

## Considering Renewable Energy?

**Is solar or renewable energy generation really worth it?** A payback period (Return-on-investment) is the amount of time it takes for you to earn back your initial investment. Renewables can help you save enough money on your energy bills over time to offset the upfront costs. How much you save per month depends on the size of your renewable system, your home's energy consumption and utility rates. Currently, CCED electric rates are still some of the lowest in the country. Be cautious of any salesperson promising any return-on-investment. Be sure they are using CCED rates in their calculations. Calculating the payback period will be unique to your circumstances due to the variability of the upfront costs, as well as the difference in energy costs based on your actual rates and rates in other regions. With federal tax incentives, Renewable energy can be a great option for those simply wanting to reduce their carbon footprint or reduce their monthly electric usage.

## Basic steps to installing renewable energy

1. **Interconnection Application** – An application for renewable energy can be found at <https://columbiacity.net/>. This will need to be completed in full and a **\$175 application** fee paid before beginning any renewable installation. This application can be emailed ([info@columbiacity.net](mailto:info@columbiacity.net)) or turned in to the Columbia City Utilities office, 112 S Chauncey St, Columbia City, IN 46725. Renewable installations subject to rules and regulations under *Columbia City Ordinance 2022-9*. Unauthorized installations are subject to fines not less than \$500 and up to \$2,500.
2. **Installation**- Approval to move forward with installation of a renewable energy source by an approved installer may be granted by the utility after application review. After receiving such approval, it is the responsibility of the installation contractor to follow the one-line diagram provided to the utility.
3. **Inspection**- When installation is complete. The utility will have a third-party engineering firm inspect the installation, **at the property owner's expense**. This ensures the safety of both the Utility equipment and staff working on the lines, also serves to protect homeowner's property/equipment. Provided the installation passes the engineer's inspection, the owner is authorized to operate at full capacity. At this point the customer will transition into a Renewable Energy Customer, there is a \$35/mo additional customer charge for renewable customers.

## Think you may put surplus energy back onto the grid?

The Columbia City Electric Department is not able to purchase excess energy from renewable energy sources. All excess generation can be sold to our electric provider, Indiana Municipal Power Agency (IMPA). However, customers who choose to install and own a renewable generation facility should still first contact the CCED. You will need to submit the application and work with your local utility's interconnection process. Customers will also need to complete a power purchase agreement with IMPA that will document how IMPA will pay for the excess generation, as well as supply a one-line diagram and proof of ownership. IMPA customer generation information can be found at <https://www.impa.com/customergeneration>