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California approves major electricity rate changes

Sammy Roth,, The Desert Sun 6:07 p.m. EDT July 3, 2015



(Photo: Paul Buck < EPA)

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State officials voted unanimously to raise electricity rates for millions of Californians on Friday, over the objections of consumer advocates and environmental groups who called the plan a giveaway to the wealthy and said it would discourage people from saving energy and going

solar.

The controversial changes were a long time coming. For years, Southern California Edison, Pacific Gas & Electric and San Diego Gas & Electric have wanted to raise rates for those who use the least and lower rates for those who use the most, and the California Public Utilities Commission made it happen in a 5-0 vote.

The plan approved Friday also leaves the door open for new fixed charges, another utility industry goal.

Edison and other electricity providers have argued that current rates unfairly penalize high-usage customers, and that low-usage customers aren't paying their fair share. Utility companies have also said that all customers, including solar customers, need to pay more to keep the electric grid running — hence the need for higher fixed charges.

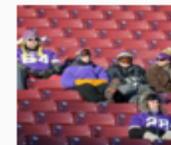
Consumer advocates agree that some changes are needed to make rates more fair. But they criticized the plan passed Friday as a sign that the public utilities commission isn't looking out for the best interests of the public.

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"This is a lose-lose for customers, but business as usual for the CPUC, which has once again done PG&E, Edison and SDG&E's bidding," Mark Toney, executive director of The Utility Reform Network, a San Francisco-based ratepayer advocacy group, said in a statement.

Edison's residential customers currently pay for electricity in four tiers, with energy use in the fourth tier costing more than twice as much as in the first tier. That stark difference, consumer advocates say, motivates people to save energy, and gives high-usage customers a financial incentive to invest in energy efficiency and rooftop solar.

Under the changes approved Friday, the difference between what high-usage customers and low-usage customers pay will shrink. By 2019, the number of tiers will be reduced from four to two, with a price difference of just 25% between them.

Critics say those changes amount to a redistribution of wealth from low-income to high-income families, arguing that wealthier people tend to use the most energy.

In explaining their votes at Friday's meeting, several commissioners said the link between income and electricity use isn't as well-established as critics believe. Many high-usage customers, they said, are simply large families living in small homes, or low-income desert residents who need constant air conditioning to stay cool during the summer.

There will also be a "surcharge" for the highest-usage customers, a last-minute addition by commission President Michael Picker to mollify Commissioner Mike Florio and other critics of his original, utility-backed proposal. Under that surcharge, the most excessive electricity use will be billed at more than twice the rate of low-end electricity use.

Critics, though, weren't convinced that the surcharge would make much difference, since it would only apply to electricity use more than 400% above baseline. The public utilities commission estimated that it would only apply to 10% of Edison customers, and only then to the top 4% of actual electricity use.



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The plan passed Friday would also delay new fixed charges sought until at least 2020. But it lays the groundwork for utility companies to make a new case for those charges.

Additionally it switches all Edison, PG&E and SDG&E residential customers to "time-of-use" electricity rates starting in 2019. Under those rates, the cost of electricity will depend on the time of day — and time of year — that you use it.

Several commissioners repeatedly emphasized that the commission will have many more changes to encourage conservation and solar over the next few years, including an ongoing proceeding to revamp the solar incentive program known as "net energy metering."

Consumer advocates, though, weren't convinced that the commission would follow through on those promises.

"It's hard not to look at the commission's track record and look at the repeated attempts to fast-track power plants in lieu of clean energy," said Evan Gillespie, western region deputy director of the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign.

Sammy Roth writes about energy and water for The Desert Sun. He can be reached at sammy.roth@desertsun.com, (760) 778-4622 and [@Sammy_Roth](https://twitter.com/Sammy_Roth).



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Power prices up 59% after nuke shutdown



By Morgan Lee | 1:09 p.m. July 23, 2013



A surfer rides a wave in front of the San Onofre nuclear power plant Friday, June 7, 2013, in San Onofre, Calif. (AP Photo/Gregory Bull) — AP

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The nuclear shutdown at San Onofre is partially to blame for a 59 percent increase in wholesale electricity prices for California in the first half of the year, the Energy Information Administration said Tuesday.

