

Frequently Asked Questions – System Size and Customer Usage



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SOLAR*REWARDS®**Frequently Asked Questions – System Size and Customer Usage** HOME**1. Will a PV system work with my home?**

To have a PV system installed on your roof, your property must have a reasonable amount of non-shaded, unobstructed roof space during the key sun hours of the day. A southern orientation is ideal, but east- and west-facing roofs can still capture a portion of the power of a true south-facing roof. Your roof can be flat or sloped. Rack-mounted systems on the ground are also an option.

2. Am I eligible to participate in the Solar*Rewards program?

Please review the candidate checklist, rules and requirements, and term and conditions documents in order to determine your eligibility.

3. What size system should I get?

For the Solar*Rewards program, the system size is limited by two rules. Overall system size is limited to 40 kW AC or less. The system size is also limited to not produce more than 120 percent of the customer's annual kWh consumption, based on the previous 12 months of consumption data.

The 120 percent rule is explained in more detail in another FAQ in this section.

If both of these rules have been met, the size you choose is a trade-off between the amount of money you want to invest and the amount of electricity you want to produce.

A fairly large home during peak electricity usage in the summer uses up to five kW of electricity at any given moment. Over a year, that same home will use approximately 12,000 kWh of electricity. You can look at your past bills to calculate how much electricity your home typically uses and determine what percentage you want to cover with solar electricity.

The amount of suitable space available on your roof is also something to consider. To be suitable, it must be unobstructed and not shaded, either flat or sloped, at an orientation other than north. You need roughly 120 square feet of roof space for each kilowatt of PV capacity you wish to install.

4. Can a customer at a service location apply for the Solar*Rewards (performance based) incentive if they have received an incentive under the old Solar*Reward or Minnesota Bonus program?

Yes. As long as the combined system size does not exceed 40 kW AC, and the aggregate production from all systems does not exceed 120% of your annual consumption, you may apply for an additional Solar*Rewards incentive. This will be a separately metered system with a new contract term.

5. What is the limit for a system size for the Solar*Rewards program in relation to customer usage? (Calculating the 120% rule)

For Solar*Rewards, the annual power output (kWh) of a PV system can be no greater than 120% of the total customer usage from the previous 12 months. Any applications that come in over the 120% rule will be declined and asked to adjust system size accordingly.

We calculate this at the time of application review by using the previous 12 months of usage. If 12 months of usage is not available, then we will use the average of the available months (minimum of four months is required). If at least four months of usage is not available, then we will use the Home Usage Estimator (xcelenergy.com/Solar*Rewards) to determine the appropriate system size based on square footage.

Please note that, in this case, we will require proof of square footage.

6. What is the limit for a system size for new construction or when four months of energy usage is not available?

If the building is new construction or there is less than four months of energy usage available, we will use the data we have to determine if the kW system is appropriate for the site. You can use the home usage estimator to determine the appropriate system size for your home or business. Please note that proof of square footage is required.

The new construction calculator is based on customer energy use surveys of properties within certain square foot sizes.

SQUARE FEET RANGE (SQ. FT.)	120% RULE EQUIVALENT (KWH)	ALLOW PV SYSTEM SIZE (KW)
500–1,000	5,311	4.13
1,001–1,500	7,318	5.69
1,501–2,000	10,215	7.94
2,001–2,500	11,018	8.57
2,501 – 3,000	12,978	10.09
3,001 – 3,500	14,830	11.53
3,501 – 4,000	15,618	12.14
4,001 – 4,500	17,887	13.91

The new construction calculator is designed to provide an estimate of a home's annual electricity use based on square footage. This is necessary to insure we are in compliance with the regulation that states PV systems can only provide up to 120% of a homes annual energy use. The calculator is based on survey results of average electricity use for homes within the square footage parameters listed.

SOLAR*REWARDS®**Frequently Asked Questions – System Size and Customer Usage** **HOME****6. (Continued)**

If the home in question is larger than 4,500 sq. ft., you must provide a load profile or analysis of each aspect of the home or building in order for us to properly size the system. There is no specific format needed when creating this document, but the analysis must be stamped/signed off by a professional engineer.

