

General Rebate Program Questions

Q: Can the GEO rebates be used with other types of funding like grants?

A: The GEO rebate will be applied in addition to any existing incentive as long as the total incentive (rebates, REC purchases) does not exceed the statewide cap established by the GEO. The federal tax incentive is not included in the incentive calculation and may be applied for by any investor in solar systems.

The GEO rebate may be combined with most grants but absolutely cannot be combined with grants from the GEO. Solar PV or solar thermal projects must apply either for a GEO rebate or a GEO grant (if eligible) but applicants cannot receive funding from both. The GEO strongly suggests that project developers and owners take each funding source requirement and award amount into consideration to make the best decision for the project.

Any receipt of additional funding for a project must be listed on the solar rebate application.

Q: Are projects that receive a rebate from the Governor's Energy Office still eligible for the Federal Tax Incentive (ITC)?

A: Yes. Contact a tax professional to discuss tax incentives for investments in solar.

Q: Do federal government tax incentives figure into the cap limit?

A: No. Federal tax incentives are not included in the cap calculation.

Q: When will the GEO Rebate Program Partners be announced?

A: A list of participating partners will be announced in early 2010.

Q: Are you working with any propane suppliers to develop a partnership?

A: Not at this time, but propane customers are eligible for the full solar thermal rebate for solar domestic hot water systems.

Q: If equipment has been purchased, but a contractor has not yet begun the install, is the project still eligible for GEO rebate?

A: No. Solar contractors may purchase equipment for inventory, but the customer cannot be charged for any equipment purchases. The rebate program is not retroactive, meaning it does not apply to any projects that are started before the customer receives the Rebate Reservation Confirmation Letter. Some costs may be incurred by the customer during the site assessment and one-line drawing process, but the customer cannot purchase equipment or begin any construction prior to receipt of the Rebate Reservation Confirmation Letter.

Q: Why is the GEO dedicating less money to solar rebates than to energy efficiency rebates?

A: The GEO is dedicating more funding to energy efficiency rebates than to solar rebates in effort to promote the GEO's policy that energy efficiency measures should be implemented before investments in on-site generation. Implementing energy efficiency measures costs around 1-3 cents/kWh so it makes good financial sense to invest in energy efficiency first. The investment in solar should come after so that the on-site generation is sized to meet the remaining load. As Colorado residents and businesses become more energy efficient, the focus can and will move to on-site generation.

Q: If an applicant for a solar domestic hot water system is not served by a natural gas or non-electric utility, what utility should be listed for the purpose of the utility documentation?

A: We will offer a "not applicable" section in the rebate application under the utility forms, but it is the responsibility of the contractor to ensure that the issue is clearly explained in the application.

Q: Commercial solar thermal systems often involve heating, DHW and pool heating supplied by one boiler system. Would the system need to be separate from the pool system in order to be eligible for a rebate?

A: Yes.

Q: Are public buildings, including k-12, community college and higher education buildings eligible for the commercial rebate?

A: Public buildings are ineligible for a GEO solar rebate. Public buildings may be eligible for the renewable energy grants for public buildings. Please see our website for more information:

<http://www.colorado.gov/energy/index.php?/resources/category/funding-opportunities/>

Q: Can a contractor reassign the rebate to a third-party?

A: No. Rebate checks must be issued to the customer, so contractors do not have the right to reassign the rebates to anyone.

Q: If the local utility (i.e., IREA) does not offer rebates, can a customer in that territory still get the state rebate of \$1.50 per watt?

A: Yes.

Q: Are rebates available for non-profits?

A: If a non-profit pays commercial rates for the electricity, it is eligible for the commercial rebates. Non-profits that are serving Colorado's low-income or other eligible population may be able to secure a grant through the GEO Grant Program. It is anticipated that these grants will result in a higher award than a rebate. Please view <http://www.colorado.gov/energy/index.php?/resources/category/funding-opportunities/> for information on the grant launch.

Q: If I am a sole proprietor, do I need to comply with the Davis Bacon Act for temporary help wages?

A: Yes.

Q: If a contractor participates in the GEO program, that company must be Davis-Bacon compliant. Will participating in the GEO program require the company to change the way it does business?

A: Compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act is required only for commercial applications, and compliance is required only during the weeks that a contractor works on the system receiving federal funds.

Q: Must all solar contractors comply with the BUY AMERICAN Act?