The statistical arm of the U.S. Department of Energy found that **wholesale electricity prices rose across the country during the first six months of 2013** over the same period last year.

Prices in New England were the highest largely because of pipeline constraints that limited the delivery of natural gas.

In California, the "increase was largely the result of the continued outage of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station," according to the agency's Today in Energy briefing. "This factor also caused a large and unusual separation in power prices between the northern and southern parts of the state's electric system."

M. Tyson Brown, a statistician at the Energy Information Administration, clarified that a modest rebound in historically low natural gas prices has been the main driver of the overall increase in wholesale electricity in California. Natural gas generation is California's principal source of electricity.

Since the San Onofre outage began in January 2012, however, there has been a persistent spread between wholesale power prices in Northern and Southern California, Brown explained.

"The Southern California prices have been a good deal higher than the Northern California prices," he noted.

The layout of California's transmission grid limits the amount of power that can be transferred between the north and south of the state.

Wholesale price increases are likely to translate into higher average utility bills. Commodity costs for household electricity and natural gas in California are generally passed on directly to customers, but require regulatory approval before the utility can change rates.



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TRENDING

Electricity costs account for about half of the electrical portion of monthly bills on average, according to San Diego Gas & Electric. But the impact of wholesale prices on consumers is hard to estimate precisely -- especially under complex residential rates.

San Onofre's two nuclear reactors, which once produced enough electricity to power 1.4 million homes, were taken off line in January 2012, never to return. The plant's operator gave up in June on efforts to resolve problems of rapid wear on faulty replacement steam generators.

California's main grid operator found that wholesale electricity prices fell just 2 percent in 2012 despite a nearly 30 percent drop in natural gas prices. The San Onofre outage -- along with lower hydroelectric supplies and shifting energy demands -- contributed to that price disparity, **according to the California Independent System Operator.**



Morgan Lee



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Decommissioning San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station

SCE formally notified the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) on June 12, 2013 that it had permanently ceased operation of Units 2 and 3 on June 7, 2013. The notification, called a Certification of Permanent Cessation of Power Operations, sets the stage for SCE to begin preparations for decommissioning.

Decommissioning is a well-defined NRC process that involves transferring the used fuel into safe storage, followed by the removal and disposal of radioactive components and materials. Longer term, this process calls for reducing residual radioactivity to a level that supports termination of the NRC license.

- [NRC Briefing on Nuclear Power Plant Decommissioning, July 2014 >](#)
- [Core Principles for San Onofre Decommissioning >](#)
- [SONGS Decommissioning CEP Charter >](#)
- [Safe Storage of San Onofre's Nuclear Fuel >](#)

About the Decommissioning Process

Since 1960, more than 70 test, demonstration and power reactors have been retired throughout the United States. SCE formally notified the NRC on June 12, 2013 that operations at San Onofre have permanently ceased. On July 23, 2013, SCE notified the NRC it had transferred fuel from the Unit 2 reactor to the spent fuel pool. The company had previously defueled Unit 3. Once fuel was removed from both reactors, San Onofre transitioned from an operating to a "possession" license.

Within two years of shutdown, SCE must submit to the NRC and state officials a detailed plan that spells out specific decommissioning activities and schedules, cost estimates and potential environmental impacts. Public review and comment is an important part of this process, and NRC oversight of decommissioning continues. The NRC addresses frequently asked questions at <http://www.nrc.gov/waste/decommissioning/faq.html>.

Decommissioning Funding

Nuclear power plants are required by the NRC to put aside funds for decommissioning while the plant is operating. The California Public Utility Commission (CPUC) regulates utilities that own nuclear plants in the state and has allowed SCE to collect those funds during San Onofre's operating years. The money is collected from customers and invested in dedicated trusts. The current balance in those trusts is \$4.1 Billion.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON COMPANY (SCE) REQUEST TO CHANGE YOUR ELECTRIC RATES DUE TO ALTERATIONS IN THE NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING TRUST FUND APPLICATION NO. A. 14-12-007

On December 10, 2014, Southern California Edison Company (SCE) and San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) (collectively referred to as Utilities) filed a joint application with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to set the amount each utility customer pays into the nuclear decommissioning trust fund through collected rates. Nuclear decommissioning trust funds were established by the CPUC for funding the decommissioning of San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS). Additionally this application will address other related issues associated with San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS) Units 2 and 3.

