

VPIRG & our Clean Energy Program

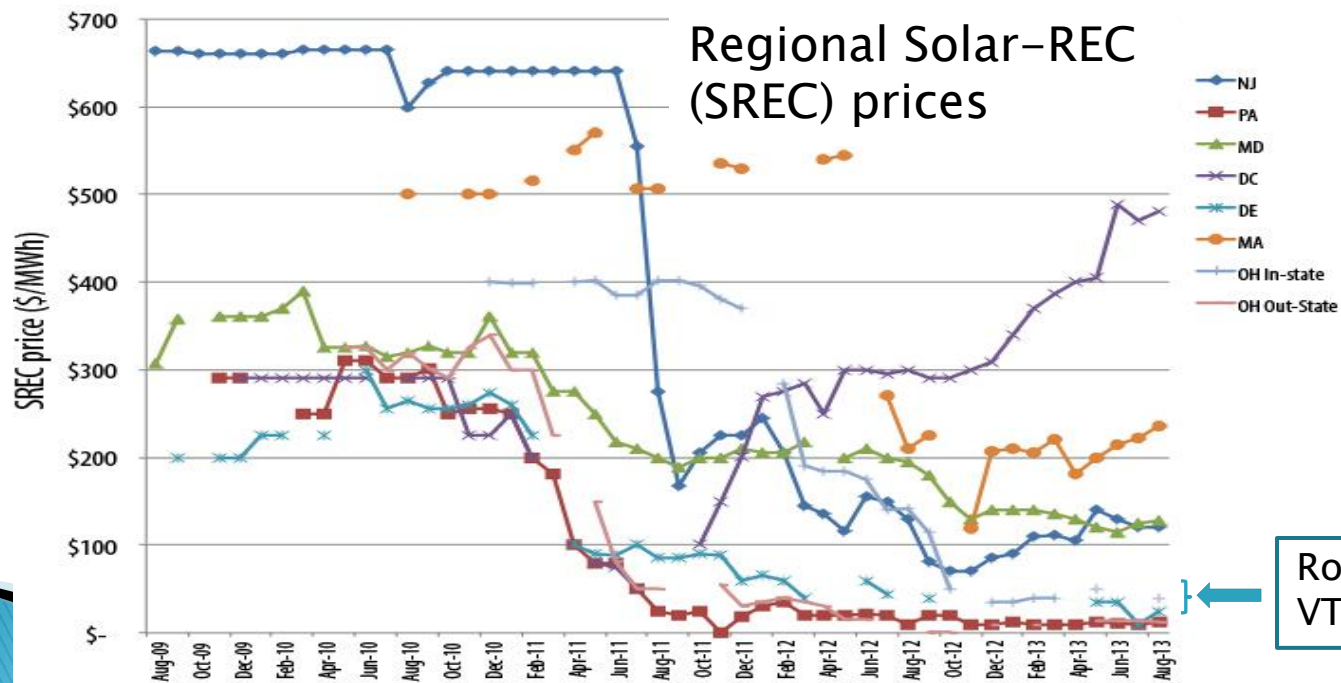
- ▶ VPIRG is the largest consumer and environmental advocacy organization in Vermont.
 - Knock on doors in every town, city, grant & gore in VT.
 - Supporters in every inhabited municipality in VT (over 30,000 all told).
- ▶ The goals of our Clean Energy Program:
 - Reduce Vermont's global warming impact
 - Increase efficiency and the use of renewable energy
 - Benefit Vermont's economy
- ▶ Climate change is the Program's top priority. Why?
 - We're headed towards 4–6°C (8– 10°F) of warming, which is a potentially civilization-threatening disaster.
 - *“A 4°C future is incompatible with an organized global community, is likely to be beyond ‘adaptation’, is devastating to the majority of ecosystems, and has a high probability of not being stable.”¹*

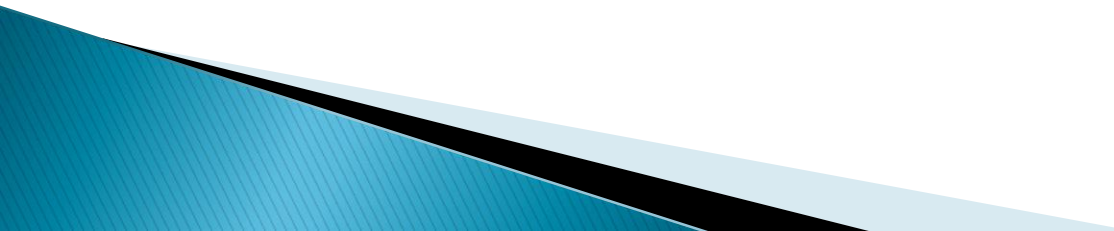
How we think about solar & net metering

- ▶ Our goals:
 - Rapidly grow solar
 - Provide the incentives necessary to achieve that growth, while being mindful of diminishing returns
- ▶ How?
 - Prioritize consistency & predictability
 - Make solar not just affordable, but simple as well
- ▶ VPIRG supports the Department's framework; there is no question this draft would be a big step in the right direction for solar in VT