7. What is required for proof of square footage?

As proof of square footage for new construction, we require either a blueprint or floor plan. The document must clearly indicate the total square footage and address, and must be uploaded at the time of application submission. As proof of square footage for a building that is not new construction, we require one of the above options, or a printout of the property record from the city and county assessor's office.

8. How can I obtain access to bill history or data usage information for an account?

The following are three ways that a customer or installer can make a data request:

1. Xcel Energy customers can obtain billing and consumption information directly by calling **800-895-4999** and speaking with one of our customer service representatives.
2. Xcel Energy residential customers can sign up at no cost for My Account access to view and download up to two years of consumption history for their home.
3. Solar installers may request data for a customer by completing the PUC consent form. Submit the request, and the completed and signed form to Xcel Energy at **DataRequest@xcelenergy.com**.

APPLICATION PROCESS**9. Can I submit an application if I only have a temporary meter?**

The customer needs to have a permanent account, premise and meter set up in order to submit a new application. The customer should contact **Customer Service** at **800-895-4999** to check if there is a permanent account set up. If there is not, the customer must contact the **Builders Call Line** at **800-628-2121** to set one up. The application system will not accept applications with zeros or ones entered for the account or premise or with "unit temp" listed on the account.

10. What is the engineering fee?

This is a standard fee that we collect for all Solar*Rewards applications. The collected payment goes directly toward the cost of reviewing the associated

engineering documents for approval. We collect this fee during initial stages of the application, prior to submission for completeness review. The fee is refundable if the application is canceled prior to the engineering completeness review process.

11. How long do I have to complete my installation?

Applications are valid for 365 days from the date of application creation (when you complete the initial form and are assigned a case number). An application is considered complete for this deadline when the application reaches the Permission to Operate status. Applications will be automatically withdrawn if they exceed this 12-month window, unless they request an extension.

12. Can I apply for an extension?

Our standard policy allows for a one-time extension of 60 calendar days on the one year window. A project extension will be considered under the following conditions only:

- The project is within 60 calendar days of the expiration date
- The request is made at least 1 week prior to the project expiration date
- Engineering review has been completed and the application is at the final documentation stage.

Your request will be reviewed by the Solar*Rewards team. We will reply via email to your request. We reserve the right to deny an extension request, and to change our extension policy at any time if it is no longer in line with program objectives.

13. Can I install PV on a building's roof and back feed to another separately metered building?

For roof mounted arrays — PV systems shall be interconnected to the meter that serves the building or structure in which the arrays are located. If there are multiple meters serving a single building or structure, the PV system shall be interconnected to the meter that serves the portion of the building in which the arrays are located. No intermingling of systems and premises will be permitted.

For ground mounted arrays — PV systems shall be interconnected to a meter on the same parcel/property in which the array is located. If there are multiple meters on a single parcel/property, multiple systems may be installed, provided the entirety of the PV system is located on the same parcel/property that the meters serve. No intermingling of systems and premises will be permitted.

SOLAR*REWARDS®**Frequently Asked Questions – System Size and Customer Usage** **HOME****14. Is there a list of equipment that is eligible through the Solar*Rewards program?**

The list of eligible equipment that we use is managed by the California Energy Commission (CEC). If you plan to use non-UL listed modules you will need to have them approved through our metering and engineering department. Please fill out an exception form from the Xcel Energy standards for installation and use manual.

15. Can you recommend an installer?

We do not recommend specific installers, but can suggest that you work only with licensed contractors specializing in solar installation. Also, we suggest requesting bids from at least three companies to compare. Always make sure to check the PV installer's rating and references with the Better Business Bureau and or the local chapter of the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA). You may also find it helpful to request referrals from other customers who have completed projects with the solar installer.

16. Why does Xcel Energy need proof of personal property liability insurance of \$300,000?

We ask for proof of personal property liability insurance for the financial protection of both the customer and Xcel Energy. This requirement protects both parties if anyone were to get hurt while working on the meter, whether it is an Xcel Energy employee, neighbor, firefighter, or other individual. Having solar installed on your home makes you liable if someone were to get hurt while working on your meter.

17. Can I move my solar system to a different address if I move or buy another home?

We do not allow Solar*Rewards PV systems to be moved from one premises to another. You must keep the PV system on your home for the life of the contract.

