

New Hampshire

Solar Policy Survey

October 2016



The NESEMC Solar Policy Survey compiles information on state-level policies that significantly influence the solar energy market. The survey was produced with the help of the Pace Energy and Climate Center’s team of student researchers. The vast majority of the information contained within this document has been obtained from [the Database of State Incentives for Renewables & Efficiency](#) (DSIRE) with additional information and research obtained from various sources.

Note: These factsheets are updated periodically to reflect policy changes within each state. If you notice a mistake or out of date information, please contact Nick Martin at nmartin@nesemc.com.

SOLAR MARKET POLICIES

This document surveys the following solar market relevant policies.

POLICY	DESCRIPTION
RENEWABLE ENERGY GOALS	Does the state have enforceable and/or non-mandatory renewable energy goals? Do these goals include a specific solar PV carve out?
SOLAR TARIFFS AND RATES	How are solar PV customers impacted by utility tariffs and rates? Does the state offer net metering and/or value of solar tariffs? Do utilities impose high fixed charges or specific charges on solar customers?
VIRTUAL NET METERING	Can solar PV customers offset electricity purchases on multiple meters?
COMMUNITY AND SHARED SOLAR	Can multiple customers offset their electricity purchases from a single PV system?
GREEN FINANCING	Does the state support renewable energy financing through institutions like green banks or property assessed clean energy (PACE) financing?
PERMITTING	Has the state streamlined the solar PV permitting process?
LICENSING	What type of licensing is required to install solar PV systems? Are specialized solar PV or renewable energy licenses available?
SOLAR RIGHTS AND ACCESS	Does the state protect customers’ ability to install solar PV systems and access sunlight?
OTHER FINANCIAL INCENTIVES	Does the state offer financial incentives including grants, loans, tax credits, and/or tax exemptions?

RENEWABLE ENERGY GOALS

Goals and Mandates:

New Hampshire state law creates a renewable portfolio standard (RPS) requiring 24.8% of retail electricity sales to be supplied by renewable sources by 2025.¹

15.3% of the 2025 RPS mandate must be fulfilled by Class I and II renewables, which include solar PV. The remaining 9.5% of the mandate must be fulfilled by Class III and IV resources, which do not include solar PV.

Solar Carve Out:

New Hampshire has a solar-specific renewable energy goal. By 2014, 0.3% of the RPS had to be fulfilled by Class II new solar-electric sources, which are any solar PV generator that began operation after January 1st, 2006.

SOLAR TARIFFS AND RATES

NET METERING

New Hampshire state law mandates net metering for solar PV customers.²

Maximum System Capacity:

Net metered facilities may be up to 1MW per location.

Aggregate Capacity Limit:

There is an aggregate capacity limit of 100 MW state-wide. 50MW of this limit is allocated to the state's three investor-owned utilities with 80% of this capacity (i.e. 40MW) reserved for systems under 100kW. The remaining 50MW is allocated to the state's other utilities with no restrictions on facility size.

Applicable Entities:

All utilities must offer net metering.

Excess Generation:

Excess generation is applied to the customer's next bill as a kWh credit and carried forward indefinitely. Customers may elect to receive payment (at the utility's avoided-cost rate) for any excess credit remaining at the end of an annual period.

Renewable Energy Certificate (REC) Ownership:

The customer retains ownership of the REC, except for RECs associated with the net excess generation purchased by the utility at the end of an annual billing period, which may be claimed by the utility.

¹ [RPS § 362-F3](#)

² [RSA § 362-A 9](#)

VALUE OF SOLAR

New Hampshire's utilities do not offer any value of solar tariffs. The Acadia Center has analyzed the value of solar in New Hampshire for a solar PV system installed near Pembroke, NH. The [study](#) found solar PV energy values between 19 to 24 cents per kWh to the grid, with additional societal values of 7 cents per kWh.

VIRTUAL NET METERING

New Hampshire allows virtual net metering under its existing net metering program.

Maximum System Capacity:

Virtually net metered facilities may be up to 1MW, which is the same limit that applies to net metered facilities.

