

Step-by-Step Solar Guide

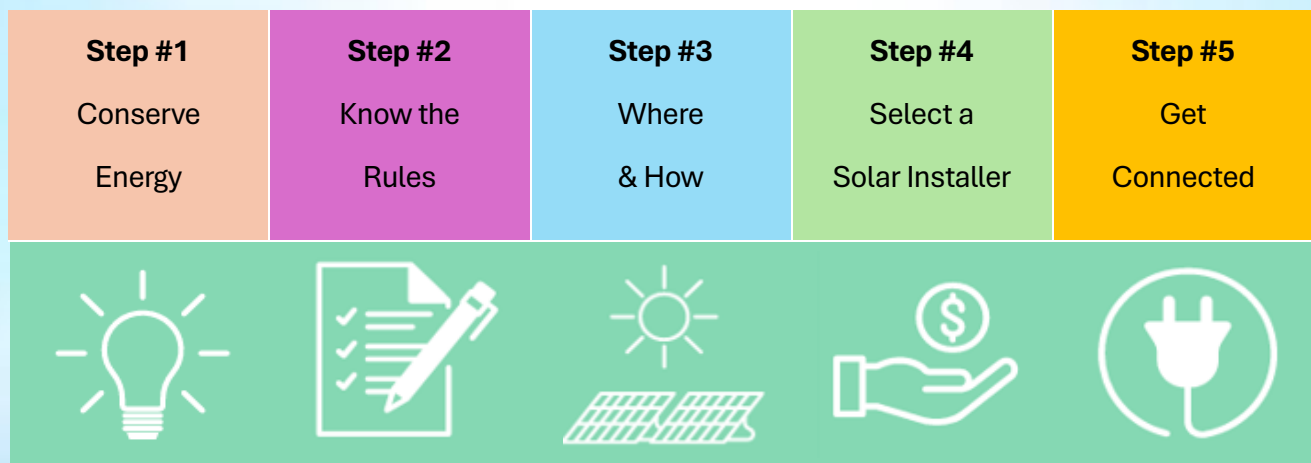


Village of Albany, Ohio

Is Solar Energy Right for My Home or Business?

Good question! As the solar economy grows across the world, communities are embracing the opportunity to support clean, green power.

In partnership with Sustainable Ohio Public Energy Council (SOPEC), the Village of Albany shares the following Step-By-Step Solar Guide, to make sure you are asking the right questions about solar energy.



Step 1: Conserve Energy

Before asking if solar is a good investment, you should see if there are cheaper ways to **reduce your overall electricity consumption first**. If your home or business is not energy efficient, you will be wasting precious solar power through drafty doors, windows, and walls.

Get a building/home energy audit to determine how you can reduce your electricity consumption before you pursue a solar installation. By reducing your overall electricity demand on the grid, you won't need as big of a solar system, potentially saving you thousands!

Step 2: Know the Rules

Review the Village's rules and regulations for installing solar energy systems. There are different rules for installing solar in a residential zone vs. a commercial zone, for example. Click here to access the [Albany Village Code Chapter 157 Solar Energy Systems](#).

The Village of Albany is committed to a 3 business day turnaround for application approval for small rooftop PV systems.

Solar PV systems must comply with Ohio law and the regulations set by the electric utility that serves you. In the Village of Albany, this is AEP Ohio.

AEP Ohio Solar Information links:



Step 3: Where & How

Most solar PV systems are installed on the roof of a home or business. If the roof is not a suitable option – either because of shade or structural weakness to hold the weight of the solar array – ground mounted systems can be installed but they are often more costly. A solar installation provider can help you figure out the where and how.

A solar PV system is a significant investment. Your installer can help you take advantage of any federal tax-based incentives that may be available with a solar investment, especially if you're seeking solar power for your business.

With solar, you can purchase a system outright, with cash, or through a loan, or you can lease a solar PV system as part of a power purchase agreement. Each path comes with its own pros and cons.



Step 4: Select a Solar Installer

Yes – get a quote from multiple solar installers, if possible. Quotes should contain a roof assessment, if applicable, with information about the type of panels, racks, and inverters that will be used to build the full solar PV system. [Do some research](#).

[You have rights](#) as a solar customer. Ask installers for a full cost breakdown, ensuring that you see the full system cost including any federal investment tax credits that may be available to you. Also, ask installers if they offer [flexible financing options](#) including a breakdown of the details among various options, such as securing financing through a loan or line of credit, a power purchase agreement, or an outright cash purchase.

Select an installer that will manage all necessary requirements with government regulators and will lead communication with the utility for grid interconnection.

Check to see if your solar installer of choice is a licensed contractor with a credentialed electrician on staff. High-quality solar installers carry the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) and/or Electronics Technicians Association (ETA) certification.

The following solar installation companies are located near Albany:



Check out this list of [Ohio Solar Installers](#) for more Ohio-based installers.

Step 5: Get Connected!

You've selected your favorite solar installer, you've lined up financing, and a date on when your solar system will be installed is booked, so now you're ready to turn on that solar!

Remember, before you finalize everything make sure you understand the following:

- the warranty and maintenance needs of your solar system
- the potential liability and insurance needs for your solar investment
- the taxes and tax credits, if available, associated with your solar project

If you're confident to move forward, your installer will ensure proper safety measures have been met and the electric utility has approved the **solar-to-grid connection**. Once you're connected to the grid, the panels will start generating electricity from the sunlight!

Additional Information about SOPEC

SOPEC: Sustainable Ohio Public Energy Council – is a Regional Council of Governments that provides public energy services to member communities across Ohio. The mission of SOPEC is to provide simple, valuable, and reliable public energy programs that help our communities achieve their local sustainable energy goals.

The Village of Albany has partnered with SOPEC to create the following programs:

Electric Aggregation Program

SOPEC manages an opt-out electric aggregation program for the Village of Albany. This program allows the local government to purchase electricity in bulk for its residents and small businesses.

Solar Net-metering Program

SOPEC's net-metering program provides compensation for excess solar power production at the program rate as a bill credit.

SOPEC and AEP Energy (the supplier of the SOPEC Electric Aggregation Program) offer a valuable solar net-metering agreement for AEP Ohio utility customers who have a solar system and are enrolled in the SOPEC Electric Aggregation Program.

The [SOPEC solar net-metering agreement](#) serves as an alternative to AEP Ohio's net-metering program for their Standard Service Offer customers (those that aren't enrolled in a governmental aggregation program or a supply contract with a Certified Retail Electric Service (CRES) provider).

**Questions? We'd love to help. Please contact Albany Village Administrator at
(740) 698-6127**