

NEWS

For Immediate Release
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Energy Trust of Oregon increases solar incentives for Oregon businesses

Goal is to spur more installation of clean energy systems

PORTLAND, Ore. — April 18, 2013 — Oregon businesses interested in putting the sun to work are getting some help from Energy Trust of Oregon. The nonprofit announced today that it is increasing cash incentives for solar electric systems for businesses while also raising the size limit of systems eligible for incentives.

“While market momentum for residential solar installations has remained strong, demand for solar by businesses has waned,” said Peter West, director, energy programs, Energy Trust, noting that incentives and federal and state tax benefits for businesses have declined more rapidly than prices of solar electric equipment have come down. “We determined that our incentives were insufficient to motivate customers given the current business conditions.”

The new solar incentives vary based on the electric utility service territory. For Portland General Electric customers, the incentive rises to \$1.20 per watt of installed capacity for systems up to 35 kilowatts, up from \$1.00 per watt. The incentive for systems 36-200 kW starts at \$1.20 per watt and declines to \$0.60 per watt as the system increases in size. The maximum incentive for a single customer is \$120,000 and the maximum system size eligible for incentives is 1,000 kW.

For customers of Pacific Power in Oregon, the incentive rises to \$1.10 per watt of installed capacity for systems up to 35 kilowatts, up from \$0.75 per watt. The incentive for systems 36-200 kW starts at \$1.10 per watt and declines to \$0.50 per watt as the system increases in size. The maximum incentive for a single customer is \$100,000 and the maximum system size eligible for funding is also 1,000 kW.

Energy Trust will allocate incentive funds in a way that allows the largest number of customers to take advantage of its Solar program. Energy Trust is making \$3.1 million available to businesses for solar electric systems on a first-come, first-served basis.

“Solar electric generation is a good investment for businesses and for utility ratepayers,” said West. “It’s also a key resource in Oregon’s renewable energy portfolio.”

The Oregon Public Utility Commission, which oversees the operations of Energy Trust, set a 2013 performance benchmark for Energy Trust to install 0.66 aMW of solar and small wind generation this year. Energy Trust intends to reach half of that goal through commercial and industrial solar installations.

According to the Oregon Solar Energy Industries Association, solar companies have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in Oregon since 2007 with more than a dozen component-part manufacturers, and at least 100 distribution and installation firms employing more than 2,000

people. Executive Director Glenn Montgomery cites Energy Trust as a prime reason for Oregon's thriving solar economy and agrees that a stable solar industry requires both residential and business sectors to be strong.

"The technical assistance and cash incentives from Energy Trust have spurred a dramatic increase in the adoption of solar in Oregon, especially for residential systems," said Montgomery. "We applaud Energy Trust for seeking ways to bolster the commercial sector and broaden the base of what can be a long term, viable clean energy sector."

Energy Trust of Oregon is an independent nonprofit organization dedicated to helping utility customers benefit from saving energy and tapping renewable resources. Our services, cash incentives and energy solutions have helped participating customers of Portland General Electric, Pacific Power, NW Natural and Cascade Natural Gas save more than \$1 billion on energy bills. Our work helps keep energy costs as low as possible, creates jobs and builds a sustainable energy future. Learn more at www.energytrust.org or call 1-866-368-7878.

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