



Commonwealth Solar Hot Water - Residential Program Application Instructions

The Commonwealth Solar Hot Water Program provides rebates through a non-competitive application process for the installation of solar hot water projects by professional, licensed installers at residential and multi-family (1 to 4 unit) homes. In order to apply and qualify for a solar hot water system rebate for your home, the instructions and solar system requirements must be followed.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1) **Read the [Commonwealth Solar Hot Water Program Factsheet](#)** for basic information about solar hot water systems.
- 2) **Determine eligibility.** To be eligible for a Commonwealth Solar Hot Water Program rebate, customers may install solar hot water ("SHW") systems that use any fuel, not just electricity, as a backup. However, rebates are only available to Massachusetts customers who pay into MassCEC's Renewable Energy Trust Fund. This includes all electric customers served by National Grid, NSTAR, Unitil (Fitchburg Gas and Electric), WMECO, or a [participating Municipal Lighting Plant community](#). Please provide your installer with a copy of your electric bill so that MassCEC can verify eligibility.
- 3) **Find a qualified installer** to help you decide what system is right for you. The Solar Energy Business Association of New England ("SEBANE") maintains [a list of installers](#) who will install systems in Massachusetts¹. You may also refer to the Commonwealth Solar Hot Water Program Awarded Projects Database (at www.masscec.com/solarhotwater) for a list of installers that have successfully submitted an application through the program. MassCEC recommends that you obtain bids from more than one installer and always check references. Your contract with the installer should require that the installer is properly insured with adequate coverage types and limits to meet the project's needs, and the installed system meets all of the requirements for this rebate program, including, but not limited to, utilizing a licensed professional when required by state law.
- 4) **Estimate Your Rebate.** The rebate is \$25 per collector multiplied by the SRCC thermal performance rating of the collector². An additional rebate of \$200 is available if the installed system has eligible

¹ SEBANE's installer list is not exhaustive of all installers in the Commonwealth and MassCEC does not endorse, guarantee, warrant, supervise, or control the performance of any installer or the results achieved, and specifically disclaims any such warranty.

² For purposes of calculating the rebate, MassCEC uses the Solar Rating and Certification Corporation's (SRCC) thousands of btu/panel/day rating for "Category C, Mildly Cloudy Day." To find the rating of your collector, go to <http://www.solar-rating.org/ratings/ratings.htm> and click on "Certified Collectors and Ratings".



Massachusetts manufactured components. Rebates are capped at lesser of \$3,500 per building (which includes the additional \$200 Massachusetts manufactured component rebate), or 25% of system costs.

For residents affected by a natural disaster, an additional rebate of \$50 x the # of collectors installed x the SRCC rating of the collectors is available. This Natural Disaster Relief adder will be capped at 25% of total installed costs, and the total rebate available will be capped at 50% of total installed costs. To be eligible to receive the adder, the host customer residence must be located in one of the eleven (11) communities (Westfield, West Springfield, Springfield, Wilbraham, Monson, Brimfield, Charlton, Southbridge, Sturbridge, Hampden, Palmer) affected by the June 1, 2011 tornado in the western part of Massachusetts. The Host Customer must submit official documentation from FEMA, MEMA, or an insurance company (or any other backup documentation that MassCEC may reasonably request) documenting damage from the tornado.

The Natural Disaster Relief Adder will be awarded in addition to the total base rebate and will be paid separately to the "Payee" listed on the Project Completion Form. Note: third-party owned projects will be eligible to apply for the adder, but MassCEC may request additional information from the third-party owner that demonstrates the lease or PPA savings to the customer specifically as a result of receiving the adder.

- 5) **Sign the [Commonwealth Solar Hot Water Program Terms and Conditions](#)** and give it to your installer.
- 6) **Submit an Online Application:** Have your installer submit your online application, including all backup documentation. You will be notified by email when your application has been approved. Do not order, purchase, or install any equipment until you receive the official award email from the MassCEC. Installation prior to MassCEC approval may render your project ineligible for funding.

Installers: Applications must be submitted electronically. Please visit www.masscec.com/solarhotwater to access instructions on how to submit an online application through PowerClerk.

