ready Home: PV-Ready Checklist

Area of Improvement	Mandatory Requirements
7. Renewable Ready	<input type="checkbox"/> Provisions of the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home PV-Ready Checklist are Completed ¹⁸

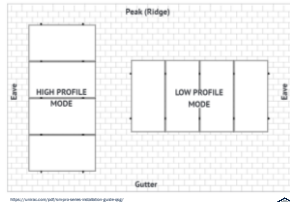


1. Install conduit from the roof to the inverter
2. Install conduit from the inverter to the electrical panel
3. Install a 4'x4' plywood panel area to mount the inverter and balance of system components, and
4. Install a 70 amp dual pole breaker in the electrical box



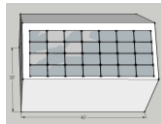
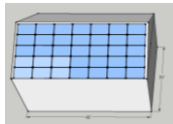
Example: Roof Sizing

- Mount modules horizontally or vertically
 - Confirm racking equipment compatibility
- Width/length of modules
- 1"-1.25" spacing between modules to fit clamps



Example: Roof Sizing

Example: 40'x30' house, 7/12 pitch roof facing south, no overhangs



- JinkoSolar Eagle 60P **260 W** polycrystalline panel
- 65.00" x 39.05" = 17.6 ft²
- No/tiny roof design tweaks: **35 panels (9.1 kW system)**

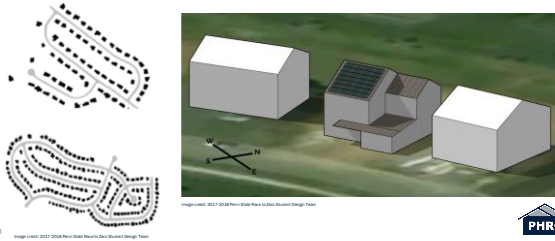
- Sunpower X21 **345 W** monocrystalline panel
- 61.4" x 41.2" = 17.6 ft²
- No roof design tweaks: **28 panels (9.7 kW system)**
- Minor roof design tweaks: **35 panels (12.1 kW system)**

Race to Zero Case Study: Similar Floor Plans



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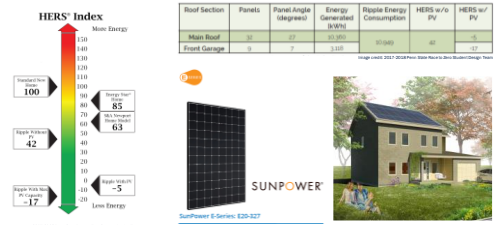
Race to Zero: Spacing/Shading Concerns



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Race to Zero: Efficiency First + Expandability



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Retrofits: Hall Of Shame



Retrofits: Aesthetics



Retrofits: Tesla Solar Roof



Sketch Retrofit Potential: Google Sunroof



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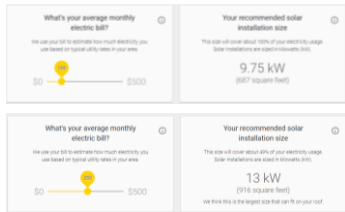


Sketch Retrofit Sizing: Google Sunroof

Example

- Gas Heat (current)**
- \$100 electric bill
 - 9.75 kW system
 - 687 ft2 (out of 916 ft2 available)
 - 100% electricity offset

- Electric Heat (conversion)**
- \$250 electric bill
 - 13 kW system
 - 916 ft2 (out of 916 ft2 available)
 - 49% electricity offset



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Off-Grid Solar: Batteries + Generator



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Outline

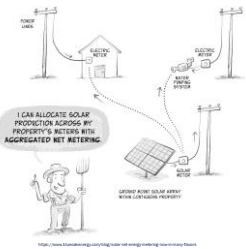
- Brief introduction
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PHRC/Steve DelReusa.org/Community solar gardens could expand solar benefits to more households that need them but cannot install.

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Net Meter Aggregation (current)



- **Allows aggregation of multiple usage meters with the solar production meter**
- **Current rules in PA:**
 - Must be same property owner
 - Meters must be within 2 miles of each other
 - Solar production meter must have some sort of load (can't be purely production)
- **Policy currently designed for farms & businesses with multiple close-by buildings**
 - Example: install the solar PV system on an electrified barn to virtually use in the house + for the water pump

programs.delreusa.org/system/program/detail/85



PA Solar Future Plan (Nov. 2018)

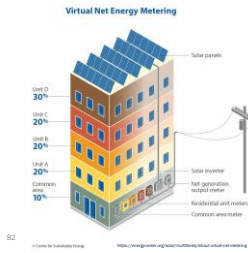


- **Target: 10% solar PV electricity generation in PA by 2030**
- Combination of distributed generation & utility/grid-scale installations
- Some of the strategies include:
 - Increased Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards
 - Increase access to capital for solar PV financing
 - Streamlined land use policies
 - Expand virtual net metering
 - Remove barriers to Community Solar
 - Enable Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing programs



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Virtual Net Metering



- **Billing calculations vs. hardwired equipment requirements**
- **Current net meter aggregation rules:**
 - Must be same property owner
 - Meters must be within 2 miles of each other
- **Potential rule changes:**
 - Does not have to be the same owner/end user
 - Increase distance stipulations between meters



Community Solar



- Greater solar PV system placement potential, especially for shading conditions
- Subscribers purchase defined share/credits for solar PV energy production for their electric bills



Conclusions

- Think ahead when incorporating solar PV systems into home designs
- Variety of solar modules & solar PV systems components
- Work with a NABCEP professionals to design & install best systems for your needs
- Consider energy efficiency first
- Future policy changes may expand solar PV system options for homes in PA



84 <http://www.psu.edu/energy/energy-center/energy-center-for-home-energy-efficiency/>
