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## News

# Homeowner goes green with solar roof

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HATFIELD TWP. — Looking at it from the northeast side, Paul Sucro's home looks like the rest of its neighbors on Fischer Road in Hatfield Township.

But approach the same house from its southwest side, and you'll see an asset that has already started paying for itself: Hatfield Township's first residential solar roof.

"I've been thinking about doing this for about 20 years, and a buddy of mine and I keep saying: just wait until it gets cheaper, just wait, just wait," Sucro said.

This past summer, after key state and federal solar energy tax credit were passed and signed into law, Sucro decided the time was right, and contacted Philadelphia based EOS Energy Solutions to see if a roof would work for him.

"I contacted them in April and by the end of August, the first part of my system was up. That part gives me 5.8 kilowatts and the second part that's just finishing up this week will give me another 3.2," Sucro said.

The two sets of panels are each connected to their own inverters in Sucro's basement, which take the direct current input from the panels and converts it to alternating current for the home's electrical system, synchronizing it with the power coming in from Philadelphia Power and Light.

"When we went online back in August, as soon as we flipped the switch I ran up to my meter and saw it start going backwards. Let me tell you, that was the greatest thing I'd ever seen," Sucro said.

That's precisely the idea behind those state and federal credits and rebates, said Andrew Kleeman, a managing partner with Philadelphia based EOS Energy Solutions.

"The Pennsylvania rebate system opened in May, and allows for a rebate on up to a 10 kilowatt system on a residence. The average size system we do is probably about 3 kW, but that's because we do a whole lot of them in Center City, Philadelphia where the roofs are much smaller than Paul's," Kleeman said.

EOS has done about 140 solar systems nationwide since 2007, with about 35 of them located on the east coast, and is currently working on an 85 kW system located on Cheltenham Avenue in Philadelphia, he said.

"The combination of federal and state subsidies make solar an incredibly good financial investment. Forget about how good it is for the environment, and how important it is for us as a society to adapt to renewable energy sources, but from a strictly financial point of view, these deals make a lot of sense too," Kleeman said.

Sucro's makes plenty of sense: his system should pay for itself over the next five to seven years, he said, and he's already cut back on paying federal taxes in anticipation of the large credit he'll get back around tax time.

"The Feds have a tax credit, it was a line item in that TARP bill, that will give me 30 percent of the installation cost back. The state also gives me \$2.25 a watt for the installation, and I'll save \$1,500 to \$2,000 per year on my electricity bills," Sucro said.

His monthly bill typically averages over \$100, he said, but last month's bill came to only \$11.32 with the panels online.

"And once the electric rate caps come off around 2011, the savings will only go up because prices are going up at least 25 percent. Right now I figure I'm saving about \$2.40 a day, times thirty days a month times twelve months, but starting in 2011 it could be as much as \$3.60 a day," he said.

"People have been asking me, 'Why did you go ahead and do it now? Why not wait five years until it's even cheaper,' but my answer to them is that in five years, mine will be all paid off already when they're just putting theirs in," Sucro said.

You can see if it makes sense for you, too: EOS offers a no-obligation analysis of your home based on satellite

imagery on their Web site [www.EOSSS.com](http://www.EOSSS.com).

"Only about seven of every ten inquiries we get are buildings that will actually work, because three of those ten won't have enough roof, or face the wrong way, or have tree shade or some other problems like that," said Kleeman.

"The cost of solar systems has gone down every year for pretty much the past 30 years, but in the next five years, any reductions in price may be smaller because the subsidies could be gone, so there's really never been a better time than now to invest in solar," he said.