



REDUCE : RENEW : SAVE  
Authorized PG&E Solar Installer

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### **Questions to Ask Your Solar Installer:**

**1. Of course ask the same questions you would of any contractor...**

- i.e. Are they: Licensed / Bonded / Insured?

**2. Do they hold any special certifications? If so, which ones?**

- Look for certifications that are issued by the utility companies, or state run programs.

**3. Are they installing Top Tier Products, i.e. Made in America, Good Reputation, etc...**

- Don't be fooled by a "great warranty"; just because it looks good on paper doesn't mean it actually performs good. That is, a system that is broken can't produce any power for you, and therefore you lose money. So just because a company will replace a faulty part doesn't make up for lost power generation, and therefore lost income. Instead of a good warranty, look for products that have the least amount of warranty claims and speedy turnaround on warranty issues if they do occur.

**4. Are they designing and modeling the system through specialized software?**

- They should at least be predicting system output with a calculator that is driven by the "PV Watts" algorithm.

**5. Ask them to design their own system configuration and be wary if they don't give you examples of the system performance and especially system *cash-flow*.**

- If they are not taking those things into consideration, then they likely don't understand the process to reverse engineer a system design, or they're trying to fool you. Also be wary of people overestimating your savings by inflating it as described below.

**6. What percentage are they using for escalation of utility rates?**

- Historically we've seen rates increase up to 6% annually, and current predictions expect to continue the trend - However, we like to utilize a more conservative number like 5%. The companies using higher power escalation rates are going to reflect an unrealistically high dollar amount for money saved over the life of the system.

**7. Are they trying to sell you a system or lease you the equipment?**

- We strongly urge you to consider owning in lieu of leasing, your overall benefit is bigger by owning your system.

**8. Is Solar Energy System Installation their specialty, or do they do other trades too?**

- You wouldn't have dentistry done by your hair stylist would you? Ya, we wouldn't either...

**9. What can they offer that their competitors can't?**

- We include the following with our base price, that some will charge you extra for or simply can't offer at all:
  - FREE Light Bulb Swap-out to LED's
  - FREE Comprehensive Energy Usage Analysis
  - FREE Secure Power Supply - Utilize power from the sun when the grid goes down!
    - That's right! Most companies will tell you that your PV System won't make power when the Grid is Down - Not our System! You can watch that game, and still keep your beer cold...

**Make sure that they are asking you the right questions too:**

- Is there more than one meter that you pay the bill for? (Aggregation)
- Is there a large / old appliance or piece of equipment that is drawing a lot of power that will be eliminated or replaced?
  - Are there other mitigation measures that can be taken to reduce your power consumption? i.e. replacing outdoor lighting such as High Intensity Discharge Bulbs with LED's
- What is your service? i.e. Amperage / Voltage / Etc...
  - What is your Rate Schedule? Is your heating gas or electric? Are you on a discount program?
- What is your previous 13 months of usage, or your average power bill over the last 12-24 months?
- Do you plan to use more power than that in the coming years?
- What's your roof pitch? Or is there an option for ground mount?
  - What type of roof framing do you have? Trusses / Rafters / Heavy Timber
- Are you paying cash or financing?
  - If financing, is the interest tax deductible?
    - At what tax rate?
- Do you have enough of the tax liability to utilize the 30% Federal Tax Incentive?