A: Contractors installing systems on public buildings must comply with the BUY AMERICAN Act. **Residential and commercial installations are not subject to the BUY AMERICAN requirements.** The contractor is responsible for BUY AMERICAN compliance or for seeking exemption, where applicable. For more information about the BUY AMERICAN Act, please look for the guidance posted on the GEO website or visit the website <http://gpoaccess.gov/CFR/>

Q: What components in solar PV and solar thermal systems need to be in compliance with the BUY AMERICAN Act?

A: All iron, steel, or manufactured goods must comply with the BUY AMERICAN Act. In the coming weeks the GEO will provide outreach to the industry to determine if any industry barriers exist.

Q: Will there be minimum production requirement for the rebate?

A: Yes. Solar PV systems must meet 90% of the minimum optimum orientation output and solar thermal must meet 80% of the minimum optimum orientation output. Documentation of this production will include PV Watts or SRCC reports.

Q: If partner funds are limited and the partner funds run out will the customers be able to apply for the GEO portion of the rebate?

A: Yes. If partner funds run out, customers can apply for the GEO portion of the rebate provided that the rebates are still available.

Q: Colorado Springs Utilities program is to be \$3/AC watt for 2010 - will GEO make up the difference to \$3/DC Watt?

A: No.

Q: Xcel energy recently lowered the REC purchase amount, bringing the total combined rebate plus REC purchase amount below the GEO's \$3.00/watt cap. Will the GEO rebate be offered for the difference between Xcel's rebate and the \$3.00/watt cap?

A: No. Per rules established in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the rebates offered under the Governor's Energy Office Rebate Program cannot supplant existing energy efficiency and renewable energy rebate programs. This means that existing rebate programs funded by utilities, local governments, or non-profits cannot be deliberately reduced and replaced with ARRA funds.

In effort to avoid supplanting, the GEO's rebate levels for areas with existing rebates will be based on the rebate amounts offered locally as of September 30, 2009.

In September, 2009, Xcel Energy's total incentive for PV met the GEO cap, therefore the GEO rebate will not be offered in Xcel territory.

Q: Why must PV and wind systems installed under the GEO program be grid-tied?

A: The goal of renewable energy incentives is to bring the cost of renewable technologies closer to the cost of grid power. In the case of off-grid systems, PV or wind energy is often equal to or less than the cost of laying a power line. For this reason, the GEO does not currently offer rebates to off-grid systems.

Solar Contractor Requirements

Q: What are the contractor requirements to participate or install in the GEO Rebate Program?

A: Solar contractors that participate in the GEO Rebate Program must:

- Be licensed to do business in the state of Colorado
- Comply with Davis-Bacon Act requirements for commercial or non-profit building installations (residential exempt)

Additional requirements apply for public building systems, but public buildings are ineligible for rebates and will have incentive opportunities under a grant program.

Q: By "business license" do you mean "sales tax license?"

A: No. The GEO requires that participating contractors have a business license.

Q: How does a new business get on the GEO contractor list?

A: Stay tuned to the GEO newsletter for more information about how to list your business with the GEO list of solar providers. It will be the responsibility of the contractor to ensure that his or her business is listed once the GEO process is defined.

Q: Will any weight be given to COSEIA certification for contractors on the GEO rebate program?

A: The GEO will provide information about the different solar certifications to consumers as part of the public outreach campaign but no weight will be given to CoSEIA certified contractors when the rebate is processed.

Q: If a solar contractor is already on the list from the 2009 GEO Solar Rebate Program, will that contractor have to be signed up again to be listed or will the name of the company be pre-populated to that list?

A: Please stay tuned to the GEO newsletter for more information about how to list your business with the GEO list of solar providers.

Q. How can the industry support the public outreach efforts?

A: The GEO will work with industry leaders and associations to ensure that the public outreach information reflects the messages that both the GEO and the industries wish to express. The GEO asks that industry members become aware of the GEO messages and include them in their outreach to Colorado residents and businesses. The GEO will have useful tools for both the public and industry members on its website in the coming weeks.

Q. Can a contractor install equipment the customer bought from somewhere/ someone else than from the contractor?

No. All equipment must be purchased by the contractor and included in the invoices. In addition, The GEO requires that the contractor have a business license to operate in Colorado, all required documentation is accurate and complete, and the project meets the GEO's eligibility requirements. Contractors must document all serial numbers, ensure that no used equipment has been installed and provide all necessary warranties.

System Requirements

Solar Thermal Applications

Q: Are commercial space heating applications eligible for a solar thermal rebate?

A: Yes. Most solar thermal applications are eligible for a GEO rebate. Pools, spas, and snow-melt applications are ineligible.

Q: Can thermal rebates be used for radiant space heating applications?

