



Minnesota Solar Challenge

Solar means **business** for your local government

What is the Minnesota Solar Challenge?

The Minnesota Solar Challenge provides support for communities across Minnesota that may be interested in capturing the benefit of their local solar energy resource. Minnesota Solar Challenge partners will work with communities across Minnesota until February 2013 to implement local government best practices in permitting and zoning. The project aims to create an economically self-sustaining solar energy industry and opportunities for homeowners and businesses to more effectively use their solar energy resource.

Non-hardware costs such as permitting, installation, design, and maintenance currently account for up to 40 percent of the total cost of installed rooftop solar photovoltaic systems in the United States. Lowering these costs is an important part of growing the solar energy industry so that it can create new jobs for American workers, improve U.S. energy security, and provide clean, renewable energy for American families and businesses.

What are “best practices”?

Local governments have a number of opportunities for advancing solar energy resources and promoting the development of a solar energy industry. Best practices for local governments include standardizing permitting processes for addressing solar technologies, updating land use policies and zoning codes, and increasing access to financing. Incorporating such best practices into local government operations can enable property owners to capture their solar resource consistent with community land use, aesthetic, and safety standards.



What assistance is being offered?

The Minnesota Solar Challenge is offering free technical assistance to communities who want to investigate adopting local government best practices for enabling solar energy development. Best practices focus on:

- Removing barriers in local permitting processes (building and electric)
- Understanding and adopting reasonable permit fees charged to solar installations
- Ensuring that land use regulation (including comprehensive plan language and zoning) treats solar energy installations fairly and consistently with other similar land uses

**See other side
for details on
assistance.**

Technical assistance can include:

At least 20 communities will receive direct technical assistance implementing solar energy best practices.

- Workshops detailing the local government best practices and how to adapt the best practices
- Working directly with decision makers and staff to explain the value of solar
- Presenting and discussing local best practices directly with commissions, staff and elected officials
- Helping individual cities, counties or townships investigate how the best practices fit into existing processes and regulations
- Writing draft language or guidance documents for permitting and land use standards to fit the local conditions and circumstances



How does my community sign up?

Take action today! Workshops are being held throughout the fall and winter in 2012 and 2013 across Minnesota, and you can fill out a brief questionnaire online if you're interested in receiving direct technical assistance.

Visit mncerts.org/solarchallenge to learn more, register for events, and get assistance before February 2013.

The Minnesota Solar Challenge is made possible by a grant from the U.S. Department of Energy and the Minnesota Department of Commerce.

Visit mncerts.org/solarchallenge to learn more

Minnesota Solar Challenge local government partners:

