



# Solar Power in Maine

Solar power is a clean, local, renewable energy source that is available statewide. Solar panels are being installed around the country and world in huge numbers, but Maine is falling behind other states in the region in developing solar power. Maine should take charge of our electricity by better helping homeowners and businesses harness their own clean, local solar power.

## JIM IS SAVING MONEY WITH SOLAR. SHOULDN'T ALL MAINERS HAVE ACCESS?



**"As a lobsterman and business owner, I have to cut costs any way possible and the solar panels on my wharf are working for me."**

*Jim Merryman,  
Potts Harbor Lobster,  
Harpwell*



Solar Power for Maine People

Natural Resources  
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## Good for Maine's Environment

Maine people overwhelmingly support solar energy because it reduces pollution and protects the environment. Fossil-fuel burning power plants are a leading source of climate-changing pollution. It is important that we increase clean energy sources since climate change threatens Maine's economy and way of life in serious ways. Solar panels provide extra value because they produce clean power when we need it the most—on hot summer days when power from the electric grid is the most expensive and most polluting.

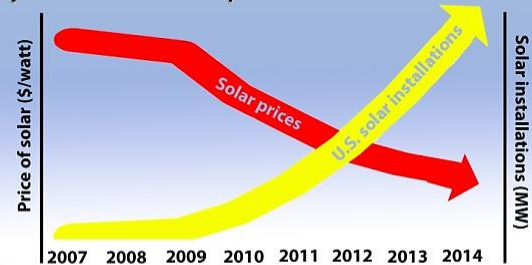
## Good for Maine's Economy

Every year, Maine sends billions of dollars out of state to buy fossil fuels. The path to keeping our energy dollars in Maine and increasing our energy independence is for us to invest in more homegrown renewable energy, including solar power. Prices for solar panels have fallen 75% in the last five years, making it a great option for producing electricity in Maine. And rooftop solar power is a way to limit expensive transmission and distribution costs that are driving up electric rates for Mainers. Solar power can be generated in every Maine town, urban or rural.

## DID YOU KNOW?

### Solar is taking off but Maine is missing out.

Solar installations quadrupled nationally in the last four years while solar prices fell 50%.



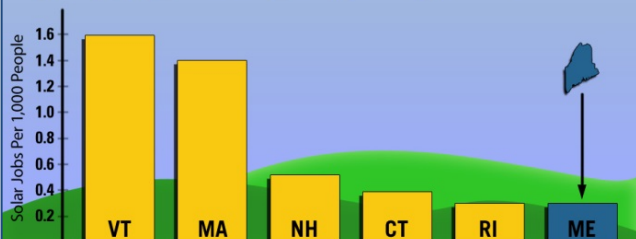
**Maine can't afford to stay in the dark.**

Source: SEIA/GTM Research "U.S. Solar Market Insight Q3 2014"

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## DID YOU KNOW?

Solar jobs are taking off, but Maine is missing out. Vermont and Mass. have five times more solar jobs than Maine per capita. Maine can't afford to miss out on the good-paying jobs in this growing industry, but we are.



Maine can't afford to stay in the dark.

Source: The Solar Foundation "National Solar Jobs Census 2014"



## The Value of Solar Power in Maine

In 2015, the Maine Public Utilities Commission (PUC) issued a detailed study evaluating the value of solar energy. The PUC's study shows that an increase in solar creates cheaper power for all consumers, reduced costs for our electricity grid, more stable prices, greater energy security, and less air and carbon pollution. Every Maine electricity user saves money when solar power is installed in Maine. But because Maine does not have adequate solar policies, we are missing out on significant benefits.

## Local, Good-Paying Solar Jobs

Maine has the potential for a robust, statewide solar industry with many more good jobs. Maine already has an estimated 45 companies employing 270 Maine people in solar. But our state is falling behind others in solar energy, solar jobs, and cutting energy costs.

**JAMES HAS A SOLAR JOB.**  
SHOULDN'T MAINE HAVE MORE OF THESE JOBS?

"My wife and I moved back to my hometown of Embden because I got a good-paying job selling solar arrays in Maine. With this job, we are now far more secure because solar jobs can't be outsourced. We need more solar jobs in Maine; they are booming across the nation, while Maine is falling behind."  
*James Manzer, ReVision Energy, Embden, ME*

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**BEN HAS A SOLAR JOB.**  
SHOULDN'T MAINE HAVE MORE OF THESE JOBS?

"I grew up in Skowhegan, went to college in Maine, and wanted to stay here after graduation. I am thankful to have a good-paying job in Maine's solar industry. Solar jobs are growing across the country, and I'd like to see more opportunities for young people to stay here in Maine."  
*Ben Holt, Insource Renewables, Pittsfield, ME*

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## Maine Can't Afford to Fall Behind.

Maine has fallen to nearly last place in the Northeast in solar power development because we are the only state in New England that does not have a solar policy. As a result, we are missing out on the full benefits of solar, including cheaper power and good solar jobs. Maine needs an effective solar policy that will reduce barriers, treat solar-producing homes and businesses fairly, and increase the number of solar installations, so all Maine people and businesses can benefit fully from solar power.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Solar is taking off around the region, but Maine has fallen behind. Vermont and New Jersey have installed 20 times more solar than Maine, per capita. Don't let Maine miss out!

