



GLREA Solarize Program Summary

Introduction

The Great Lakes Renewable Energy Association (GLREA) is promoting a community based educational and group-buy program that brings together Homeowners with Solar Installers to learn about solar energy. If a certain percentage of homeowners end up purchasing solar, they will receive a discount that reduces the cost of installing solar. This approach helps strengthen neighborhood and community connection by capitalizing on peer-to-peer and neighbor-to-neighbor relationships, instead of relying only on municipality or organizational outreach. This program is called **GLREA Solarize** with the goal of accelerating the adoption of solar to protect the environment and save money on energy use.

The Great Lakes Renewable Energy Association (GLREA) is a non-profit organization of solar energy advocates who support the expansion and adoption of renewable energy in Michigan. GLREA's mission is to educate and enable homeowners, farmers, and businesses to save money and protect our environment by installing a renewable energy system. GLREA is a membership organization and we encourage all solar supporters to become a Member by clicking here <https://www.2glrea.org/membership> and then scrolling down and following the directions.

GLREA's Solarize Model is designed to increase the number of distributed solar energy installations within communities through education and lowered costs of solar installation. As such, the Model works for two distinct groups:

1. **Individuals** seeking to increase the number of solar users in their community. This can be anyone from any background. Often people who have been interested in solar in the past or those who have installed solar already become involved with Solarize to share their experiences and encourage others to go solar.
2. **Communities** seeking to increase the number of solar users in the community in accordance with a specific, sustainability-related goal. For example, to reduce carbon emissions, improve the quality of life, stimulate economic development, and to enhance energy resiliency.

With **GLREA Solarize**, residents choose the Solar Installer they wish to work with, and then organize a Meeting by reaching out to their friends and neighbors, either on Zoom or in person at someone's home, place of worship, or neighborhood community center. At the Meeting, the benefits of solar energy are explained and then a Solar Installer provides an example of the cost of a solar system, which is expressed by an average price per watt (PPW) 'range' for rooftop installations, and then explains the level of discount that can be offered depending on the number of participants that agree to purchase solar.

Overview of Solarize

Why do this Program?

The Solarize Program can be used as a model to educate homeowners about solar, install more solar energy systems, track participation, and share data. Through Solarize, communities and individuals can contribute to the campaign to shift how we generate electricity from fossil fuels to clean solar energy and can contribute to helping cities advance their sustainability goals.

How is this Program Implemented?

With this Program, we explain the roles of the Organizer, Host, Participants (homeowners or small business), Solar Installers, and Local Government Officials in supporting the adoption of solar for the community. These roles work together to bring together Participants and Solar Installers to learn about solar and participate in a Solarize event and group-buy.

When Should this Program Be Done?

Right now is a great time! There is plenty of sun in Michigan to generate solar electricity, the cost of solar has decreased significantly over the last ten years at the same time as solar panel efficiency is increasing, and the Federal Government is offering an Investment Tax Credit of 30% until 2033 that reduces the cost of installing a solar energy system by that amount by reducing your federal income taxes.

Who Should Participate?

GLREA Solarize is primarily targeted to homeowners, farmers, and small businesses.

The key personnel of this program are the Organizer, the Host, and the Solar Installer. The Organizer can be a resident, city employee, or a solar advocate willing to oversee the implementation of this Program. The Host is an individual who either already has solar or is interested in obtaining solar and is willing to reach out and gather other people interested in solar. The Organizer and Host work with the Solar Installer to present information about solar, answer questions, and provide the option of coming together to offer a group buy discount, which will reduce the cost of purchasing solar for each participant. In some cases, the Host and Organizer roles will be combined, and the same individual will take on the responsibilities of both.

Past Results from Ann Arbor, MI

Based on the experience of the Ann Arbor Solarize program:

- Average of 48 people attended per meeting
- Average of 35 estimates per meeting
- Average of 15 sales after meeting

If you have any questions, concerns, or need more information, please feel free to contact John Freeman at jfreeman13@comcast.net or (313) 655-7945 and Megan Husted at mhusted@umich.edu.