



**SNAKE RIVER
ALLIANCE**
IDAHO'S NUCLEAR WATCHDOG & CLEAN ENERGY ADVOCATE



What is *Solarize the Valley*?

A program to accelerate installation of rooftop solar in the Treasure Valley, create a stronger solar market and deliver economic and environmental benefits to the community. *Solarize the Valley* is a first-of-its kind campaign in southwest Idaho. Snake River Alliance will connect you directly with a carefully selected solar installer to provide top-quality service and American-made solar panels.

Why Should I Sign Up for *Solarize the Valley*?

- We make it easy and affordable to harness clean energy in Idaho now.
- Invest in energy independence for your home, business, place of worship or nonprofit organization with photovoltaic (PV) solar panels.
- Protect against Idaho Power electric rate hikes of 4% to 5% a year.
- Reduce your carbon footprint and dependence on Snake River hydropower.
- Direct 30% federal tax credit and additional state tax deductions.
- Support local jobs installing American-made products.
- Special great prices, negotiated with trusted installers.
- Eliminate the hassle of getting and sorting through multiple contractor bids.
- Increase the resale value of your home. (See [study in 2015 by Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory](#) .)

How Do I Get Started?

Sign up at the *Solarize the Valley* website, www.solarizethevalley.org for your free solar site assessment. Be prepared to supply contact and location information and upload an electric bill to be used to evaluate the suitability of your building and your cost estimate. You will get a call from our staff or a volunteer Solar Ambassador to pre-qualify your application and a call from an installation specialist to schedule your free solar site assessment.

Can You Help My Business or Nonprofit?

Yes, *Solarize the Valley* has special services to help get rooftop solar on businesses, churches, schools and nonprofit organizations in the Treasure Valley. If you are a member of a group that owns its own building and pays electricity bills – now is the time to consider investing in your organization's sustainable future. Please sign up for a free evaluation and we will help you understand current prices and the return on investment for your business or presentation to your board of directors.

Do I Have a Good Rooftop for Solar?

Site suitability depends on which way your roof faces, (south, east and west are appropriate), whether you have lots of shade, and the amount of electricity you use. *Solarize the Valley* may use satellite images to evaluate your property's suitability for solar. Solar panels can be installed on most roof types and on sloped and flat roofs (additional fees may apply for some roof types and ground-mounted systems).

What Will My Solar Panels Power?

The solar panels will be connected to your existing electric system. A power inverter converts and synchronizes with the power grid. When it's sunny your solar panels will power your home. When it's not sunny, your home will use electricity from Idaho Power. Your system comes with computer software that lets you see what each of your solar panels is producing and follow along with the sun.

What if I Produce More Power Than I Need?

When your solar panels produce more electricity than you use it goes to Idaho Power and is credited through the Net Energy Metering program which substantially reduces your overall power bill. Your surplus energy is credited to your account. Details on this program are available at <https://www.idahopower.com/AboutUs/BusinessToBusiness/GenerationInterconnect/netMetering.cfm>

Is Solar Really Affordable?

Solarize the Valley has negotiated very competitive pricing for residential and commercial solar installation. Solar panel installation for your home or business is an investment with an economic payback time that varies depending on how much solar capacity is installed and how much electricity the building uses. You'll have a rough idea of the cost of your system and your payback time after you sign up and a very good idea after your Solarize the Valley Solar Site Assessment. Remember that you pay money for electricity each month. By producing your own energy, instead of sending money to Idaho Power each month, you'll be "sending" money to yourself, and before long you'll have paid off your investment.

Is Financing Available?

Many private banks and credit unions can add solar panels to your mortgage as a home equity loan. The State of Idaho has 4% financing available for 5-years for residents (\$1,000 to \$15,000) and businesses (\$1,000 to \$100,000) for renewable energy project such as solar panels. See more information [here](#)

And use this form [to apply](#):

How Were the Solar Installation Companies Selected?

Early in 2016, the Snake River Alliance assembled a Technical Advisory Committee to help us create a transparent and fair process for selecting our solar installers. We issued a Request for Proposals to area installers and met with them to clarify each proposal. Equipment installed in this program will be Tier One, made-in-America panels and come with a ten-year warranty on parts and installation.

The Alliance negotiated contracts with two companies that offered the best value and reliability for our customers. [AltEnergy](#) was selected to handle all of our residential customers for *Solarize the Valley* and [Site Based Energy](#) was selected to handle commercial installations. Both of these companies agree to extend these great prices during the period of the campaign for customers signing up through *Solarize the Valley*, located in Ada and Canyon counties.

Who Runs this Program?

Solarize the Valley is a program of the Snake River Alliance Education Fund, Inc. The Alliance is a local non-profit organization founded in 1979 that advocates the use of solar energy to decrease Idaho's heavy reliance on coal-burning power plants.

Solarize the Valley was created to accelerate the installation of solar panels in the Treasure Valley and move Idaho closer to 100% clean, renewable and reliable energy. Every solar array installed with *Solarize the Valley* results in a small contribution to the Alliance's highly-effective Clean Energy Program.

What if I don't live in Ada or Canyon Counties?

The community-based model for the Solarize program began in Portland, Oregon and spread around the Northwest and from coast to coast. This is the first program in southwest Idaho –and The Sun Valley Institute for Resilience is running a similar program this year in Blaine County, Idaho. The U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Colorado has posted an explanation of the concept [here](#). You can find how things have worked in other states [here](#). We've learned a lot from our colleagues at the [Solarize Missoula](#) campaign, and here in the Pacific Northwest at NW SEED's [Solarize Northwest](#) site.

How Do I Get More Information?

Solarize the Valley will hold free public workshops in Ada and Canyon county in May, June and July. We will cover the basics of solar technology, explain the rates offered through *Solarize the Valley*, financing options and site suitability. Please visit www.solarizethevalley.org to see the schedule of upcoming workshops. ***Let us know if you'd like us to schedule a workshop for your neighborhood, place of worship or workplace.***