

## Florida SOLAR CO-OP Program

*For homeowners: reduced electric bills, more access to affordable solar PV equipment, more investment in local properties*

*For whole county: empowered citizens, more local jobs, cleaner air, help delay or avoid costly outlays on generating plants and transmission lines, expand business opportunities for solar installers*

### **What is a solar co-op?**

- Solar co-ops consist of homeowners who are bundling their buying power to secure a discounted price and high-quality offerings for solar PV equipment for their respective homes.
- Solar co-ops are homeowners coming together to take control of their energy production, learn together and exercise their purchasing power as more informed consumers.

### **How do solar co-ops work?**

1. Homeowners learn about solar and decide to join online at [solarunitedneighbors.org/florida](http://solarunitedneighbors.org/florida). (There is no fee or commitment to sign up.)
2. Members' roofs reviewed remotely for suitability and members are notified via educational email.
3. Once 20 members have joined, installers invited to bid and co-op members select one installer.
4. Installer draws up customized design and each homeowner decides if they will sign contract.
5. Very important.: There is no obligation to sign a contract!
6. Installer completes installations and co-op members celebrate!

### **What is happening in Florida?**

- 34 co-op programs are either completed or underway.
- Over 1,000 homeowners have gone solar through a Florida co-op.
- Solar United Neighbors of Florida is a program of a 501(c)3 nonprofit based in Washington D.C., Solar United Neighbors. Solar United Neighbors has nine (and counting!) state programs and has facilitated hundreds of solar co-ops across these states.
- Other local organizations will be invited to become local partners.

### **How can a County be involved?**

- Elected officials can become **public spokes persons** with the media and other audiences.
- Government officials can **sponsor a co-op** and provide funding through a contract or grant. (Note: Orange County, Hillsborough and Broward County have signed contracts. Miami-Dade County and St. Petersburg pay for a Solar United Neighbors of Florida coordinator position dedicated to facilitating co-ops in that area.)
- Government officials can **publicize the co-op** through a variety of communication channels.
- Government officials can **provide space for "Solar Information Meetings"** designed to educate the public about the benefits of solar.
- Elected and other government officials can **lead by example and become members of the solar co-op**.



### ***What is the track record of solar co-ops in Florida?***

- St. Petersburg Co-op (2016) Mayor Kriseman endorsed
- Orange County Co-op (2016) Mayor Jacobs spearheaded and funded
- Brevard County Co-op (2016) Brevard County Commission & Satellite Beach Mayor endorsed
- Sarasota County Co-op (2017) City of Sarasota endorsed
- East and West Broward County Co-op (2017) Sponsored by County's Environmental Protection Dept.
- Miami-Dade County Co-op's (2017-2018) Green Corridor District sponsored 6 co-ops
- St. Johns County Co-op (2017) St. Augustine Mayor Nancy Shaver endorsed
- Volusia County Co-op (2017) City of DeLand, DeLand Mayor Apgar endorsed
- Pinellas County Co-op (2017) City of Dunedin, Safety Harbor and Tarpon Springs endorsed
- Hillsborough County Co-op (2017) Sponsored by County Commissioner Pat Kemp, funded by Hillsborough County
- Palm Beach County (2017) Endorsed by City of West Palm Beach and Mayor's Office of Sustainability
- Leon County Co-op (2018) County Commissioner Dozier endorses, BOCC and City of Tallahassee pass Proclamation of Support
- Citrus County Co-op (2018) County Commissioners pass Resolution of Support
- Franklin-Bay Co-op (2018) supported by City of Apalachicola
- St. Petersburg (2018) funds a St. Pete Co-op Coordinator F/T position and three co-ops
- Orange County (2018) gov't fully funds two co-ops; Orange County Mayor Teresa Jacobs went solar with co-op; 3 County Commissioners join
- Highlands County (2018) BOCC passes Resolution of Support; City Councilman Lowrance and Deputy Mayor of Avon Park endorse
- Sarasota Co-op (2018) City of Sarasota endorses

### **For more information:**

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