

## Renewable Generation at Your Home or Business

Are you interested in generating power from solar, wind or another renewable energy source at your home or business? Learn more below.

### **I want to put renewable generation (solar panels, small wind-turbine, etc.) on my house or business. Does Idaho Power allow this?**

Yes. Idaho Power's Net Metering program allows customers to install small-scale, renewable generation projects on their property and connect to Idaho Power's electrical grid. The purpose of the program is to enable customers to offset their electricity usage. Customers generating more electricity than they use can earn a credit on their Idaho Power bill.

### **Does Idaho Power offer any financial incentives or rebates for installing small-scale renewable energy systems on my property?**

No. However, there are federal and state tax incentives and loan programs that can help with financing on-site renewable energy sources. The Idaho Office of Energy Resources has information on financing options at [energy.idaho.gov/renewableenergy](http://energy.idaho.gov/renewableenergy). For Oregon customers, visit the Oregon Energy Department at [www.oregon.gov/ENERGY/index.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/ENERGY/index.shtml). The *Database of State Incentives for Renewable Energy (DSIRE)*, funded by the U.S. Department of Energy, also lists incentives for renewable resources by state at [www.dsireusa.org](http://www.dsireusa.org).

### **What is the cost of a small-scale renewable system?**

The cost of a system depends on many factors including the type and size. Expect to pay in the thousands to tens of thousands of dollars. To get an estimate, contact a local dealer familiar with the type of system you are interested in.

### **How much does a renewable system pay back, and when?**

The amount of payback or return on your investment and the length of time it will take to pay for the installation costs depend on the technology, system size and system configuration, as well as weather and location. "Breaking even" occurs when the total savings equal the value of the installed renewable energy system. There are a number of online calculators to help you estimate property value changes and payback times. A simple equation to use:

$$\text{Years to Break Even} = (\text{Net Cost} - \text{Property Value Increase}) / (\text{"Pre-Tax" Average Annual Utility Savings})$$

Maximize your payback by taking advantage of Idaho Power's energy efficiency programs to help lower your overall energy use. Information can be found at [www.idahopower.com/energycenter](http://www.idahopower.com/energycenter).

### **How much energy does a system generate?**

Energy generated varies by project depending on such factors as technology, weather, location, and orientation. Your dealer can help estimate potential generation from the different systems.

### **How much space do I need?**

For solar array, each kW of solar photovoltaic generation capacity requires about 100 to 200 square feet of roof or ground area depending on the efficiency of the panels.

For a wind turbine, the space depends on the type and height of the system installed. A general rule of thumb is the turbine generator should be 20 feet above the top of anything within 300 feet of the system. Turbines should be erected away from structures to minimize the risk of falling on buildings during extremely strong winds. The minimum distance between the turbines and the structures is typically equal to the combined height of the tower and blades, known as the “fall distance.”

### **What other restrictions apply?**

Check with your homeowners association and local planning and zoning commission to see if local ordinances or rules prohibit or limit the installation of renewable resources on your property. Also, ask your dealer about other considerations you may encounter.

### **What size system should I get?**

The size of the system depends on many factors including the type of technology, the site and available space, and how much energy your home or business uses. Your monthly electric bill shows your usage over the past 12 months. Work with a dealer to evaluate your needs to determine the proper size and system.

Don't forget to take advantage of Idaho Power's energy efficiency programs to help lower your overall energy use. Information can be found at [www.idahopower.com/energycenter](http://www.idahopower.com/energycenter).

### **How can I find a dealer?**

The Idaho Office of Energy Resources posts a list of contractors that serve Idaho and Eastern Oregon. Visit [energy.idaho.gov/renewableenergy](http://energy.idaho.gov/renewableenergy) for more information.

### **What is my first step?**

First, you must select the system you want that will work on your property. Then, contact a dealer to evaluate technology options, cost, and site considerations. The Idaho Office of Energy Resources has information on dealers, financing options and generation systems at [energy.idaho.gov/renewableenergy](http://energy.idaho.gov/renewableenergy). For Oregon customers, visit the Oregon Energy Department at [www.oregon.gov/ENERGY/index.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/ENERGY/index.shtml).

Once you've selected a system or to learn more about connecting to Idaho Power's lines, visit [burton:801/AboutUs/BusinessToBusiness/GenerationInterconnect/default.cfm](http://burton:801/AboutUs/BusinessToBusiness/GenerationInterconnect/default.cfm).

### **On-site generation is not an option for me. How can I still support renewable energy?**

Idaho Power's Green Power Program allows customers to support renewable energy. Participants voluntarily contribute an extra dollar amount on their monthly bill. The contributions are used to purchase green power for the region's power grid from renewable generation sources in Idaho, Oregon and surrounding states. For more information visit [www.idahopower.com/greenpower](http://www.idahopower.com/greenpower).