

9/23/09



Texas

Incentives/Policies for Renewables & Efficiency

Austin Energy - Solar PV Rebate Program

Last DSIRE Review: 03/17/2009

Incentive Type: Utility Rebate Program

State: Texas

Eligible Photovoltaics

Renewable/Other Technologies:

Applicable Sectors: Commercial, Residential, Nonprofit, State Government, Fed. Government, Multi-Family Residential, Must be Austin Energy Customer

Incentive Amount: Residential and Commercial: \$3.75/watt-AC;
Non-profit: \$4.50/watt-AC;
Equipment manufactured (60% minimum) in Austin: up to \$5.60/watt AC

Maximum Incentive: Residential: the lesser of \$50,000 or 80% of the invoiced cost per customer;
Commercial: the lesser of \$100,000 or 80% of invoiced cost per customer, system not to exceed 20 kW-AC

Eligible System Size: Minimum size: 1 kW-AC
Maximum size: 20 kW-AC

Equipment Requirements: Must use pre-approved modules and inverters (those listed by the California Energy Commission). PV systems must carry a 5-year warranty from the installer in addition to a 20 year module manufacturer warrantee and a 10 year manufacturer warrantee on inverters in residential applications without battery back-up.

Installation Requirements: Must be grid-connected. Must use a solar installer from the Austin Energy Registered Installer List. Solar installers must be certified by the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) within two years of becoming a Registered Installer.

Program Budget: \$4.5 million (FY 08-09, total for all solar rebates)

Ownership of Renewable Energy

Credits: Austin Energy

Expiration Date: Program year runs from October - September

Project Review/Certification: Pre-installation inspection will determine rebate eligibility; final rebate determined upon post-installation inspection

Web Site: <http://www.austinenergy.com/Energy%20Efficiency/Programs/Rebates/Solar%20Rebates/index.htm>

Summary:

Austin Energy's Solar Rebate Program, launched on June 1, 2004, offers a \$3.75 per watt incentive to eligible residential and commercial customers (including multi-family housing) who install photovoltaics on their homes or facilities. Non-profit organizations are eligible for a rebate of \$4.50 per watt. For solar installations that use PV equipment manufactured in Austin, the rebate is \$5.60 per watt. For residential customers, the rebate program will pay 80% of customer invoiced cost up to a maximum of \$50,000 per customer. For commercial customers, the rebate program will pay 80% of customer invoiced cost up to \$100,000 per customer. Rebates will only be paid for approved systems installed by approved solar contractors according to the established technical requirements. Depending on the commercial rebate amount, approval from the Austin City Council may be required. All systems must conform with the utility's equipment and installation standards in order to qualify for a rebate.

The City Council initially approved \$933,000 in funding for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004. For 2005, \$2,000,000 was budgeted for solar PV rebates and \$500,000 for PV installations on municipal buildings. For 2006, the solar PV rebate budget was raised to \$3,000,000, with \$450,000 being allocated for PV installations on municipal buildings. The FY 08-09 budget (through September 30, 2009) has been increased to \$4.5 million. The program is reassessed on an annual basis each fiscal year in October, but does not have a specified final expiration date.

Austin Energy will provide net metering for customers with solar systems. Any net excess generation at the end of each month will be credited to the following month's bill. However, the credit will be less than retail value -- calculated by multiplying the net kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity fed into the grid times the current fuel charge. Renewable energy credits (RECs) and other environmental attributes generated by a rebated system must be transferred to Austin Energy, unless the RECs are required for LEED certification.

In 2003, the Austin City Council set a 20% by 2020 renewable portfolio standard (RPS) for Austin Energy with a solar goal of 100 megawatts capacity in the community by 2020. Austin Energy will install demonstration solar projects at schools, libraries and community centers, and is partnering with other city departments to develop the first 'affordable' net-zero energy subdivision in the country, a 100-home subdivision in the city's southeast district.

Contact:**Conservation Information Center - Solar Rebates**

Austin Energy
Solar Rebate Program
721 Barton Springs Road
Austin, TX 78704

Phone: (512) 482-5346

Fax: (512) 482-5409

E-Mail: solarrebate@austinenergy.com

Web Site: <http://www.austinenergy.com>