A: Residential solar thermal rebates are for the domestic hot water portion of the system only. Thermal radiant space heating applications for residential systems are ineligible for rebates, but a homeowner may apply for a rebate on the solar domestic hot water portion of the system only. Radiant space heating can be included in commercial project applications.

Q: Will there be funds available for orphan hot water systems?

A: No, not at this time.

Q: Would a recreation center that includes a pool as well as laundry and showering facilities be excluded from the program if a thermal system were set up to supply hot water for the showers?

A: If the thermal system supplies hot water to the showers and laundry it would be eligible for the program. If the same collectors also supply hot water to the pool, it would be ineligible because any pool or spa application is ineligible under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Such a project will be heavily scrutinized while under application review and will likely be considered for an on-site verification.

Q: If a solar domestic hot water system is combined with a radiant heating solar thermal system will there be any rules about the fraction allocated to the DHW portion?

A: No. The GEO expects the contractors to provide realistic and honest assessments of the fraction of the system that is dedicated to solar domestic hot water. In addition, the GEO requires the contractor and customer to sign the application and state that they have represented the system accurately. The GEO reserves the right to inspect any system installed with rebate dollars and will suspend any contractor that misrepresents a system for financial gain. Projects that include both solar domestic hot water and radiant heating solar thermal systems will be highly scrutinized while under application review and will likely be considered for an on-site verification.

PV Applications

Q: Is the rebate adjusted for systems that use trackers?

A: No. The PV rebate is based on the nameplate capacity (DC Watts) of the panels used on the system. The rebate is not adjusted for additional efficiency measures.

Q: Is PV system performance of a certain level required? Will there be PV system installation requirements such as no shade during 9-3p?

A: Yes to both. The PV system must meet a 90% optimum orientation output to qualify for a rebate. The customer must also sign an agreement to manage the system shade from 9am – 3pm.

Q: Can a system be over-built to meet the 90% efficiency rule?

A: No.

Energy Audits

Q: Is an energy audit required before a customer can receive a renewable energy rebate?

A: Yes. Any customer wishing to receive a renewable energy rebate must have an energy audit done on the building prior to submitting Part 1 of the application. Residential customers must have a minimum of a walkthrough audit, and small commercial applicants must submit a minimum of an online energy audit report.

Q: How recent does the energy audit have to be to qualify a home or business owner for a solar rebate application?

A: The energy audit can be up to one year old. That is the energy audit must have been performed in the 12 months prior to the submission of Part 1 of the rebate application.

Q: Are there rebates for energy audits?

A: Yes. More information about these rebates will be made available before program launch.

Q: Can customers begin obtaining energy audits before the program launch?

A: Customers can begin the energy audit at any time. If the customer wants to also apply for the GEO rebate for energy audits, however, they will have to wait to obtain the audit until after the program launch.

Q: Should the cost of the energy audit be included in the total cost of the solar system?

A: No. The solar rebates are calculated based on the size of the solar thermal or PV system. Some utilities offer free or subsidized energy audits and the GEO offers a rebate for a minimum energy audit of a blower door test. Please note that the GEO rebate for energy audits is for energy audits performed after the program launch date.

Q: Is there a standard template that must be completed for the mandatory residential walk through energy audit?

A: The GEO will provide more details about the energy audit requirements in the following weeks. Please stay tuned to the GEO website and sign up for the newsletter to receive program updates.

Q: Can you provide detail on what will be required in the energy audit? How is "walk through" defined?

A: The GEO will provide more details about the energy audit requirements in the following weeks. Please stay tuned to the GEO website and sign up for the newsletter to receive program updates.

Q: How recent does the energy audit need to be? Is within last 12 months OK?

A: An energy audit should have been performed sometime between January 1, 2009 and the date of the application. Audits older than January 1, 2009 will not be accepted.

Rebate Application Process

Q: Are there going to be deposits required for these applications similar to Xcel?

A: No.

Q: Is there a pre-approval process or rebate reservation for systems that are not in partner territories?

A: All renewable energy rebates require a pre-approval process, regardless of whether or not the applicant address is in a partner territory.

For all renewable energy rebates, the contractor must submit Part 1 of the application prior to any installation or construction which includes the energy audit report, the one-line drawing, and the system quote, among other items. Once the application is complete, provided that the system qualifies for a rebate, the GEO will reserve a rebate for the customer. The customer and the contractor will receive a

rebate reservation confirmation letter. The contractor will have 6 months to install the system and complete Part 2 of the application. If the final application paperwork is not submitted within 6 months, the customer loses the rebate reservation.

