



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY  
**SOLAR DECATHLON**

2011

# Going Solar 101

A Capitol Hill Case Study



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*Time to shine.*



# Introduction

- Moderator - Corey Ramsden
- Panelists
  - Donna Barbisch - Capitol Hill homeowner
  - Michael Barrette - DCSUN
  - Andy Kerr - Capitol Hill Energy Cooperative



# Glossary

- CoOp - Solar Energy Cooperative
- DDOE - DC Department of the Environment
- Interconnection - The process of connecting a distributed generation system (such as solar electric) to the utility grid.
- PEPCO - Local utility company
- SREC - Solar Renewable Energy Credit



## In the beginning ...

- Homeowner decides they want to go solar
  - What prompted you to act?
    - Always had interest in renewable energy since living on a farm years ago.
    - Saw an article in the paper
  - What was the first thing you did?
    - Researched online about what was happening locally
    - Discovered Capitol Hill Energy Cooperative
    - Attended a solar home tour in Mt. Pleasant
  - Where did you go for information?
    - About the process
      - Concerns about impact on historic home
    - About the technology



# The real work begins

- Homeowner decides to get quotes
  - How did you decide on whom to contact for quotes?
  - What was the quote process like?
    - Received quotes from several installers.
    - Learned of Co Op deal with installers that resulted in reduced pricing.
  - How long did it take?
  - What roof attachment methods were proposed by installers?
    - Which did you select and why?
- Making a decision
  - What were the key factors in selecting an installer?
- **Tips for the audience?**

# How am I going to pay for this?

- Homeowner faces the realities of paying for their system.
  - Where did you go to find information on incentives?
  - Which ones did you take advantage of?
    - Federal tax credit
    - DC Renewable Energy Incentive Program
      - \$3 < 3kW / \$2 < 3-7kW / \$1 > 7-10kW
    - SREC - Solar Renewable Energy Credit
  - What was the process like to receive the incentives?
  - Leasing vs. purchase
  - How much did the installer help?
  - Calculating payback times
  - Tax treatment of incentives
- **Tips for the audience?**



# Coming down the home stretch





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## Coming down the home stretch (cont.)

- Homeowner's system gets installed (July, 2010)
  - How long did it take?
  - Where there any major issues along the way?
    - Roofing surprises?
    - Permitting & Inspection delays?
- **Tips for the audience?**

# Watch the meter spin ... backwards

- Homeowner finally sees the results
  - How quickly did the credits show up on your utility bill?
  - Were there any issues with interconnection?
    - Utility company delays in approving interconnection
    - Meter reading issues
      - Problems with digital meter and net metering
      - Real vs. actual meter readings
  - When did the first SREC payment arrive?
  - Estimated performance vs. reality
- **Tips for the audience?**

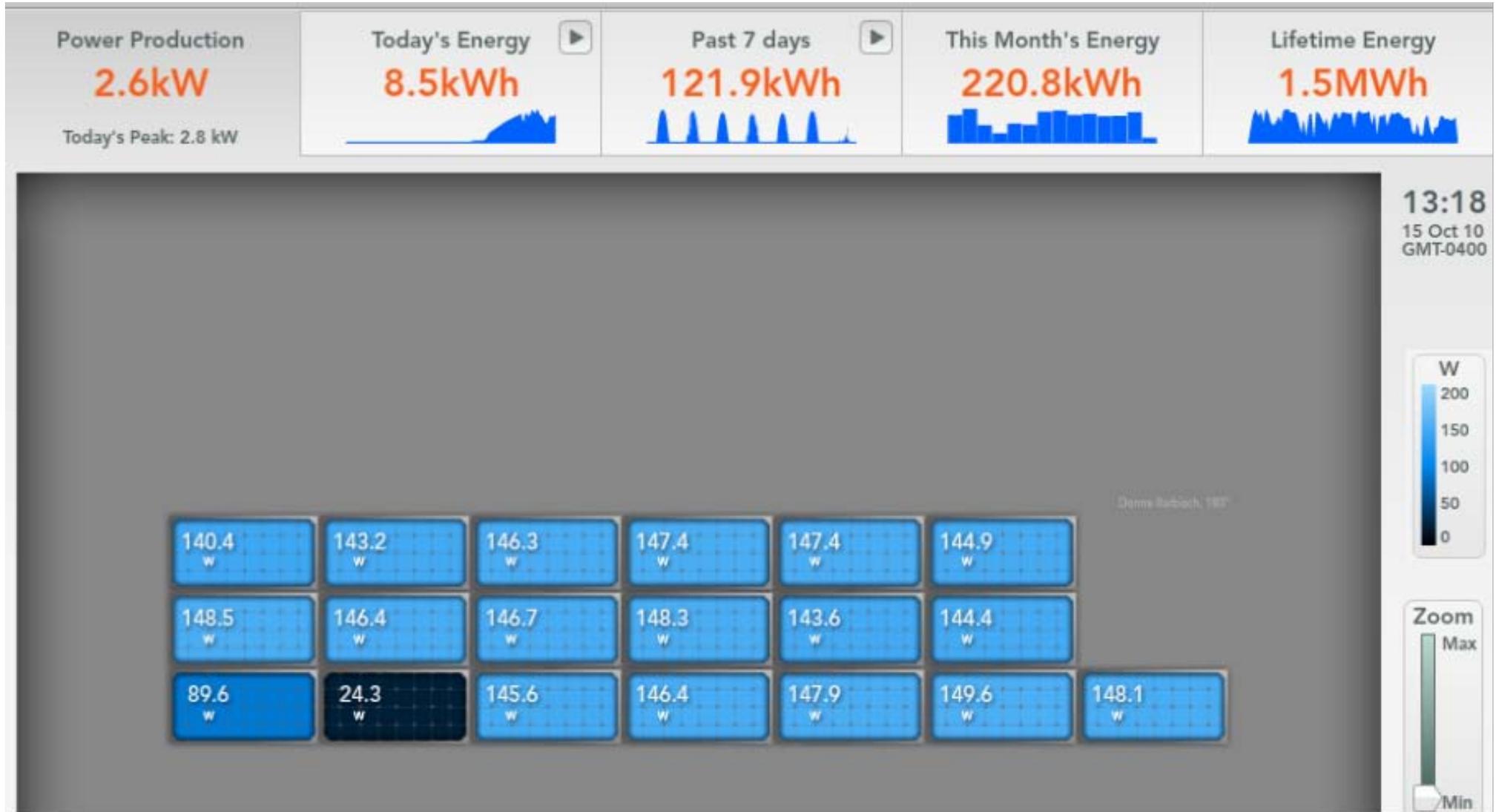


# Monitoring the system

- Homeowner finally sees the results
  - How is system production tracked?
  - How often do you use the data accessible in the monitoring system?



# Monitoring the system (cont.)





# Monitoring the system (cont.)





# Questions & Answers

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Andy Kerr - Capitol Hill Energy Cooperative

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