

Wells Branch Community Solar— Program Resource Guide

Determine which UTILITY PROVIDER covers your home: it's either Austin Energy (AE) OR Oncor (ON)

STEP 1: Read a Solar FAQ sheet: Determine if solar is right for your home

AUSTIN ENERGY: [Austin Energy FAQ](#) and www.solaraustin.org/is-solar-right-for-you/

Your home must be 10 years old or newer **OR** meet [Austin Energy Efficiency standards](#) to qualify for AE rebates. Additional rebates may apply for energy efficient upgrades.

ONCOR: www.askoncor.com/EN/Pages/FAQs/Category.aspx?q=Renewable

Consider following the AE Guidelines and complete any recommended energy efficient upgrades

NOTE: Review/remove possible obstructions (e.g. Prune trees, remove unused satellites, antennas, etc.)

NOTE: Determine the size of solar energy system to required

STEP 2: Contact at least 2-3 solar installers for proposals - There are over 30 companies

AUSTIN ENERGY: [Complete list of installers](#)
(PowerSavers Program: www.austinenergy.com)

ONCOR: [Complete list of solar installers](#)
<http://www.takealoadoftexas.com>

REQUEST CONFIRMATION of INSTALLTION PROGRAM QUALIFICATIONS from your utility provider (AE or ON)
(Compliance of installation program qualification is critical to receive rebates)

- Confirm installer is qualified to work with your utility provider (this is critical)
- Request a detailed on-site system review and quote

ONCOR ONLY: Confirm ROI calculation based on ONCOR service area considerations for distributed renewable energy generation programs/excess solar energy buyback programs. <http://pvwatts.nrel.gov/>

STEP 3: Decide how you want to finance your system

Austin Energy and Oncor both partner with Velocity Credit Union: <https://www.velocitycu.com/loans>

- Review financial ROI: <http://pvwatts.nrel.gov/>
- Cash **OR** Credit Card Account (Some credit accounts offer additional reward program points)
- Loan direct from Solar Installation Company
- Loan through Commercial Bank or Credit Union
- Lease – Note: Any lease program **MUST BE** fully transferable in order to sell your home
Note: Leasing options may offer flexible 3rd party savings, but savings from other solar programs (e.g. rebates) may be reduced if a leasing option is selected – AE disallows rebates for leased equipment

STEP 4: Review Proposals

Select a QUALIFIED Solar Installer — Consideration points:

- Verify solar program qualifications
- Verify state licensing and proof of insurance -- Ask for copies of current information
- Compare pricing, materials and system design
- Compare warranty coverage
- Follow up with reference checks, customer feedback, etc. (Overall professionalism)

STEP 5: Submit Materials to WB Architectural Control Committee (ACC)

The WB ACC will work to get the required approval confirmed within 2 weeks, but allow 4 weeks.

Online Form: http://wellsbranchmud.com/general_information/architectural-control-committee.html

Send completed STANDARD ACC form to ACC (E-mail copy to all ACC active members)

- Project layout sheet – copy provided by solar installation company
- Materials list – copy provided by solar installation company
- Some areas with an HOA will require written notice to neighbors or approval letters from neighbors

STEP 6: Confirm WB Architectural Control Committee (ACC) Approval

RECOMMENDED CHECKPOINT: Keep a project file on hand with a list of all contacts. Keep copies of all e-mails

- Finalize project with your installer -- update your installer with the ACC approval
- Ensure the installer has obtained all required permits
- As courtesy, let your immediate neighbors know you are starting this project

STEP 7: Complete Interconnection Application Process – This is a CRITICAL step

Austin Energy: www.austinenergy.com

- Review program details to apply for AE Rebate (PowerSaver – Residential): [Solar Photovoltaics \(PV\) Rebate](#)
- Complete AE Renewable Energy Credit (REC) Agreement (Solar installer should provide documents)
- Submit completed forms to AE, installer submits forms for you
- Confirm the REC Agreement is received by AE.
- Austin Energy provides final Letter of Intent

NOTE: [Download Distribution Interconnection Guide \(pdf\)](#)

Once the installation is complete and LOI is received, you are guaranteed rebate money from Austin Energy in 120 days.

ONCOR: Complete the application: <http://www.oncor.com/EN/Pages/Interconnection-Applications.aspx>

- Oncor will send you an interconnection agreement to sign
- Return the signed agreement to: dg@oncor.com
- Oncor will return the completed interconnection agreement, signed by you and Oncor
- Provide your installer with the completed interconnection agreement
- The in-flow/out-flow meter will be scheduled for reprogramming once the interconnection agreement is complete

If your system meets all of the requirements, Oncor will send your service provider an incentive check. (Allow 2-3 weeks)

STEP 7A: ONCOR ONLY: Oncor initiates process to connect the in-flow/out-flow meter. Please allow up to three weeks for completion from receipt of application. ONCOR installs 2 meters (output/net metering)

STEP 8: Call Your Insurance Company

- Ask about any energy efficient discounts – some companies offer this
- Ensure you have sufficient replacement coverage for your solar panels
- The Tax Appraisal District may submit the solar installation details to your insurance company

STEP 9: Review your options for retail electric providers (ONCOR only, Austin Energy requires AE as provider)

It's important to understand how your Solar Energy In/Out flows impact your energy cost/return. Programs vary by company and the energy "buy back rates" may differ from your actual electricity costs—choose carefully.

- <http://www.powertochoose.org/en-us/Content/Resource/Selling-Renewable-Power>
- <http://www.powertochoose.org/en-us/Plan/Offers>

STEP 10: Installation Checkpoint

Austin Energy

- Solar Installer completes hardware installation
- **Austin Energy** inspects and approves installation
- AE installs 2 meters (output/net metering)
- Final system explanation and operation

ONCOR:

- Solar Installer completes hardware installation
- **ONCOR** inspects and approves installation
- Final system explanation and operation

STEP 11: File Property Tax Exemption (Travis Central Appraisal District, 512-834-9138) - Form 50-123

File for a solar exemption every year, reminders are usually sent by Travis Central Appraisal District office <http://www.traviscad.org/forms.html>

STEP 12: Federal Energy Improvement and/or Solar Tax Credits (One time file, 30% credit) - IRS Form 5695

- Take detailed pictures of the system (or find an aerial shot of your roof online, e.g. Google Earth)
- Print out several copies of the photos and save the images along with copies of your invoice and specifications
- If you are unable to use the entire credit in one year, this can be carried forward into future years

STEP 13: On-Going Reporting / Energy Usage Review: HOW TO: www.centerpointenergy.com/cehe/res/usage/

- Review Electric Usage Statements and monitor metering equipment
- Ensure your system is operating as planned -- via internet-based monitoring program, track energy usage, solar production, etc.
- Verify that you are receiving credits for the solar energy power generated