State	Installed Solar Watts Per Capita
VT	190
NJ	163
MA	114
DE	66
CT	33
MD	32
PA	19
NY	17
RI	15
NH	9
ME	9

**Maine can't afford to stay in the dark.**  
Source: SEIA/GTM Research "U.S. Solar Market Insight Q3 2014"

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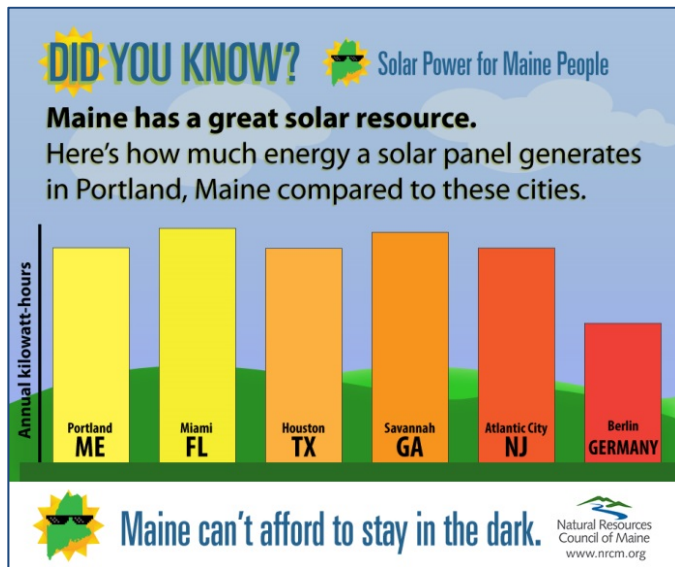
# What's Happening in Augusta?

Maine does not have a fair, effective solar policy to help residents and businesses invest in solar energy. It is time to improve Maine's policies to provide better access to solar power for Maine people and for the economic, job creation, and energy security benefits that solar energy provides.



After years of efforts, a bipartisan solar bill nearly overcame Governor LePage's veto in 2016. This bill had strong, broad support from a bipartisan group of lawmakers, Maine solar companies, the environmental community, towns, community leaders, public health groups, and many others. The bill provided a strong, well-developed solar energy policy, which Maine has lacked for years. Unfortunately, the Legislature failed to override Governor LePage's veto by only two votes.

In the fall of 2016, the Maine Public Utilities Commission (PUC) proposed an extreme anti-solar rollback of solar net metering rules. Net metering has made it possible for thousands of Maine homes and businesses to own and produce their own solar power. It is the simple, effective mechanism existing in Maine—and most other states—to give solar customers credit on their electricity bills for power they provide to the grid. NRCM led the solar campaign at the Legislature and is committed to defending net metering at the PUC. We are also counting on the Maine Legislature to take up solar power as a top priority in the coming session in January 2017, especially if the PUC gives final approval to their rollback.



**RITA & BOB ARE SAVING MONEY WITH SOLAR. SHOULDN'T ALL MAINERS HAVE ACCESS?**

**"Our solar array has made our electric bill affordable and predictable. Today's low solar prices make now a great time for the state to tackle the barriers, so more Mainers can go solar, too."**  
*Rita and Bob Kimber  
Temple, ME*

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# Community Solar

Solar energy is quickly turning into a community endeavor in Maine, with more and more people choosing to invest together to switch to renewable energy and protect our environment. One model, community solar farms, is an option for people who may not have the roof or room for solar panels, but are eager to produce their own renewable energy. Community solar farm agreements can be owned and structured in different ways. Current Maine state law dictates that these shared solar farms, which may be located on private or public land, can only be used by up to ten households or businesses. Other states do not have this arbitrary and unnecessary limit.

Another community solar model, "Solarize", allows for bulk purchasing of solar panels, to lower the cost for residents and businesses in that area. The panels are installed separately on each participant's building.

A third model, municipally owned solar projects, are also springing up in Maine. Towns around the state are organizing these projects on municipal property or buildings, which can benefit taxpayers and residents.



Belfast Fire Department

Learn more with NRCM's Community Solar Toolkit, which is available online at [www.nrcm.org](http://www.nrcm.org).

## THE MILKHOUSE WANTS TO GO SOLAR. SHOULDN'T ALL MAINE FARMS HAVE ACCESS?



"For farms like ours to thrive in Maine, we have to lower our energy costs. Solar will accomplish just that, making us more energy independent, while being better for our bottom line and our environment. But Maine is the only state in New England that doesn't help farmers go solar. It won't be possible for our farm until there are better policies."  
*Andy Smith and Caitlin Frame  
The Milkhouse, Monmouth*



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## DID YOU KNOW?

In some states, farmers can make thousands of dollars per year by producing clean, solar energy for their neighbors.



Maine is **NOT** one of those states.



Maine can't afford to stay in the dark.



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