The solar adder: predictable, consistent & low

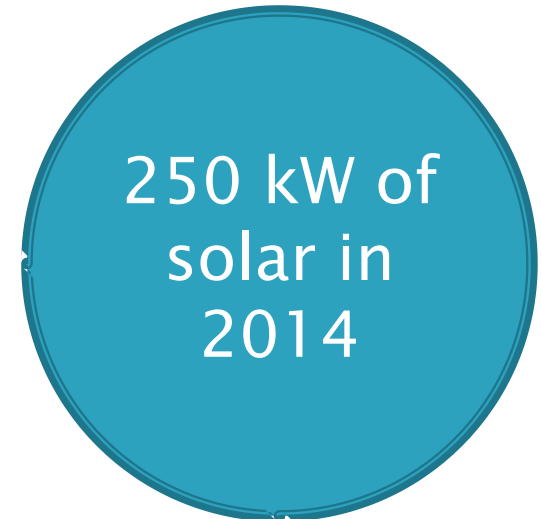
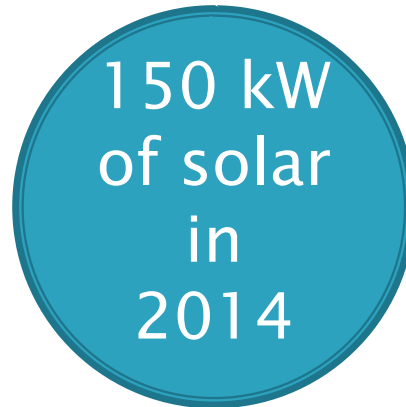
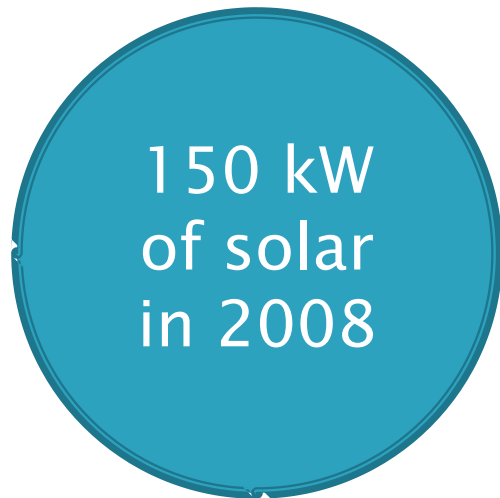
- ▶ In Vermont, we've built the incentives for solar *into* our net metering program.
- ▶ The solar adder:
 - Is low, relative to other solar incentives regionally.
 - Has had an outsized impact, due to its consistency.



- ▶ The middle class is driving growth in solar.
 - This is growing more true every year.²
 - This is made possible by solar programs that allow going solar without increased customer expense.
 - ▶ There *is* a perception issue.
 - The costs of solar incentives are intuitive.
 - The economic benefits of solar are not.
 - More education is needed.
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Suggestion: Update streamlined permitting line to reflect increased panel efficiency

Relative size:



Currently, streamlined permitting exists for systems ≤ 150 kW. To reflect improved panel efficiency (~50% increase in energy density from 2008³), for solar that should be updated to 250 kW.

Other draft specific comments

- ▶ VPIRG suggests utilities that have hit the cap be allowed to continue net metering for systems 15 kW and under, at each utility's discretion
 - We support uncapped residential net metering, however, we believe this is an issue best addressed in the Board process.
- ▶ Renewable attribute treatment is good (p7 & p11)
 - In the 22 states that assign REC ownership to utilities or customers, 19 give RECs to the customer.⁴
- ▶ Set-backs & registration (p5, lines 18–20)
 - We need to be watchful of solar or energy-specific setbacks and other restrictions.

Ben Walsh
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1-Dr. Kevin Anderson, Tyndall Center for Climate Change Research:

http://137.205.102.156/Ms%20S%20J%20Pain/20111124/Kevin_Anderson_-_Flash_%28Medium%29_-_20111124_05.26.31PM.html

SREC chart on page 3: <http://apps3.eere.energy.gov/greenpower/markets/certificates.shtml?page=5>, <http://sretrade.com>

Value of solar adder: Public Service Department & EIA residential rate data

2 - The Center for American Progress *Solar Power to the People* report:

<http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/green/report/2013/10/21/76013/solar-power-to-the-people-the-rise-of-rooftop-solar-among-the-middle-class/>

3 - Correspondence with Sunpower Corp & publically available panel data.

4 - Freeing the Grid 2013: http://freeingthegrid.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/FTG_2013.pdf



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