In this application each company is requesting its decommissioning trust fund to be set at \$0.00. The reduction that SCE is requesting is based on the current estimate of decommissioning costs, current level of funding of the trusts, and financial market conditions known at this time. The current annual revenue requirement to cover contributions to SCE's trust funds is \$22.726 million. The requested revenue requirement decrease results in an annual decrease of \$22.726 million or 100% of current funding.

In addition to setting the decommissioning fund to \$0.00, the application addresses related issues, such as:

- (1) approval from the CPUC that SCE's \$4.411 billion SONGS 2 & 3 decommissioning cost estimate is reasonable;
- (2) approval for a streamlined review process, referred to as a Tier 2 advice letter process for authorizing disbursements from the SONGS 2&3 Nuclear Decommissioning Trusts (NDTs);
- (3) authorization of an annual reasonableness review process; and
- (4) a review of decommissioning costs incurred for SONGS 2 & 3 decommissioning activities completed from June 7, 2013 through December 31, 2014.

SONGS is jointly owned by SCE, San Diego Gas & Electric Company, and the City of Riverside. SCE owns 80% interest in SONGS 1 and 78.21 % interest in SONGS 2 & 3. SDG&E owns 20% interest in SONGS 1, 2, and 3. The City of Riverside owns the remaining 1.79% interest in

Southern California Edison

Historical Rate Increases

TIER	JAN 2005	APR 2007	APR 2008	APR 2009	OCT 2012	JAN 2013	JUL 2014	JUL 2015	INC %
TIER 1	10.4	10.2	10.6	10.9	12.5	12.8	13.0	15.0	50%
TIER 2	14.4	12.6	13.3	13.6	15.5	15.9	16.0	17.0	20%
TIER 3	15.3	22.4	21.5	23.6	25.1	27.0	27.5	28.0	85%
TIER 4	16.8	25.8	25.0	27.1	28.6	31.0	32.0	32.0	100%
AVERAGE	14.2	17.7	17.6	18.8	20.4	21.6	22.1	23.0	



P.O. Box 600
 Rosemead, CA
 91771-0001
 www.sce.com

Your electricity bill

NUAIMI, SUSANNE M / Page 1 of 8

For billing and service inquiries call 1-800-684-8123,
 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week

Date bill prepared: Jun 26 '14

Customer account 2-19-430-9407

Service account 3-015-3005-51
 4932 TORONTO AVE
 FONTANA, CA 92336

Rotating outage Group N001

Your account summary

Amount of your last bill	\$502.26
Payment we received on Jun 16 '14 - thank you	-\$502.26
Balance forward	\$0.00
Your new charges	\$414.75
Total amount you owe by Jul 15 '14	\$414.75

Compare the electricity you are using

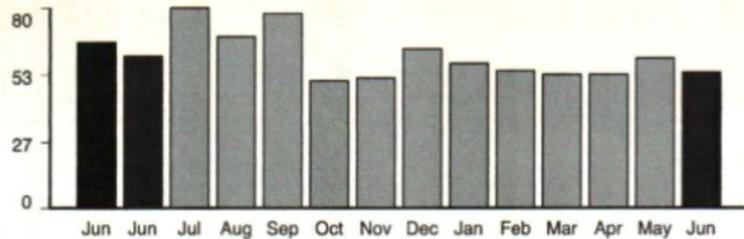
For meter 222011-433146 from May 27 '14 to Jun 25 '14

Total electricity you used this month in kWh **1,574**

Your next billing cycle will end on or about Jul 25 '14.

