



Make the Connection. Power the Future.

SELECTING A SOLAR CONTRACTOR

As with any major purchase, it's helpful to compare costs and information. Seeking bids from multiple professionals can provide constructive advice, set realistic expectations, secure the most competitive price, and help you fine-tune the design that will work best for your application. Below are the questions to ask your contractor.

- What kind of solar experience do you have?
Sunlight Solar was established in 1988, opened a store in Redmond, OR in 1997, and moved to Bend in 2003 with their most recent office opening in Portland in 2009. We have been installing solar power systems for over 10 years. We have over 300 installations in Oregon, totaling over 750 kW. We have solar power installations in Portland, Eugene, Corvallis, Bend, Ashland, and Klamath Falls.
- Before asking for bids or signing a contract, ask for a solar installer's State of Oregon Construction Contractor's Board (or CCB) license #, verify that their license is active and review any positive or negative history at: www.hirelicensedcontractor.com. Sunlight Solar's CCB License # is 158922.
- The Energy Trust of Oregon maintains a list of licensed solar trade ally contractors, which is available at www.energytrust.org/solar/ta_list/index.php. This is crucial in order for you to receive a cash incentive if you're a Pacific Power or PGE customer. Sunlight Solar was the 3rd Trade Ally to be registered with the Energy Trust of Oregon. We have since grown to 14 Oregon employees with 3 installation trucks and our install team consists of a Supervising Electrician, AC electrician, DC electrician, and (2) NABCEP certified installers. Our active voluntary stewardship includes the Latino Community Association, Oregon Adaptive Sports, Small Wind Energy Association, SMART Oregon, Big Brother Big Sister, and Habitat for Humanity. The Sunlight Solar team consists of 24% women, 7% Hispanic, and 4% African American.
- The Oregon Department of Energy maintains a list of tax credit-certified solar technicians at www.oregon.gov/ENERGY/RENEW/Solar/index.shtml. Make sure your solar installer has an active Tax Credit Certified Technician (or TCCT) so they're qualified to complete your state tax credit paperwork and you're eligible to receive your state tax credit. Sunlight Solar has (2) Tax Credit Certified Technicians and (2) NABCEP certified installers on staff to complete and sign your tax credit paperwork.
- Ask for references of past customers from the contractor and contact them. Don't be afraid to ask if they came up against any challenges and if they were satisfied with their experience. We have a list of references readily available for every customer.
- A system warranty is essential. Energy Trust trade allies and Oregon Department of Energy tax credit certified technicians must provide a two-year labor warranty that covers any repairs resulting from defects in equipment or contractor workmanship. Make sure your warranty is explicit about what issues the contractor will handle and what service to expect if something goes wrong. Sunlight Solar offers a 10-year warranty. Our labor warranty states "any and all installation labor shall be free of defects. SSE will repair or replace defective components within the first 10 years from date of installation".
- Make sure the bids you receive are based on the same criteria. A common way to compare "apples-to-apples" is to figure out the price-per-watt quoted from your solar contractor. This number should typically be around **\$6.25** per installed DC watt for a single 2-kW PV system. Quotes should include all costs associated with the project including all solar components, hardware, installation labor, permitting, incentive paperwork and warranties.