

GOING SOLAR IN FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP – ONE RESIDENT’S STORY

Franklin Township residents Pat and Bill McCallum began their personal journey into solar energy at a renewable energy seminar hosted by the Franklin Township Environmental Commission in April of 2010. At the workshop, Bill learned about incentive programs offered by NJ’s Clean Energy Program and had an opportunity to speak with a local solar installation firm. He found the idea of producing clean electricity on his roof, using photovoltaic (PV) panels to be quite compelling and State incentives of \$1.35 per rated kilowatt capacity made the concept even more attractive.

Bill reached out immediately to several solar installation firms for assessments and proposals for his home, a 2,600 square foot two story cape built in 1975. He learned that, due to its broad south-facing roof, his home was a good candidate for solar.

The McCallums took action very quickly in order to prepare and submit an application in time for the Clean Energy Program’s May application round, one of three 2010 Renewable Energy Incentive Program (REIP) application cycles for the year -- January, May and September. The participation was high; theirs was one of 1125 applications *received on the first day* of the May round.

In order to apply for a cash rebate for their proposed solar photovoltaic project, the McCallums had to submit an application packet that included

- a signed contract with the contractor, Solar Connections, LLC.
- a detailed technical worksheet including use, system and warranty information
- documentation to support production estimates
- copies of the previous year’s electric bills
- a site map
- a ten-year certification addendum agreeing to pay back a portion of the rebate if the system were sold or moved before ten years

Solar Connections assisted with the technical aspects of the application. However, for the REIP Program (unlike the CEP’s Home Energy Performance Program) a contractor cannot submit on behalf of the applicant. The property owner must submit directly for the REIP rebate.

In August, Bill and his wife, Pat, received the news that their application had been approved on a 42-panel, 7,350kW system costing \$49,600. The CEP would provide a total rebate of \$9,922.50. A 30% federal tax credit on the balance of the costs would further offset their investment by an additional \$11,900. After installation, the McCallum’s will not only benefit from the electricity their system produces, but will also be able to sell Solar Renewable Energy Credits enabling them to recoup their investment in about 4.5 years.