Your daily average electricity usage (kWh)

2 Years ago: 66.17 Last year: 60.84 This year: 54.28



Details of your new charges

Your rate: DOMESTIC PTR

Billing period: May 27 '14 to Jun 1 '14 (5 days Winter Season)

Jun 1 '14 to Jun 25 '14 (24 days Summer Season)

Delivery charges

Basic charge	29 days x \$0.03100	\$0.90
Energy-Winter		
Tier 1 (within baseline)	94 kWh x \$0.04165	\$3.92
Tier 2 (up to 30%)	28 kWh x \$0.07386	\$2.07
Tier 3 (31% to 100%)	66 kWh x \$0.15994	\$10.56
Tier 4 (more than 100%)	155 kWh x \$0.18994	\$29.44
Energy-Summer		
Tier 1 (within baseline)	333 kWh x \$0.02898	\$9.65
Tier 2 (up to 30%)	100 kWh x \$0.06119	\$6.12
Tier 3 (31% to 100%)	233 kWh x \$0.18803	\$43.81
Tier 4 (more than 100%)	565 kWh x \$0.21803	\$123.19
DWR bond charge	1,574 kWh x \$0.00513	\$8.08

Generation charges

DWR		
DWR energy credit	1,574 kWh x -\$0.00037	-\$0.59
SCE		
Energy-Winter		
Tier 1 (within baseline)	94 kWh x \$0.08592	\$8.08
Tier 2 (up to 30%)	28 kWh x \$0.08592	\$2.41
Tier 3 (31% to 100%)	66 kWh x \$0.10904	\$7.20
Tier 4 (more than 100%)	155 kWh x \$0.10904	\$16.90
Energy-Summer		
Tier 1 (within baseline)	333 kWh x \$0.09859	\$32.83
Tier 2 (up to 30%)	100 kWh x \$0.09859	\$9.86
Tier 3 (31% to 100%)	233 kWh x \$0.12514	\$29.16
Tier 4 (more than 100%)	565 kWh x \$0.12514	\$70.70

Subtotal of your new charges		\$414.29
State tax	1,574 kWh x \$0.00029	\$0.46
Your new charges		\$414.75

Your Delivery charges include:

- \$18.18 transmission charges
- \$96.51 distribution charges
- -\$0.39 nuclear decommissioning charges
- \$91.16 conservation incentive adjustment
- \$9.97 public purpose programs charge
- \$13.85 new system generation charge

Your Generation charges include:

- -\$2.86 competition transition charge

Your overall energy charges include:

- \$3.75 franchise fees

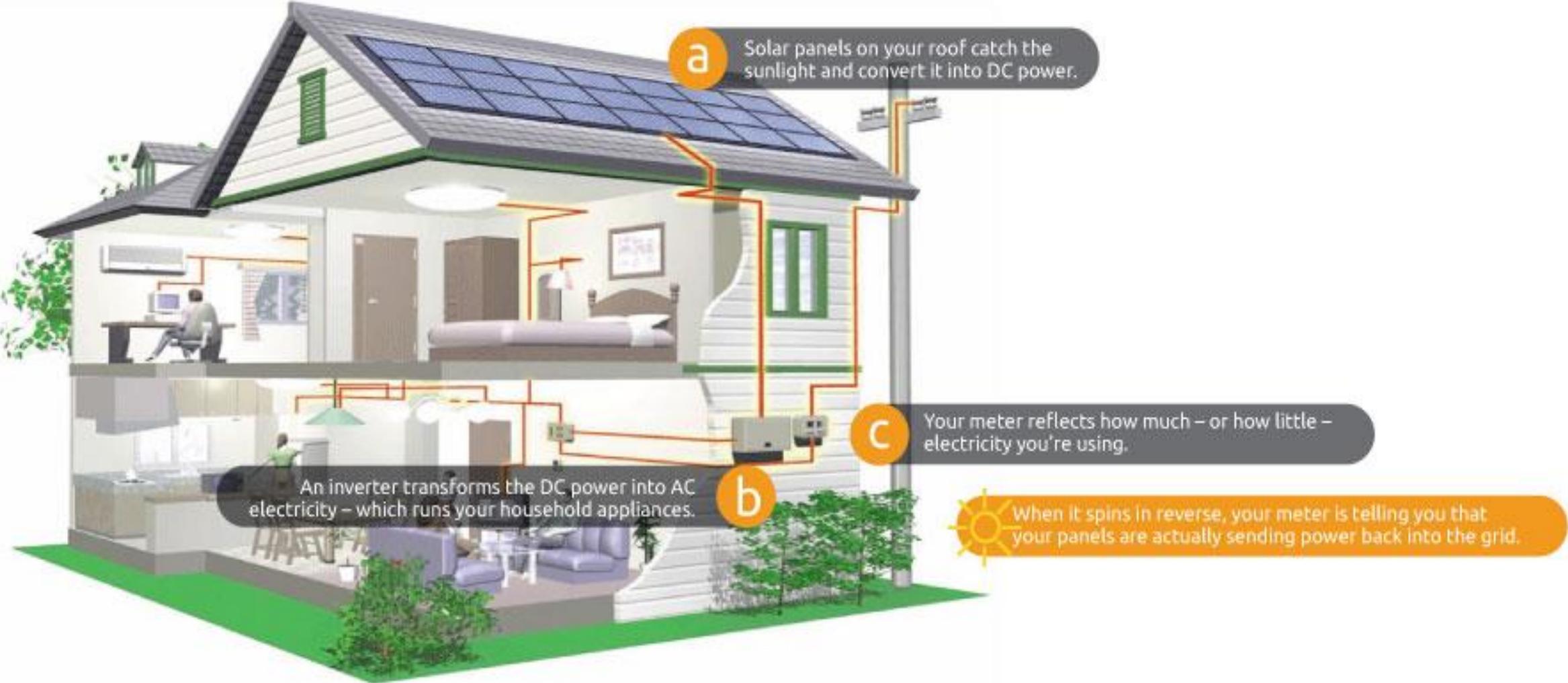
Additional information:

