



Questions to Ask a Prospective Solar PV Vendor

If you're considering installing or investing in solar photovoltaic (PV) technology to generate electricity, ask prospective vendors these questions before signing on the dotted line. And if you have further questions or concerns, don't hesitate to talk to the member services department at your not-for-profit electric cooperative for more information.

1. What is the total installed (turnkey) cost of the system?
2. How much money is due upfront, and what is the schedule of payments?
3. If my energy use changes, will I be able to add more panels later?
4. Do I need a new roof now in order to install solar? Is my roof suitable to carry the additional live and dead load forces that the solar array will exert?
5. When was your company established and how much solar has it installed to date? Can your company provide a list of the projects and references for them?
6. Is your company affiliated with other parties to deliver the installation and who are they?
7. Does your company have a Standard Insurance Certificate with adequate General Liability coverage of \$1 million or more? (*Ask to see it*)
8. Does your company have Professional Liability Insurance? (*Ask to see it*)
9. Does your company carry Workers Compensation? (*Ask to see it*)
10. Do you have the ability to cover me as an "Additional Insured"?
11. Are your solar installers North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Electric trained and certified?
12. Do you have a licensed Iowa Professional Engineer on staff to review and approve drawings for submission to city/county building code and fire department officials?

13. Are you accredited with the Better Business Bureau? If so, what is your rating?
14. In which country are the solar panels and inverters you are selling made?
15. Will the company honor your manufacturer's multi-year performance warranty?
16. Does the company have a Master Electrician on staff to obtain the required electrical permits and to supervise the electrical work for your project? *(Ask to see the certificate)*
17. Is your solar installer company a Licensed Electrical Contractor, which is required to install solar electric systems? May I see your company's license?
18. Who will be working on my roof, and how much experience do they personally have installing solar?
19. How does your company handle it when you get busy? Do you work with sub-contractors?
20. How long will the installation take?
21. Will the age or type of my roof affect the cost of installation?
22. How will installation affect my roof? Will it create leaks? And if it does create leaks, are you then responsible for repairs?
23. If I'm planning on re-doing my roof, should I install panels before or after?
24. How much of my energy use would my solar system cover?
25. How much would my monthly energy bills be after installation? From you and from my cooperative?
26. How long would my payback period be on my solar system? What are the key assumptions associated with my payback that may impact that result?
27. How will solar affect my homeowner's insurance?
28. Will you complete all of the paperwork associated with getting the permits and financing?

>> For more information and resources, we encourage you to download the Iowa Utilities Board's *Consumer Informational Guide for On-Site Generation* at: <https://iub.iowa.gov/distributed-generation>