

<http://cleantechnica.com/2013/10/28/us-solar-growth-driven-middle-class-americans/>

US Solar Growth Driven By Middle-Class Americans

[Originally published on Cost of Solar.](#)



Photo Credit: [KN6KS](#) / [Foter](#) / [CC BY-NC](#)

One of the most common solar-related myths out there is that it's mostly just the rich who are going solar. We've [seen indication](#) in the past that this stereotype was not true. However, a study just released by the Center for American Progress (CAP) is certainly the most recent and most comprehensive study on the matter that I've seen.

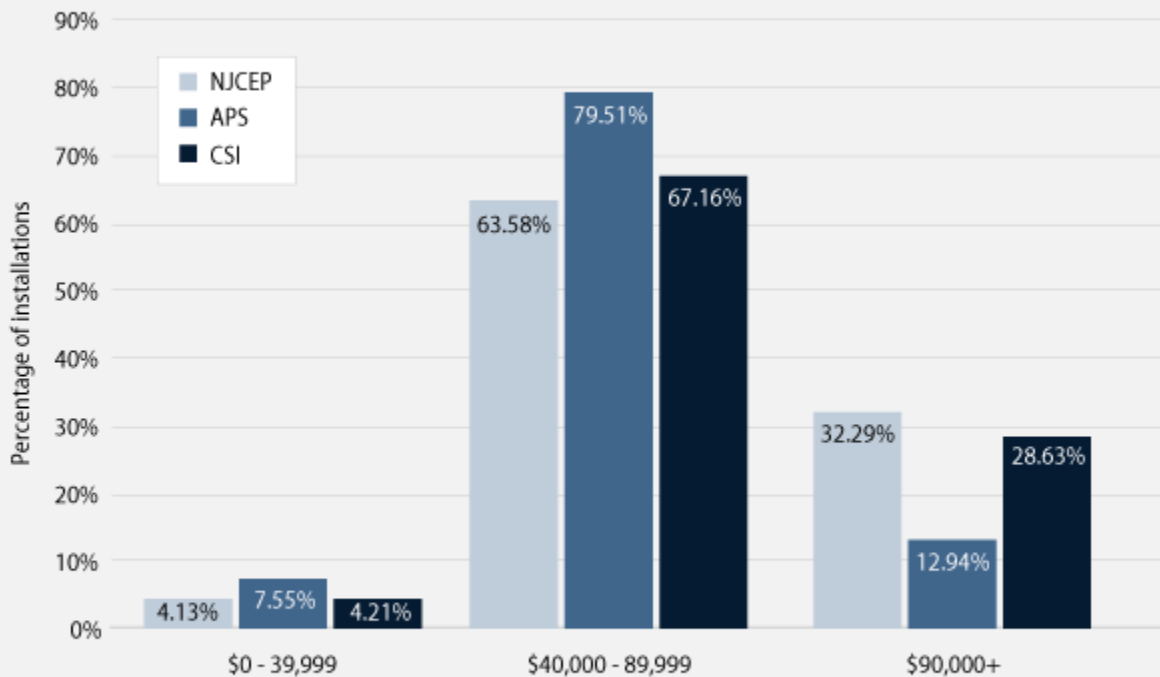
"The CAP report used residential solar installation data from the Arizona Public Service (APS), California Solar Initiative (CSI) and New Jersey's Clean Energy Program (NJCEP) databases to examine solar adoption trends across income levels in the three largest U.S. solar markets – Arizona, California and New Jersey," Mari Hernandez of CAP [wrote on Think Progress](#) this week.

The study, [Solar Power to the People: The Rise of Rooftop Solar Among the Middle Class](#), found that solar installations "are overwhelmingly occurring in middle-class neighborhoods that have median incomes ranging from \$40,000 to \$90,000." Over 60% of installations were in such neighborhoods. That is surprising even to me. That is *very clearly* [the middle class](#).

And the areas with the strongest growth were actually in lower ranges, the "lower middle class" or even "working class" range. Mari Hernandez wrote: "The areas that experienced the most growth from 2011 to 2012 had median incomes ranging from \$40,000 to \$50,000 in both Arizona and California and \$30,000 to \$40,000 in New Jersey."

FIGURE 1

Percentage of installations by dataset and income range



Sources: Arizona Goes Solar, "Arizona Public Service (APS): Installations," available at <http://arizonagoessolar.org/UtilityIncentives/ArizonaPublicService.aspx> (last accessed August 2013); Go Solar California, "Download Current CSI Data," available at http://www.californiasolarstatistics.ca.gov/current_data_files/ (last accessed August 2013); New Jersey's Clean Energy Program, "New Jersey Solar Installation Update," available at <http://www.njcleanenergy.com/renewable-energy/project-activity-reports/installation-summary-by-technology/solar-installation-projects> (last accessed September 2013); U.S. Census Bureau, "American FactFinder: Advanced Search," available at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?refresh=t> (last accessed September 2013).

Image Credit: [Center for American Progress](#)

So, the next time you see someone write (or hear them say) that it's just the rich who are going solar, send them here.

Also, if you had it in your head that solar was too expensive, that you're in the middle class — maybe even the working class — and can't afford it, maybe it's time to wake up and see that the middle and working classes are driving solar power growth today. Maybe it's time to [get a solar quote!](#)

It makes sense, too. The working and middle classes are more sensitive to electricity bill increase. We're more affected by that day of the month when we have to send a check to the electric company. Solar power is a light in the smog that can pull us out of that codependency. [Saving \\$600](#) or even [thousands of dollars](#) a year means more to us than it does to the über rich. That's why thousands upon thousands of middle-class and working-class Americans are switching to solar power.

Join the crowd. [Go solar.](#)

Read more at <http://cleantechnica.com/2013/10/28/us-solar-growth-driven-middle-class-americans/#IL1hMHqxiBwsGSJj.99>