- Service voltage: 240 volts
- Your winter baseline allowance: 94.0 kWh
- Your summer baseline allowance: 333.0 kWh

Average cost per kilowatt hour

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
\$0.13	\$0.16	\$0.31	\$0.34
427 kWh	128 kWh	299 kWh	720 kWh

How Solar Works



HOW SOLAR WORKS

1 SunPower® Solar Panels
Convert light into electricity with the highest efficiency solar cells on the market.



2 Inverter
Converts solar electricity for household use.



3 Electric Meter
Whenever production exceeds use, you receive a credit from the local utility.



4 Performance Monitoring
View energy production and usage online.



The Solar Powered Home

- Lowers electric bills every month¹
- Protects against rising energy prices
- Save 30%+ in federal and state incentives²
- Effortlessly generates clean, renewable energy
- Develops domestic energy resources

¹ Actual results may vary. A portion of the solar investment may be eligible for the federal investment tax credit. Please consult your tax advisor for more information.

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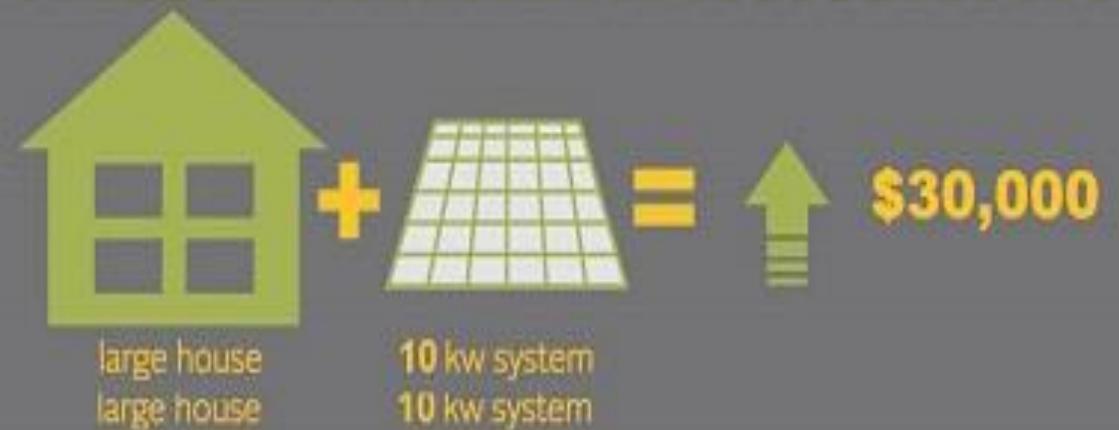
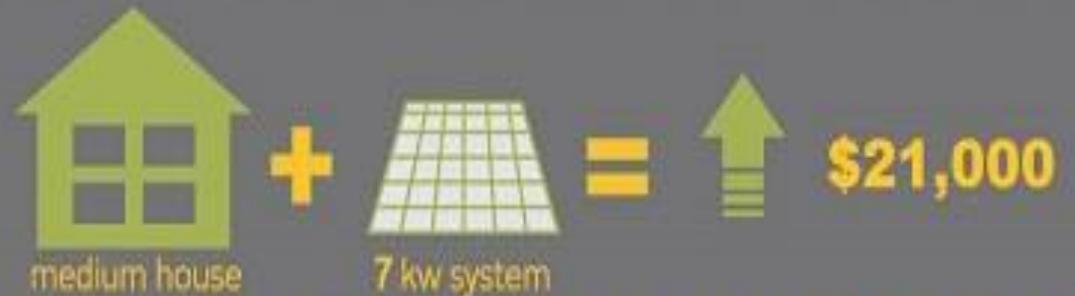
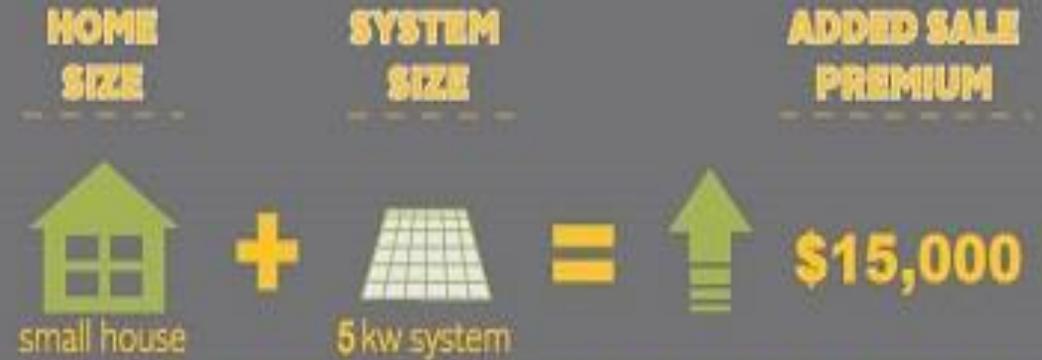


Solar Homes Have **MORE** VALUE

PV Systems add an extra **\$3.00** per watt to the value of the sale of the house



Solar Homes **SELL** FASTER



360 Solar Family



