

UNDERSTANDING GREEN TAGS

Your solar electric system benefits all of us.

The best thing about a solar electric system isn't what it does produce, but what it doesn't produce. When your solar electric system generates electricity, you are offsetting power that might otherwise be generated by burning fossil fuels, which can create carbon dioxide and other pollutants.

What are green tags?

Green tags, also known as renewable energy certificates (RECs), are commodities that represent the environmental attributes and benefits associated with electricity generated from renewable resources like solar. Green tags are separate from the electricity generated and may be separately traded to businesses and utilities who want to purchase/support renewable energy.

Who owns the green tags produced by my solar electric system?

As a participant in Energy Trust of Oregon's solar electric incentive program, you own the green tags associated with the electricity your system produces for the first five years of the system's life. Energy Trust will own the green tags for 15 years after that. The portion of green tags claimed by Energy Trust reflects the investment that has been made in your new solar system on behalf of the Oregon ratepayers of Portland General Electric and Pacific Power. After these 15 years, the green tags return to the owner.

You may sell the green tags associated with your electricity generation during the period of time that you own those tags; however, you may not sell them during the time period when Energy Trust owns them.

What does Energy Trust do with the green tags that it owns?

Energy Trust generally holds the green tags it owns in trust for the ratepayers, although it also has the option to sell a portion of them and reinvest the green tag revenue in new renewable energy projects.

Will someone buy my green tags?

The market for green tags is constantly changing and the availability of buyers is not guaranteed. The nonprofit Solar Oregon has established the Northwest Solar Coop to provide resources to those looking to sell their tags. To find out more, visit their website at www.solaroregon.org/nwsolarcoop, or call 503.231.5662.

Does Energy Trust buy green tags?

Energy Trust does not purchase green tags. Our role in this area is simply to help people understand the nature of these commodities.

What happens to my green tags if I sell my home or business?

Your agreement with Energy Trust stipulates that you will leave your system on your home or business if you move. The new owner will own the solar electric system along with any green tags generated during the remaining part of your green tag ownership period. Any contract you have to sell your green tags should be assigned to the new business or homeowner.

For general information on green tags, visit the Green-e program which provides certification and verification services for green tags and is administered by the Center for Resource Solutions at www.green-e.org.