Q: How long will it take for a customer to receive the Rebate Reservation Confirmation Letter after submitting Part 1 of the application?

A: Provided that Part 1 of the application is complete with no errors *and the system qualifies for the rebate*, the customer can expect to receive the rebate confirmation letter within 1-3 weeks of the complete submission.

Q: What is the estimated time lag between completion of installation and rebate issuance?

A: Once the GEO has received a complete and final application in Part 2, customers can expect to receive the check in 4-6 weeks.

Q: Will the GEO have a website similar to Xcel's that installers can access to see the progress of rebate applications for our customers?

A: The GEO will provide a website and call center for customers and contractors that would like to monitor the progress of the rebate application.

Q: Can the contractor accept the rebate on behalf of the customer?

A: No. All checks issued by the GEO must be made out to the customer and cannot be issued in the name of the contractor's business.

Q: Can any modifications or adjustments to a system design be made after the Rebate Reservation Confirmation Letter is sent and the rebate is reserved?

A: Changes to equipment may be necessary and are permitted. Changes in the system size or capacity may result in a reduction of the rebate (changing from a 3kW to a 2.7kW system, for example). Under no circumstance will a modification result in an increased rebate, even in cases when a system size is increased.

Q: Can a contract be signed prior to launch, equipment purchased later?

A: The contractor cannot guarantee the rebate in a contract or other business documentation. Whether or not the contractor and customer decide to sign a contract is between those two parties and, as such, is not a consideration in the rebate application process.

Q: What is required to verify residency?

A: In addition to a copy of a Colorado driver's license, all residential applicants will be required to submit an affidavit of residency (which will be provided on the GEO website) per HB 06S – 1023 which requires state agencies to verify that recipients of "public benefit" are lawfully present in the U.S.

Q: If a customer receives the Rebate Reservation Confirmation Letter, is the rebate guaranteed? Is there any way the customer would not receive the rebate?

A: The Rebate Reservation Confirmation Letter confirms that the GEO has reserved the rebate for a customer. The only way a reservation would be cancelled is failure to complete the system and submit the proper paperwork within six months, or to make changes in the system that would render the system ineligible. A reduced rebate would be offered to any system with a system size reduced from the size represented in the original application.

Q: Why does the one-line drawing need to be included in Part 1 of the rebate application? It creates a real cost for the customer prior to approval.

A: The GEO is not charging a deposit for rebate applications. Inclusion of the one-line drawing is an attempt to ensure that the rebate applications are submitted on behalf of serious applicants only. The GEO hopes to provide up-to-date information about the number of rebates available so contractors should have an idea of how many rebates are available in order to avoid surprised customers when the rebates run out. The GEO will be reviewing one-line drawings for each applicant. If the project is chosen for verification, the one-line drawing must be reflected in the system design. Generic or “mass produced” one-line drawings will be flagged and may delay the rebate reservation process.

Q: What kind of quantifiable savings reporting will GEO require post-installation or even further in the future?

A: The GEO rebate is considered an up-front, one-time payment for the system based on the nameplate capacity. The GEO reserves the right to inspect and verify a system at any point during the duration of the rebate program. While no quantifiable savings reporting is required, if a system is selected to be verified, the system should be operating and demonstrating the savings represented in the rebate application.

RECs

Q: What does the GEO do with the RECs for renewable energy systems that receive the GEO rebate?

A: Any time the GEO rebate is offered in addition to any local utility or government rebate, the GEO will not claim any Renewable Energy Credits (RECs). If the local utility or government provides a REC Purchase Agreement, the GEO will require that a copy of the agreement be submitted with the application. If the GEO is the only organization providing a rebate to a customer, the GEO will purchase the rebates and provide its own REC Purchase Agreement.

Access to Information

Q: Will there be an opportunity for contractors or suppliers to be involved in the development of your public outreach materials?

A: Not the development, no.

Q: Will the GEO funded mortgage refinancing EE/RE program/incentive be part of your consumer education piece?

A: When the program is up and running, yes.

Q: Will marketing collateral developed by the GEO be available to contractors for use with clients and promoting the program?

A: Yes. Our Web site will have a section for downloading materials and we are developing a trade alliance program.

Q: Will utilities be provided template information about GEO rebate program, procedures and requirements for use in utilities' consumer booklets and handouts, as well as a link to the GEO rebate website for insertion on utilities' website?

A: Yes. Our Web site will have a section for downloading materials and we are developing a partner alliance program.

Q: Are you doing marketing and outreach in Spanish?

A: We are evaluating that option at this time.