Albert F -- 360 Solar with their sister company Dan's Roofing entirely **replaced our leaking roof and built and installed an 8 KW photovoltaic array all in one project.** Most people don't think too much about the age and condition of their roof when they choose to install solar panels, but it is critical to repair or replace an older roof to avoid having to remove panels later on to repair roof leaks. 360 Solar did a masterful job on our complex project and I am 100% satisfied with the quality and value I received. **We now generate all the electricity we use for the house and running our electric car, plus a small surplus.** That is the greatest feeling. Thanks 360 Solar!! Temecula

Paul J -- I recommend 360 Solar to anybody! Everything they promised actually happened! I was skeptical at first about the "zero electric bill" claim, but they nailed it! **With our high electric usage, our bill went down to zero almost immediately. Now we are much more comfortable knowing that our bill is zero.** We talked to several other solar companies, but they didn't pass the test. Tony at 360 Solar was confident and competent--he knows his stuff! Temecula

Melanie & Mike B—Many compliments to your guys doing the install. They were fast, nice and cleaned up after themselves very well. Tony laid out the different options for us and we didn't feel rushed. **We had a good understanding of our options, which made it easy to come to a decision.** They were very accommodating with our schedules during the installation. Communication with the 360 Solar's office was easy--they answered our questions promptly. Temecula

