SOLAR GROUP BUYS

Milwaukee Shines

Neighborhood Purchase Programs

June 9, 2014
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Milwaukee Shines Goals

- Increase installations
- Increase installers
- Reduce cost of solar manufacturing
- Create sustainable market
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Milwaukee Successes

- Trained installer base w/ MREA partnership
- Created financing program
- Streamlined solar permit w/ ordinance
  - Training for staff
- Supply chain support with Solar Hot Water Biz Council and www.wisolar.org
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What is a **Solar Group Buy**?

- Costco of solar
- Putting power of cooperative buying to work for customers to lower price of solar
- Initiated in Portland
- Model expanded nationally
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How Does it Reduce Costs?

- Bulk purchase panels & components
- Competitive bid on front end
- Education = customer pipeline
- Saves installer time and money
- Saves homeowner time and money
- Price break at certain levels encourages more participation

Base price – 50 KW price – 100 KW price
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The Best Resource.

- *Solarize Guidebook*
- Roadmap for advocates to create their own campaign
- Initiated in Portland
- *Solarize* model expanded nationally
- [http://j.mp/SolarizeGuidebook](http://j.mp/SolarizeGuidebook)
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Milwaukee’s Program

- Milwaukee is a city of neighborhoods
- Started with active Riverwest neighborhood
- Neighborhood requested and neighborhood lead
- Built on success of other program in US
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Milwaukee’s Program

- Public-Private Partnership
- **Milwaukee Shines (City):** overall coordination; design, content and funds for PR, posters, yard signs
- **MREA:** Leads and coordinates education session, contacts, and addresses questions
- **Riverwest Cooperative Alliance:** Signs MOU w/ selected installer. Coordinates info sessions dates & locations
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Milwaukee’s Program

- Advisory Team (5 people)
- Milwaukee Shines, MREA, RW Cooperative Alliance, instructor (certified), and resident in neighborhood who has installed solar
- Issue RFP, select installer
- Provide guidance for installer and group
- Attend info sessions!
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Education

- Basics on how solar works, what it might cost, and how the program works
- 1 hour sessions
- 7-10, one-hour sessions
- Different locations, different times
- But all planned ahead!
- Other partners
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Outreach

- Posters, yard signs in neighborhood
- Press releases, social media, radio/TV, ads
- Other partners: coffee shops, co-op, library, neighborhood association
- Kick-off event!
- Tell neighbors
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Installer Selection

- Selected by Advisory Team
- Competitive RFP process
  - Must list products used (we stress preference for US)
  - Price per watt price, and $ break at 50 KW & 100 KW
- MOU with RW Cooperative Alliance (not a contract)
- Contracts only with homeowner
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Installer Selection

- Selection Criteria (list in RFP):
  - Cost
  - Experience/Certification (required NABCEP certification)
  - Ability to handle lots of installs and site assessments

- Expectations (list in RFP):
  - Attend info sessions
  - Free site assessment/bid
  - Online scheduling, response time and great to work with!
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Milwaukee Results so far

- Fall 2013: Riverwest
  - 17 homeowners
  - 52 KW of solar

- Spring 2014: Bay View
  - So far 15 homes, 40 KW
  - Over 50 bids yet to go out
  - July 15 deadline

- Fall 2014: Wash. Heights & Layton Blvd Neighborhoods
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Milwaukee Numbers: 2013 was best year ever

Resources

Solarize Guidebook
http://j.mp/SolarizeGuidebook

Community Power Network
communitypowernetwork.com

NABCEP (certification)
www.nabcep.org

Dept of Energy SunShot
energy.gov/eere/sunshot/sunshot-initiative
The Energy Fair
Workshop: Starting a Solar Group Buy Program
Saturday, June 21
2 pm – Maroon Tent
www.midwestrenew.org

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