

Solar Program

Note: After a temporary suspension, the Solar Rebate Program is reopening for applications! But it will be for a limited period, so we recommend timely action. Applications for rebates postmarked from January 2nd through January 16th will be accepted. If funds are insufficient for the number of applications received that qualify for the program, qualified applications will be chosen for rebate awards in a random selection process. All applicants will be notified of their standing by late February.

And be sure to check out the new Wind Energy Incentive. Qualified Maine residents and businesses may be eligible for rebates of up to \$2,000 and \$4,000, respectively. See our press release here: [PRESS RELEASE](#). You can find an application here: [WIND APPLICATION](#)

Watch this site for updates.

Maine's Solar Energy Rebate Program

Governor Baldacci's Solar Initiative was signed into law on June 29th, 2005. The Solar Energy Rebate Program applies to solar electric and thermal energy systems purchased after July 1, 2005. The Maine Public Utilities Commission [Rule Chapter 930](#) governs implementation of the [Act](#).



For Solar Thermal Systems

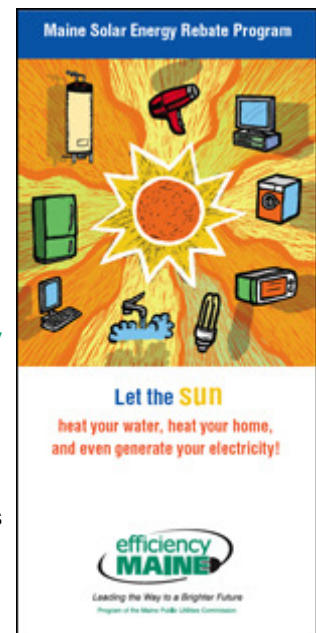
- Solar thermal systems designed to heat water and air qualifies for a basic rebate of 25% of the cost of the system or \$1,000 whichever is less. Solar incentives for ENERGY STAR and Maine Home Performance Homes are 25% of the cost of the system or \$1,500 whichever is less. The commercial incentives are now 25% of the system costs or \$1,000 whichever is less;
- Solar hot water systems must be installed by licensed plumbers who have been qualified to install such systems by the Maine Public Utilities Commission, or by licensed plumbers working with someone who has been qualified to install such systems by the Maine Public Utilities Commission;
- [List of Certified Solar Thermal Installers](#); and,
- To become a certified solar thermal installer, an individual must take the 2-day workshop offered by the Maine Public Utilities Commission and pass the take-home exam. To see if a workshop is coming up, please visit the MSEP's [calendar of events](#).

For Solar Electric Systems

- Solar PV systems qualify for rebates of \$2.00/watt for the first 1,000 watts, capped at \$2,000;
- Effective on January 1, 2008 all PV applications must include a copy of a home energy audit signed by the auditor.
- Up to 25% of the designated solar fund can be spent on solar electric system rebates;
- Solar electric systems must be installed on homes or businesses connected to the utility grid;
- For solar electric systems installed after January 1, 2007, the system must be installed by a master electrician who is [North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners \(NABCEP\)](#) certified, or by a master electrician working with someone who is NABCEP certified; and,
- [List of NABCEP Certified Solar Electric Installers](#).

All Systems

Rebates are limited to Maine residents. Homeowners and businesses applying for rebates should be prepared to furnish all documentation of system purchase and copies of installer licenses and certification. Individuals engaged in the sale, purchase, or



installation of a solar system after July 1, 2005 must carefully read the language of the [law](#) to ensure that the system will qualify for a rebate.

- [Solar Energy Rebate Program Application Form](#);
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#) about the Solar Rebate Program;
- [An Act to Encourage the Use of Solar Energy](#);
- [Solar Energy Rebate Program Rule \(Chapter 930\)](#);
- [Solar Rebate Program Monthly Financial Report](#);
- [2007 Maine Solar Energy Rebate Program Annual Report](#);
- [Federal energy tax incentives](#) (Includes solar energy systems.);
- [Solar Rebate Program Brochure](#); and,
- [Calendar of Events](#) of upcoming solar thermal certification workshop.

For More Information

Please contact Richard Fortier, Solar Program Manager Efficiency Maine at the Maine Public Utilities Commission, at (207) 287-3319 or by e-mail at richard.fortier@maine.gov.

Downeast Solar Co-Op

This project grew out of a Maine Million Solar Roofs (MSR) proposal where MSR Partnership participants began to think creatively about supporting the growth of “solar roofs” in a state that had, at that time, no significant incentive programs. Thus, the idea of a Solar Co-op was born, as a combination of tools and small incentives that would, in the aggregate, yield sufficient incentives to advance more Mainers into the ranks of solar homeowners. The Maine Energy Investment Corporation (MEIC) was awarded a Maine State Energy Program grant in the amount of \$23,000 for this project. Bonneville Environmental Foundation, and Maine Interfaith Power and Light provided match funding in the amount of \$33,000 for this grant. The resulting Downeast Solar Co-op (DSC) program consists of three core elements: Basic public education; “SolarCents” PV RECs aggregation, and “PV Reinvestment Fund”.

Basic public education on solar. Public education included the development of handouts and MEIC participation on panels at solar workshops.

“SolarCents” Aggregation project. While larger renewable generators have been selling RECs for years, owners of residential-scale PV installations may not even be aware that their system is eligible to earn RECs. In addition, most residential systems don’t produce enough output for a system owner to sell the associated RECs on his or her own. If many small systems were to be aggregated, however, the aggregation could qualify those small systems and assist them in the sale of their RECs (or sell the RECs on their behalf. The “SolarCents” aggregation effort continues to spur interest but few sign-ups. It seems that the hurdles for participation, (monitoring, verification and contracting with an aggregator, for example), remain daunting to prospective participants. We are hopeful that once REC sales are actually being processed, more eligible system owners will see the value to completing the registration process.

PV Reinvestment Fund. Two “mini-grants” have so far been awarded: Capital Village affordable housing complex in Augusta (a MSHA-sponsored complex). The second award was made to Maple Hill Farms, a “Green” B&B in Hallowell, for their 15 kW PV system. A ribbon-cutting ceremony for this installation was held January 18, 2007, and resulted in significant coverage in both print and TV media.

Both awardees were offered Fat Spaniel real-time monitoring systems, to enable the systems’ performance to be web-accessible. The Fat Spaniel System is currently running for Capitol Village, and will soon be up and running for Maple Hill Farms. <http://www.renewmaine.org/solar/MiniGrants.html>

At this time, we expect to make a second round of grants this coming fall.

For More Information

Please contact Shirley Bartlett, Efficiency Maine Program Manager at the Maine Public Utilities Commission, at (207) 287-3318 or by email at Shirley.Bartlett@maine.gov.