Going Solar 101

A Capitol Hill Case Study
Introduction

• Moderator - Corey Ramsden

• Panelists
  o Donna Barbisch - Capitol Hill homeowner
  o Michael Barrette - DCSUN
  o 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
  o How did you decide on whom to contact for quotes?
  o What was the quote process like?
    ▪ Received quotes from several installers.
    ▪ Learned of Co Op deal with installers that resulted in reduced pricing.
  o How long did it take?
  o What roof attachment methods were proposed by installers?
    ▪ Which did you select and why?

• Making a decision
  o 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
Coming down the home stretch (cont.)

• Homeowner's system gets installed (July, 2010)
  o How long did it take?
  o 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
  o How quickly did the credits show up on your utility bill?
  o 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
  o When did the first SREC payment arrive?
  o 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.)

- Power Produced: 2764.2W
  - Oct 15 2010
  - 11:30 AM

- Power Produced: 119.4W
  - Oct 14 2010
  - 2:20 PM

- Weather: Raining

- Weather: Sunny
Questions & Answers

Donna Barbisch - Capitol Hill homeowner

Michael Barrette - DCSUN

Andy Kerr - Capitol Hill Energy Cooperative

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