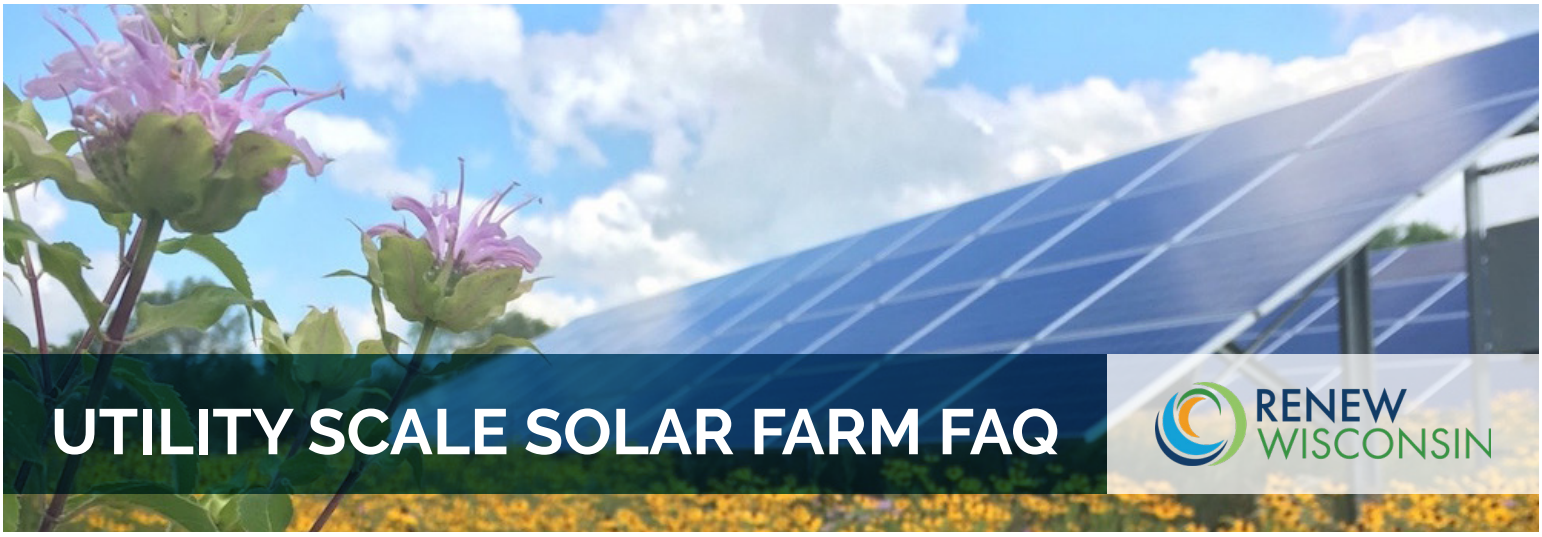

UTILITY SCALE SOLAR FARM FAQ

RENEW WISCONSIN

What is utility-scale solar?

"Utility-scale solar," "large-scale solar," and "solar farms" are different terms that describe a solar power facility that generates enough electricity to serve many customers, as opposed to a single home or business. These facilities are typically located on open land and near an existing substation or electric transmission infrastructure.

Are there any solar farms operating in Wisconsin today?

Yes. There are more than 20 solar farms in Wisconsin that are presently generating electricity for utility use. Many of these are in the range of 1-2 megawatts of solar capacity. A one megawatt solar farm produces enough electricity annually to offset the needs of about 190 average Wisconsin homes.

How much land is required for solar farms?

A good rule of thumb is 5-7 acres of land are used for every megawatt of solar power capacity.

Who uses the energy from these solar developments?

Wisconsin does! Thus far, all solar farms built or proposed in Wisconsin are owned by, or sell their electricity to, Wisconsin electric providers. In turn, the electricity is sold to WI homes and buildings.

Electricity usage in Wisconsin has been relatively stable. Why do we need new solar projects?

Wisconsin utilities are planning to retire several coal and natural gas plants in the next two to three years and this electricity capacity needs to be replaced. The cost of solar has declined tremendously, making solar projects an economic solution.

Why is solar energy being pursued as a source of grid power?

The most important driver behind the growth of solar is the declining cost of solar power technology and installation. The cost to install solar has declined 75% or more in the last decade. The cost of new large-scale solar generation has dropped to the point where it is cost-competitive today with traditional coal and natural gas power plants.

FOR MORE QUESTIONS, ANSWERS, AND DETAILS, VISIT WWW.RENEWWISCONSIN.ORG/SOLARFARMS

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Are solar panels a safe technology?

Yes. Solar panels are safe to touch, attach to your home, and install in your neighborhood or town.

Are the solar panels or any of the other components made in Wisconsin?

Although we do not have any solar panel manufacturing in Wisconsin, many of the parts needed to build and operate solar farms are indeed made in Wisconsin.

Can hosting solar panels help agricultural land?

Yes. The land that supports solar arrays can be revegetated with a range of low-lying, deep-rooted plants, grasses, and flowers that can rebuild the soil. In addition, these plantings can support honey bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, and other pollinators whose populations are facing threats.

How do solar farms benefit landowners?

Solar farms are often placed on privately owned land. Participating landowners voluntarily lease their land to host all or a portion of a solar farm and receive annual lease payments in return. The participating landowners find that the long-term lease payments are financially attractive, often because they can help supplement farm income and provide a hedge against changing commodity prices for corn, soybeans, and dairy.

Participating landowners bear no construction or operating expenses for the solar arrays. The project will be decommissioned and the land will be restored at the end of the solar farm's useful life.

How can solar farms benefit local governments?

In Wisconsin, owners of solar farms greater than 50 megawatts pay annually into a utility aid fund which is shared with the local governments where the solar farm is located. Under the revenue sharing formula currently in place, a qualifying solar farm will contribute $2,333 per megawatt (MW) per year to the county and $1,667 per MW to the township(s) hosting the project, for a total of $4,000 per MW per year.

Can some of the solar power be stored in batteries to use at night?

A "Battery Energy Storage System" (BESS) is a potential accessory to a solar project. Battery storage could provide many benefits including releasing energy after the sun goes down.

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