

Harnessing the Sun:

Consumers Energy & Landowners working together to reap solar power benefits.

Solar is the centerpiece of Consumer Energy's Clean Energy Plan to meet Michigan's energy needs over the next 20 years while protecting the environment by eliminating coal and achieving net zero carbon emissions.

Our Clean Energy Plan is a landmark 20-year blueprint to meet our state's energy needs while protecting the environment we all cherish. We want to eliminate coal and dramatically boost renewable energy to help achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2040.

That's why we're planning to add 8,000 megawatts of competitively bid, utility-scale solar power by 2040 - when solar power will comprise more than half of our electric capacity.

It's a big goal. One we won't reach without support from landowners and communities throughout Michigan, especially in rural and agricultural areas.

Solar Development is Cost Competitive:

Consumers Energy's Clean Energy Plan is projected to save customers more than \$600 million through 2040.

We're searching for tens of thousands of acres of land for utility-scale solar projects. And we want to work with local leaders interested in siting solar development that can deliver environmental and economic benefits for their communities.

Since the earliest days of our 135-year history, we've operated with Michigan's best interests

in mind. Tapping solar power to help solar power to help communities and create a brighter energy future is the next exciting chapter in our shared story.

See back to learn more about what solar expansion means for Michigan - and for you

Answers to Your Question About Solar Expansion

Learn more about solar and how we can work together.
Visit: ConsumersEnergy.com/MiSolar

Why is Consumers Energy sold on solar?

In addition to its environmental benefits, solar is increasingly cost competitive and we can add it gradually to meet Michigan's changing energy needs without building large, new fossil fuel power plants. We've already begun adding more clean, renewable, solar-generated electricity for Michigan and plan to bring 1,100 megawatts of solar capacity online by 2024. We plan to own 50 percent of this additional solar capacity and purchase the remaining half from solar developers, who also are often seeking to buy property of leasing rights.

What does this opportunity mean for Michigan communities?

Welcoming solar to your community can increase a community's revenue to help fund education and critical basic services. Solar can also provide income for participating landowners from the sale of property or ongoing easement agreements.

How much land does a community need for solar and where are the best locations?

Generating solar energy requires significant tracts of land - between five and 10 acres per megawatt of electricity - that's flat, open and treeless with direct access to the sun. That said, we expect to meet our solar energy targets using less than 2 percent of the farmland in Michigan. We're considering potential locations such as farm fields - including those less ideal for growing crops - brownfield sites and state and recreational lands. Distance to existing transmission infrastructure is also a critical factor for solar developments. The closer, the better.

Can Consumers Energy offer insights on local regulations for solar projects?

Yes. We have examples of solar ordinances that enable safe, successful projects while protecting the communities, landowners, wildlife and the environment. Setbacks and fencing, for example, are two common areas where we have experience and can suggest commonsense solutions. You can count on us as a good corporate neighbor. We maintain and operate our facilities according to the highest safety and environmental standards and abide by solar regulations.

How does a solar array affect property values?

The presence of solar does not appear to make a significant impact for landowners or neighbors. Property values are determined by a wide variety of factors, including the preferences of individual buyers, making it difficult to draw general conclusions.

What are the potential benefits for landowners?

If a farmer can add solar to a portion of their property and get a long-term steady income. Steady income from solar projects means that farmers are less vulnerable to fluctuations in market prices or crop yields. Downstream benefits from operations and maintenance and tax revenue have lasting positive community impact.

New solar installations have minimal impact on land. Topsoil is left in place and solar array sites are seeded with native grasses and pollinating plants to promote biodiversity. Land can generally be used for a variety of purposes, including farming, after serving as a solar installation.

What's the impact on the environment & local wildlife?

Protecting the planet is one of our top priorities and solar is a responsible environmental choice that highlights our commitment to Michigan's ecosystem. Solar panels don't leach or emit any harmful chemicals into the soil or the air and aren't expected to negatively affect local wildlife. We'll complete detailed environmental studies of the project area and will work with landowners and applicable federal, state and local agencies to consider all environmental concerns and obtain all required permits. This includes identifying and protecting any threatened or endangered species and their habitats.

How will solar impact electric reliability for Michigan?

As optimistic as we are about the future of solar energy, we understand the sun doesn't always shine - especially in Michigan. That's one reason our Clean Energy Plan also includes the proposed purchase of four existing natural gas-fired power plants. These existing plants - along with our current natural gas power plants in Zeeland and Jackson - will supply reliable, on-demand electricity to meet Michigan's energy needs when renewables such as solar and other sources are not available.

How does a solar array impact my neighbors?

Solar panels have minimal impact for nearby residents. Panels are installed strategically to reduce any visible glare and don't impact internet, phone, or satellite services. Solar panels do not make any noise. There can be a low humming noise associated with electrical equipment connecting solar panels to the grid, but sound studies are performed before and after construction to ensure noise is at acceptable levels defined by local zoning ordinances.