

Thinking of installing a solar energy system?

Like any other major home purchase, try to get quotes for your solar project from at least three contractors. SVEC recommends selecting a contractor who is licensed and insured. A great place to find reputable solar contractors is the Florida Solar Energy Industries Association.

In preparing their quotes, contractors should review your past electricity consumption before sizing your solar system. SVEC members can view and print copies of past bills using the co-op's SmartHub account management tool. The contractor should provide a detailed cost breakdown, realistic figures on the amount of energy your system will produce and an estimated payback period.

Remember, if a contractor's offer sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Solar panels do not produce power at night or during afternoon thunderstorms which are frequent in our area during the hot summer months. Fortunately, SVEC can provide power to your home during those times.

Also ask the contractor about a maintenance schedule and realize that if it's hard to get a contractor to come to your home to give you a quote, it will be even harder to get them to fix a problem when it occurs.

It's important to know that during an outage, interconnected solar systems without a battery back-up are inoperable. This is a necessary safety precaution to stop power from being backfed from solar systems onto SVEC lines and injuring or killing co-op workers. That's why SVEC requires members installing solar systems to enter into an interconnection agreement which requires that industry and government standards for the manufacture and safe installation of solar equipment are met.

Finally, to help avoid potential errors or delays in the installation/interconnection process, SVEC highly recommends that you speak with one of our member service representatives at 800-447-4509, before you install a solar system.