360 Solar Family



Chris G -- *These guys rock. Their roofers have many years of experience and placed all my solar racks up on/thru my cement tile roof in about a day with no damage or issues. All stanchions were double flashed and painted to match the roof. The solar design from their electrician (Doug) was slick and professional. He even noticed an issue with my electrical panel and fixed it. The field sales help from Tony was top-notch -- he coordinated everything and the installers actually showed up early. He had access to local solar supplies and was able to get good prices. Their office support filed and handled all the paperwork for federal and state rebates. Overall it was a good experience and I will use them when I put up more panels. Lake Elsinore*

Heather H. -- *This solar company is really great! We just bought our solar system from them. I loved their courteous and professional manner in the office. The sales guy was knowledgeable and friendly. The roofing company, Dan's Roofing, has been in the valley for a long time. I love that they will stand behind their installs and make sure my tiles are not broken or damaged in the process. I would totally recommend 360 Solar Energy. Wildomar*

Jeannine C. -- *I am very pleased with 360 Solar Energy. From start to finish Mark (our Sales Consultant) was very informative and answered every question I had. For some reason the other solar companies made it very difficult to understand the solar process but Mark made it very clear. Also I have already received \$500 for referring a friend to solar. I am very happy from start to finish about the customer service as well as the great installation job. Corona*

360 Solar Family



Shawn & Kate W -- *They locked in a fixed electric rate, so no matter how much rates go up, we don't see it. It was a fast installation done right. They answered all our questions during the sales appointment. Oceanside*

Dan M -- *Absolutely happy with my system! My electric bill is **negative \$50 ea. month and we're running AC non-stop!!** Don't have to worry about using the AC when we really need it in the heat! It was a very smooth installation and they finished sooner than expected, and did a very thorough job. Oceanside*

Heidi & Paul M -- *Our electric bill is about \$1 a month now and we use the air conditioning all the time! We also have a hybrid car that we don't need to put gas in, because our solar panels are generating all the power we need! It's fabulous -- we love it! We recommend 360 Solar to anyone who's considering going solar. Oceanside*

Greg D -- *The installation crew was awesome--they were always on time and cleaned up after themselves. I appreciated that! Oceanside*

Manida M -- *Overall we are very happy with our solar system. The sales person gave us good advice on exactly what we needed for our energy use. The installation went very well and we're already seeing savings on our electric bill. Oceanside*

360 Solar Family



John M -- *I was tired of paying huge electric bills every month and getting hammered by rate hikes, so I invested in solar panels and now I'm generating my own electricity. **Now we're paying Tier 1 rates instead of Tier 4.** I'm happy with the work 360 Solar did. Vista*

Mickey K -- *Our electric bill is half of what it used to be, so we're happy about that. **We had bids from other companies, but we found that there were hidden fees. 360 Solar gave us a cost breakdown, there were no hidden fees, and they did exactly what they said they would do.** The installation guys were awesome--no mess, no issues. Everything was done right. Thank you, 360 Solar! Vista*

Susan W -- *We use our AC without paying anything for it! The installation went well. **We researched other companies but chose 360 Solar Energy because a friend highly recommended them!** They lived up to our expectations! Poway*

Gene B -- ***We're generating more electricity than we use right now, so we actually have a surplus.** The installation was excellent--it went very quickly--a few days from inspection to final installation. We wanted solar for a long time and had a few bids, but our home builder recommended 360 Solar Energy, so we talked with Tony and he worked with us to design a system that was the best value for our budget! Fallbrook*

360 Solar for Business

29 Palms Marine Corps Base

National University

Idyllwild Brewpub



The 360 Solar Energy Advantage

	360 SOLAR ENERGY	BIG 3 SOLAR COMPANY
Local and Privately Owned		
Profitable and Debt-Free		
28+ Years of Experience and 15,000+ Delighted Customers		
AAA Rating by the Consumer Business Alliance		
Highest YELP Ratings in Southern CA		
Ranked #2 in Value by the CA Solar Initiative		
Best Roof Warranty (20 Years)		
Full Line of Products and Finance Solutions		
360 Assurance Guarantee		
Ground Mounts		
Custom Designs		