

Grow Solar Wisconsin Brief: Solar Group Buying



Solar Group Buying increases solar adoption by creating volume discounts and simplifying the purchase process.

Partners

- Madison: The Willy Street Grocery Store Cooperative is the exclusive Madison-area partner. The Co-op offered the group buy as benefit to its 20,000 members. The Co-op provided outreach and promotional support.. A Co-op staff member and five Co-op members helped develop the installation RFP and select the contractor. This ensured that the project's parameters aligned with the Co-op's mission.
- Marshfield: The Marshfield Sustainability Committee is the primary project partner. Local media provided project coverage and the Central City Credit Union helped market the program directly to its members. Anyone in the Central Wisconsin region is eligible to participate.
- Milwaukee: The Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA) and City of Milwaukee created the *Milwaukee Power Pack*. Through a partnership with local manufacturers (Ingeteam and Helios Solar Works), the program emphasizes local products, and local installers. Weekly educational sessions were held with Outpost Natural Foods Co-op, who promoted the program to its members. The Power Pack was coupled with the Milwaukee Shines Low-Interest Solar Financing program.

These group purchase programs will be evaluated, and the lessons learned will used to inspire and guide future group solar buying efforts.

Pricing

- Madison: Full Spectrum Solar, a full-service Madison-based installer is the selected contract. The system price discount is estimated at over 10%.
- Marshfield: Vendor selection scheduled for early September 2012.
- Milwaukee: The Power Pack features seven installers, and is expected to save customers 10 to 15%.

Status

Each project is actively accepting participants and offering outreach events, typically workshops for prospective participants. As of 8/1/2012, 10 participants have signed contracts, and 75 participants expressed interest and may participate.

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