

RESIDENTIAL SOLAR ENERGY CHECKLIST

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Increasing your home's efficiency will ensure that you don't build a system larger than it has to be. Sign up for a Home Energy Squad® visit to identify energy-saving improvements. You will receive free energy-saving installations such as LED light bulbs, a programmable thermostat, and door weather stripping; plus a blower door test to measure for air leaks and an insulation inspection. You'll be connected to Energy Advisors to help you with next steps.

The City of Golden Valley is offering a 50% discount on Home Energy Squad visits to all residents. Free visits available for income-qualified residents. Call to see if you are eligible.

Sign up at xcelenergy.com/HomeEnergySquad or call **612-328-6220**.



START PLANNING

1. Determine your home's solar potential: It's important to consider your home's solar potential before deciding if installing solar panels is right for you. You can get a sense of your solar potential by using the University of Minnesota's Solar Suitability App. Visit solar.maps.umn.edu/app.

Things to pay attention to:

- Tree coverage: If your property is listed as poor with too much coverage, your home is not suitable. Conversely, if you rank fair, good, or optimal it may be worth looking into installing solar.
- Payback period: What is your estimated return on investment? Note how many years it would take to start seeing benefits of installing solar and how that coincides with your future plans.
- Check the condition of your roof: Get your roof inspected to make sure it's in good condition for solar panels.

2. Talk to the City: It's important to talk to the City's Building Inspector about your project so you know if a variance or special use permit is required. Contact the City of Golden Valley at **763-593-8090** to learn more.

3. Talk to your HOA: If you live in a residence that has a Homeowners Association (HOA), it's important to know if there are restrictions to installing rooftop or ground mount solar. Contact your HOA directly to learn more.

4. Create a budget and identify financing opportunities: Low-interest loans are available to help homeowners add rooftop or ground mount solar at their home. Contact Center for Energy and Environment at **612-335-5884** or mnlendingcenter.org.

Take advantage of the Residential Renewable Energy Tax Credit for solar installations made in the years 2020-2022. You get to claim a 26% credit on your federal tax return for the costs of the system. Projects must be installed by Dec. 31, 2022. Don't miss your opportunity to take advantage of this tax credit!



SELECT YOUR CONTRACTOR AND INSTALL YOUR SYSTEM

5. Find a qualified contractor and get bids:

Use Clean Energy Resource Team's Solar Directory to search for qualified solar installers. Contacting more than one installer will help you compare bids and make the best choice. Visit CleanEnergyResourceTeams.org/directory.

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6. Install your system: Once you select a contractor, you will sign an agreement and install your system. Your contractor should help facilitate the interconnection agreement with Xcel Energy to allow you to track your production.

You can choose to participate in either Xcel Energy's Solar* Rewards® or Net Metering programs. With Solar* Rewards®, annual payments are made to the owner of the solar system in exchange for Renewable Energy Credits. Net Metering allows you to sell the excess energy you produce back to Xcel Energy, but there is no rebate for the electricity produced and you keep the Renewable Energy Credits.

ALTERNATIVES TO INSTALLING YOUR OWN SOLAR PANELS

If your home has low solar potential or the costs are too high to install your own system, you can still source some or all of your electricity from renewable sources. Consider these alternative renewable energy options:

- **Xcel Energy's Windsorce®:** Windsorce is a renewable energy subscription program that allows residential customers to source some or all of their electricity from wind energy. For an additional \$1-\$10 a month, the average Golden Valley household can source up to 100% of its electricity from renewable energy. Sign up xcelenergy.com/Windsorce.
- **Community Solar Gardens:** Community solar gardens are a great opportunity for homeowners and renters to subscribe to renewable energy. You will receive a monthly bill credit based on how large your subscription amount is. Visit CleanEnergyResourceTeams.org/directory to find a garden operator and a list of questions to ask before subscribing.



PARTNERS IN ENERGY
An Xcel Energy Community Collaboration

This information is brought to you by the Golden Valley Energy Action Team, which set a goal to eliminate 65,000 tons of greenhouse gas emissions through increasing clean energy practices in the next 10 years.

GOLDEN VALLEY AND XCEL ENERGY ARE PLEASED TO WORK TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE OUR COMMUNITY ENERGY GOALS.