

CURRENTS

JNEC's September 2023 Newsletter



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8 Questions to Consider Before Installing Rooftop Solar

“Free energy from the sun and lower electric bills... Where do I sign up?”

The benefits of installing rooftop solar panels may seem like a no-brainer, but the reality is, not every home (and homeowner's situation) is always right for solar.

There are several factors to consider before pulling the trigger on a rooftop solar system, like determining if your home will receive enough sun to achieve your goals, finding the right contractor, negotiating contracts, and other important details.

Investing in solar for your home is a major decision. If you're considering rooftop solar, Jasper-Newton Electric Cooperative can help.

Here are eight questions to consider before installing rooftop solar panels.

- 1. What are my goals?** If your primary goal is to save money on electric bills, you may be able to achieve this by weatherizing your home, installing energy efficiency products, and performing a home energy audit, which can identify areas of the home for maximum energy savings.
- 2. Is my roof suitable for solar?** Your roof should be in good condition before installing solar panels. If your roof is old and in poor shape, it may need to be replaced before panels can be mounted. Additionally, your roof should receive a lot of sun to make the most of a rooftop system. Consider how much sun (and shade) the roof receives and if any trees will need to be removed. Solar panels perform best when facing south, so keep this in mind as you think about where the panels will be mounted.
- 3. How long will I own the home?** If you're considering rooftop solar, you're likely planning to stay in the home for several years. But if you plan to sell the home at some point down the road, consider that not all potential buyers will want to maintain a rooftop solar system. If you enter into a contract to lease the system, carefully review the terms and what those mean if you decide to sell the property.
- 4. Lease or purchase?** Purchasing a rooftop solar system outright is expensive, which is why many homeowners opt to lease their solar panels. However, federal tax credits can help cover some of the costs for a new system, up to 30%. Regardless of how you decide to finance the solar system, make sure you get several quotes from qualified contractors. Speaking of contractors, there are several factors you'll want to discuss with them upfront.
- 5. Can the contractor provide up-to-date documentation?** It may seem obvious but be sure to request proof and documentation of the contractor's licensing, permitting and other credentials. Comb through company reviews, check the contractor's status with Better Business Bureau, etc.--do your homework on the front end before signing a contract.
- 6. Does the contract seem reasonable and fair?** If you decide to hire a contractor to install rooftop solar, carefully read the fine print of the contract. Do the system performance calculations seem realistic? Does the project timeframe sound reasonable? Negotiate the contract terms to fit your goals and needs.
- 7. Who will maintain the solar panels?** Determining who is responsible for maintaining the solar panels will depend on who owns the system. If you lease the system from a solar installer, it may be their responsibility. Periodically, solar panels need to be cleaned as dirt and debris can impact panel productivity. Parts may also need to be replaced, so it's important to know who will take on these responsibilities.
- 8. How will I work with Jasper-Newton EC?** Finally, but equally important, you should contact Jasper-Newton EC if you decide to install solar. The system must be connected to the electric grid, so you'll need to sign an interconnection agreement. We can walk you through the steps, including how our distributive generation rates work. Visit www.jnec.com/forms for a general overview of how you can work with us on connecting your new rooftop solar system.

For many homeowners, solar panels are a great way to help the environment and save on electric bills--but there are many factors to consider before diving in and installing a system.

As with any major home project, do plenty of research upfront, and contact Jasper-Newton EC if you have questions or decide to move forward with installation.

We're your local energy partner and can serve as a helpful resource throughout the process.

Hurricane Preparedness

Hurricane Season is June 1- Nov. 30.

Preparedness Checklist:

- ✔ **Make an Evacuation Plan.** Find activated evacuation routes here: DriveTexas.org or by dialing (800) 452-9292. Call **2-1-1** to find out if you live in an evacuation zone.
- ✔ **Sign-Up for Emergency Alerts.** Make sure your device is enabled to receive Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs).
- ✔ **Prepare an Emergency Supply Kit.** Learn how to build an emergency kit here: <https://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit>
- ✔ **Review Your Home Insurance Policy.**
- ✔ **Register with State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR):** <https://stear.tdem.texas.gov/> or by dialing **2-1-1** if you live in evacuation zone and:
 - have a disability or medical needs and do not have a car or other vehicle to use in an evacuation.
 - have a disability or medical needs and do not have friends or family to help in an evacuation. ****STEAR Registry information collected is confidential****

Hurricane Preparedness Online Resources:

Texas Division of Emergency Management Website: www.tdem.texas.gov
Texas Department of State Health Services: www.texasready.gov
American Red Cross: www.redcross.org
U.S. Department of Homeland Security: www.ready.gov
Office of the Texas Governor Greg Abbott: www.gov.texas.gov



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Preparación para Huracanes

La temporada de huracanes es del 1 de Junio al 30 de Noviembre.

Lista de verificación de preparación:

- ✔ **Haga un Plan de Evacuación.** Encuentre rutas de evacuación activadas aquí: DriveTexas.org o marcando (800) 452-9292. Llame **2-1-1** para averiguar si usted vive en una zona de evacuación.
- ✔ **Regístrese para recibir alertas de emergencia.** Asegúrese de que su dispositivo esté habilitado para recibir Alertas de Emergencia Inalámbricas (AEI).
- ✔ **Prepare un estuche de Suministros de Emergencia.** Aprenda cómo construir un estuche de emergencia aquí: <https://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit>
- ✔ **Revise su póliza de seguro de hogar.**
- ✔ **Regístrese en el Registro de Asistencia de Emergencia del Estado de Texas (RAEET):** <https://stear.tdem.texas.gov/> o marcando el **2-1-1** si vive en una zona de evacuación y:
 - tiene una discapacidad o necesidades médicas y no tiene un automóvil u otro vehículo para usar en una evacuación
 - tiene una discapacidad o necesidades médicas y no tiene amigos o familiares para ayudar en una evacuación. **** La información recolectada del Registro RAEET es confidencial ****

Recursos en línea para la preparación en caso de huracanes:

Sitio web de la División de Administración de Emergencias de Texas: www.tdem.texas.gov
Departamento de Servicios de Salud del Estado: www.texasready.gov
Cruz Roja Americana: www.redcross.org
Departamento de Seguridad Nacional de los Estados Unidos: www.ready.gov
Oficina del Gobernador de Texas Greg Abbott: www.gov.texas.gov