18. What happens if I sell my house during the contract period?

If you sell your home after the application process is complete, you may transfer the Solar*Rewards Contract to the new owner with an Assignment of Contract. The owner would assume responsibility for the terms of the contract. If the new homeowner elects not to sign the assignment form, you as the original contract signer would retain responsibility for the contract. The new homeowner will also need to supply proof of insurance.

19. I purchased a home (or lot) that is currently being built. I am also purchasing a solar system that will be installed on the new home. I do not have an Xcel Energy account yet, how can I apply for Solar*Rewards?

New construction applications with a temporary meter servicing the location MUST have a permanent account number and premise number. However, until you receive a permanent account and premise number, you may request placeholder numbers from the program. Please note that the permanent account and premise number must be established and added to the application prior to signing the Interconnection Agreement(s).

Please apply under the homeowner/end-user's name and the address of the solar system install (new home).

We also need a final electrical inspection, as well as proof of insurance, which must be in the homeowner's name.

20. Can I assign my incentive to an alternate recipient?

The Solar*Rewards applicant may assign the incentive to an alternative recipient at the time the Solar*Rewards contract is signed. The item is an option in the Solar*Rewards contract and is called "assignment of incentive payments under Solar*Rewards contract."

21. Does Xcel Energy issue 1099s?

Xcel Energy is not required to issue 1099s for incentive payments.

METERING AND BILLING PROCESS

22. Can I run my PV system before a net meter is installed?

While you should test your PV system to make sure it is operational, any excess energy delivered back onto Xcel Energy's grid might not be counted as a credit until properly net metered for production. Net metering and billing will not occur until the net meter is installed and the customer is placed on the pre-selected net metering rate. Running a PV system with a standard electronic meter may cause incremental charges for energy that runs back through the meter and onto the grid; thus we recommend testing the system and moving to full operation when the new net meter is in place.

23. Do I need to be connected to the grid?

Yes, to qualify for Solar*Rewards, you will need to be connected to our grid.

24. Why is an AC disconnect required?

Xcel Energy requires an AC disconnect on photovoltaic installations for a variety of reasons. Number one is safety. Without a disconnect to isolate the PV source from the production meter our meter personnel have found that when performing wiring checks on the production meter sockets they see what appears to be a phase to phase short. In most cases this is due to the inverter design, but it could also be a wiring error that would be safety concern. Xcel Energy reserves the right to shut off any distributed generation that is causing system issues or is found to be not in compliance with our standards and program requirements.

If the PV system is to be shut off for an extended period of time for system maintenance or any other reason, we prefer that the disconnect located between the inverter and the production meter is opened so that the production meter remains energized. When a meter is de-energized for two billing cycles our system automatically generates investigate orders to find out why the meter is not reporting reads.

25. How much electricity will my PV system produce?

The amount of electricity generated by a solar system is dependent upon several factors, primarily system size, orientation of the system and shading. Typically, a solar system using about 120 square feet of solar panels will generate about 1,500 kWh per year.

26. What does it mean if I see flashing 8's or 9's on my residential net meter?

The meter is checking the LED display when showing flashing eights. This is a normal function that the meter runs through periodically. If your meter shows flashing nines, the model of net meter doesn't display negative numbers, but instead "counts backwards" from 999,999 to show when it crosses over zero. This is also a normal function.

27. What is a PV production meter?

PV production meter is a standard meter that is set up for payment rather than for billing. It is used to calculate the annual incentive payment and track production and renewable energy credits (RECs).

28. I recently purchased an electric vehicle (EV) while also deciding to participate in the Solar*Rewards program. Can I size the PV array to include this increase in future energy use?

Yes, new electric vehicle purchases follow a similar process as new construction with atypical loads. Based on average electric vehicle energy usage, up to 250 kWh per month can be added to your average historical load. Here's how it works:

If you have less than four months of consumption history that includes EV load:

We will add 250 kWh per month to your consumption history when calculating the 120% rule. This consideration will allow installers to size systems based on the future EV consumption when premise historical data is absent.

If you have at least four months of consumption history that includes EV load:

We will not make any additions to your consumption when calculating the 120% rule.

When submitting your application, you are required to provide a copy of the vehicle registration showing the registration address, which corresponds with the install address, as well as confirmation of the EV purchase date. If the EV is not in your possession yet, proof of purchase is acceptable in place of the vehicle registration.

