

Solarize Alaska

Solarize Anchorage is a joint effort between the Alaska Center and the Alaska Center for Energy and Power (ACEP) at the University of Alaska to make residential and small commercial solar photovoltaic (PV) energy systems more accessible and affordable for homeowners and commercial property owners in the Anchorage Municipality. Solarize Anchorage brings neighbors together to purchase solar panels as a group to receive discounted rates on panels and installation. It will provide home and business owners less expensive panels by pairing group discount rates with available state and federal incentives. The Solarize program has been widely used in the lower 48. It allows neighbors in specific geographic areas to organize for the collective purchase of solar installation.

The Solarize program uses the Community Council area boundaries to identify neighborhood groups. In Phase I, which is happening now, a volunteer from the Community Council area becomes the lead and starts the grassroots organizing in their area. Then in Phase II, the lead, along with a core team from their area, goes through a vendor selection process to select a vendor for their Community Council area.

In 2020, the University & Tudor Community Council areas Solarized, and selected Arctic Solar Ventures (ASV) but that summer was somewhat disrupted by the initial spread of COVID. If anyone is interested in participating, there are a couple of paths to pursue. 1.) For the anyone interested in volunteering, you could reach out to Rachel Christensen, the coordinator of Solarize Anchorage, rachel@akcenter.org, and see if there is an opportunity to team help one of the leads in one of the adjacent areas that have not yet Solarized, which are Russian Jack, Northeast, Scenic Foothills, Basher, or Campbell Park. Leon Jaimes (leon.jaimes@gmail.com) was the lead for the Solarize University & Tudor areas in 2020 and is happy to answer questions about what is involved. There is no guarantee that University Area will be eligible to participate, but Leon's feedback was that the leads sure do appreciate all the help they can get, and while there was nothing official, the vendors who were finalists for University Area were both willing to extend their Solarize discounts to homeowners outside of the UACC and Tudor areas. 2.)

Another option for anyone who is simply interested in Solarizing their home, would be to reach out directly to Artic Solar Ventures for a quote (<https://forms.clickup.com/f/a23k5-791/8O8T1TVTP51OLGIGLF>) and mention the 2020 University Area Solarize. This is the right time to start the estimating and planning process to take advantage of the full season of sun this coming summer.

Here are a some resources for additional information:

ACEP Solar Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rhjYCpG3Zc8>

MEA Net Metering website:

<https://www.mea.coop/co-op-benefits/net-metering>

PV Watts:

<https://pvwatts.nrel.gov/pvwatts.php>

Solarize Anchorage

<https://akcenter.org/climate-clean-energy/solarize-anchorage/>

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