Aggregate Capacity Limit:

Virtually net metered facilities are included under the net metering program's aggregate capacity limit.

Compensation Rules:

Beneficial accounts are given credits at same rate as under the net metering program.

Limitations:

The host customer must provide a list of beneficial accounts (group members) to the New Hampshire PUC and electric distribution utility, and must certify that all members of the group have an executed agreement with the host.

The beneficial accounts must be default service customers of the same electric distribution utility as the host customer.

Costs associated with upgrading the utility's information system to accommodate new billing arrangement must be paid by the host customer.

COMMUNITY AND SHARED SOLAR

Through New Hampshire's provisions for virtual net metering, certain shared solar configurations are allowable.

Enrollment / Program Size Limits:

Shared solar facilities are included under net metering single facility capacity limits of 1MW. There is not an explicit limit on the number of participants allowed.

Compensation Rules:

The host receives credit at rates consistent with the credit the host receives relative to its own net metering (i.e. full retail rate), which are then applied to participants based on executed agreements.

Other Limitations:

Participants must be default service customers located within the same utility territory as the host.

The host must provide to the commission a list of all participants and certify that all participants have executed an agreement with host regarding utilization of kWh produced by eligible facility.

GREEN FINANCING

Green Bank:

New Hampshire does not currently have an operational green bank or similar institution/program that uses public funds to leverage private investment in solar PV.

PACE Financing:

Authorized by state law, local governments may establish PACE financing programs.³ The Jordan Institute is the state-wide administrator for the [NH C-PACE program](#), which works with program partners and municipal representatives to establish local C-PACE programs. In 2016, there were at least three New Hampshire municipalities with C-PACE programs.⁴

Other Green Financing:

[Municipal Energy Reduction Fund](#) – The New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA) administers this revolving loan program available to municipalities (with an initial budget of \$1.5 million) aiming to encourage the state’s municipal governments to invest in alternative energy.

[Enterprise Energy Fund](#) – The New Hampshire CDFA administers this revolving loan fund available to businesses and nonprofits to make energy improvements.

PERMITTING

Standardization:

New Hampshire does not have a statewide standard application or fee for obtaining necessary permits for solar PV projects.

Guidance:

State specific permitting guidance documents were not found for New Hampshire.

LICENSING

New Hampshire does not offer solar PV specific licenses for installers. Solar PV installations must be done by a licensed master electrician or a journeyman in the employment of a master electrician.

Tied to Incentives:

Incentives are not tied to licensure or certification.

Reciprocity:

New Hampshire reciprocates with MA, ME, and VT for journeyman and master electrician licenses.⁵

³ New Hampshire Statutes § 53-F

⁴ See <http://www.cpace-nh.com/about.html>

⁵ [National Electrical Contractors Association](#)

SOLAR RIGHTS AND ACCESS

Solar Rights:

New Hampshire does not have any state laws or regulations that specifically address solar rights.

Solar Access:

State law explicitly allows for voluntary creation of easements for access to direct sunlight.⁶

OTHER FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

Grants/Rebates:

[Residential Small Renewable Energy Rebate Program](#) - this program offers rebates to qualifying homeowners who install <10kW solar PV or wind turbines.

[Commercial & Industrial Solar Rebate Program](#) – this program offers rebates for solar PV systems <500kW serving non-residential structures with a commercial electric meter.

Tax Incentives:

[Property Tax Exemption for Renewable Energy](#) - New Hampshire allows cities and towns to offer a residential property tax exemption from the assessed value of a solar energy system used on the property.

⁶ N.H. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 477:50

About NESEMC



The **Northeast Solar Energy Market Coalition** brings together solar energy business associations and other stakeholders in the Northeast United States to harmonize regional solar energy policy and advance the solar energy market. We are funded by the U.S. Department of Energy SunShot Initiative as a cooperative agreement through 2017.

Our vision is a thriving, efficient regional market for solar photovoltaic energy generation in the Northeast.

We will realize our vision by encouraging and engaging regional solar businesses in advancing market policy to lower costs and increase solar market opportunity. We will educate stakeholders and policy makers throughout the region directly, and by empowering our member organizations with robust analysis and timely information.

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