



Community solar, a new offering for Illinois, will begin construction across the state this year.

A New Era of Solar Energy

ILLINOIS' 2019 SOLAR INCENTIVES OFFER A NEW BEGINNING FOR RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL SOLAR ENERGY USE

IN 1839, a 19-year-old French scientist first generated current and voltage under light by applying silver chloride in an acidic solution. Since then we've come a long way in using electricity to power our world, yet with new solar power developments, there is an exciting future.

Over time, solar energy has slowly grown in advancements and popularity. However, it wasn't until recently that solar energy became a big-time player in the energy space. Whether it's environmental consciousness, the financial benefits, grid independence, or simply wanting to do the right thing, there isn't one reason for going solar—there are many.

For one, the price of solar has dropped over 60 percent in the past decade. Manufacturing breakthroughs and efficiencies of solar cells are now at a level which was previously unimaginable. Inverter technology can now integrate with smart devices and even provide grid stability for utility companies such as ComEd, in a time of need.

SOLAR AESTHETICS

When it comes to solar modules, the grid-lined, blue hue, and silver frame panels are a thing of the past. "All-black" modules bring a level of aesthetics to the residential market that can turn heads. In fact, outside of the financials, aesthetics is one of the most important factors in the residential market. The Solaria PowerXT residential module boasts a high efficiency, 25-year factory and performance warranty, and a Mercedes Benz appeal, or should we say Tesla?

Speaking of financial benefits, the State of Illinois just enacted the Future Energy Jobs Act legislation, which is setting an aggressive, yet attainable goal of 25 percent renewables by the year 2025. Under this new program, Illinois is on track to be the top state in the country for new solar development in 2019 and beyond. As of January 30, 2019, homeowners and businesses qualify for a very large rebate, typically offsetting 40 percent of the system



The high-efficiency Solaria PowerXT residential module showcasing all black rooftop solar panels that seamlessly blend into the structure maintaining high-end aesthetics.

cost. For the residential market, this rebate comes back within the first year. Additionally, one of the most important solar incentives is the 30 percent Federal Tax Credit which is still in place through 2019 for both residential and commercial.

COMMERCIAL APPLICATIONS

In a commercial setting, the benefits multiply when including the ComEd Smart Inverter Rebate, tax benefits from depreciation, the potential reduction of demand charges, and a very unique marketing opportunity. It's now commonplace to achieve a return on investment at year two or three. Once that is achieved, the absence of an unpredictable and ever-increasing electricity expense off the books will certainly improve the bottom line. Most business and home owners don't realize that the price of electricity is only going up year after year. In contrary, the price of solar is only going down, way down.


NET METERING BENEFITS

Illinois is also very fortunate to have full retail Net Metering. Net Metering is the export of solar energy during high production months in exchange for monetary credits to be applied for future use, such as winter months. When designing a system, an installer will calculate the yearly consumption of your residence or business and match that amount in yearly production. Essentially, Net Metering allows the production and consumption to balance out



Applying solar to vacant roof space is a great way to increase property value and decrease operating expenses.

on your utility bill throughout the year, a bonus that is welcomed by ComEd.

Solar works well in any area where the sun shines, and Illinois is no exception. It can handle the cold winters, the heavy snow loads, and the rain. That big ball of fire in the sky has the capacity to power everything on Earth, and it shows up to work on time every day. Why not have it power our homes, businesses, electric vehicles, and our future? 

Barrington resident Zach Witt is the founder and owner of ilumen, LLC. His company provides solar power solutions for both residential and commercial properties. He installed the first clean-energy producing residential SmartFlower™ Solar in the United States and is the Northern Illinois SmartFlower™ Solar dealer. To learn more, visit www.ilumenpv.com, email: info@ilumenpv.com, or call 847-852-3370.