Completed applications will be considered in the order they are received online. An application will be considered complete only if all required fields have been filled out on the application form, and all required supporting documentation has been submitted. Incomplete applications will be rejected and removed from the queue.

- 7) **Install the Solar Hot Water System.** Please ensure that the system abides by all of the System Requirements listed below.
- 8) **Follow Completion Requirements.** Once your system is installed, your installer will need to submit the Project Completion Form through PowerClerk in order to initiate the rebate payment. Please review the [Project Completion Instructions](#) to understand these requirements in advance of installing your system. The rebate payment may be paid directly to the Installer or the System Owner. The Payee must be designated on the project completion form.



- 9) **Post-Installation Inspections.** MassCEC is committed to ensuring the quality of solar hot water installations. MassCEC will conduct an inspection of the first two installations completed by any installer participating in the program, and reserves the right to audit any system.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) **Installation schedule and requirements:** All systems must be installed within 9 months of the date of the award letter that you will receive from MassCEC after your application is approved. No rebates will be awarded to systems installed before the date on the rebate award letter. Rebates will be paid upon receipt of all project completion documents. Systems and system installation must meet all applicable state and local laws and ordinances.
- 2) **System warranties and certifications:** Solar hot water systems must be whole systems (tanks, collectors, controls, and plumbing), the components must be new, OG-100 or OG-300 certified by the Solar Rating and Certification Corporation (“SRCC”)³, and backed by a minimum 10-year manufacturer’s warranty for collectors, 2-year warranty for other system components, and at least a 2-year comprehensive installation warranty.
- 3) **Technical Specifications:**
 - *Collector area and mounting:* A Solar Pathfinder or a comparable device must show that collectors are subject to at least 5 hours per day unobstructed sunlight (75% shade-free). Collector tilt must follow manufacturer specifications, and orientation must be between 90 degrees and 250 degrees magnetic. Collectors must be secured according to manufacturer’s recommendations.
 - *Storage:* All systems must follow manufacturer’s recommendations regarding storage capacity.
 - *Plumbing:* All systems shall include one of the stagnation and freeze protection methods specified in the application form. Installer shall provide assurances for freeze protection to at least -27 degrees Fahrenheit in the case of pressurized systems or 9 degrees Fahrenheit for drainback systems. All systems must have insulation on all exposed and accessible hot water piping.
 - Solar water heating systems for pools are not eligible for rebates.
4. **Metering:** Metering is not required. System owners, however, may volunteer on the application form to be selected for MassCEC’s performance monitoring program. If selected, you will receive an additional rebate up to \$1,000 to cover the costs of the metering equipment. MassCEC or its representative will contact your installer to verify the system layout and details, arrange for reporting, and coordinate the rebate payment process. Please refer to the [Commonwealth Solar Hot Water Performance Monitoring System Requirements](#) for further details.

³ Solar collectors are eligible if they have interim SRCC certification. However, the system must be installed and the collectors must have achieved Final SRCC Certification within twelve (12) months of the date on the award letter, otherwise the rebate will be automatically forfeited.



Rebate Taxability: Rebates may be considered taxable income to the System Owner in this agreement by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service and the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. All parties are strongly encouraged to consult with a tax professional to determine the federal and/or state tax implications of receipt of the Rebate. Please note: A rebate tax liability may exist whether the payment is made directly to one of the parties or on its behalf.

MassCEC will send out a Form 1099 to each System Owner that is awarded a rebate through the Commonwealth Solar Hot Water rebate program. As a result, MassCEC will need to receive a completed W-9 Form from each awarded System Owner, prior to remittance of the rebate payment. A template W-9 Form and corresponding instructions will be included in the award packet for the System Owner to complete and return to MassCEC's finance department.

MassCEC reserves the right to reject applications that are incomplete or do not meet program requirements, or otherwise, in its sole discretion. MassCEC reserves the right to make the final determination on whether systems or documents meet the standards set forth in this program.

The Commonwealth Solar Hot Water program rebate is available while funding lasts. Do not install the system until you have received approval via award letter, or you may not be eligible for funding. Rebate amounts prior to award are subject to change without notice.