



MARCH TIP PAYBACK: \$700-\$1,000/YR
Avoided Emissions of CO₂: Up to 3,300 lbs./YR

\$USTAINABILITY \$AVINGS TIP

SOLAR OPPORTUNITIES SHINE

Take advantage of our bountiful sunshine and tax credits to save green and be green.

March brings us longer days and great weather to get outdoors and enjoy the sunshine. But did you know that Mesa gets over 325 sun-drenched days a year? So why, when we look out the airplane window, or view our community with Google Earth, don't we see just as many (or more) solar panels as swimming pools? Here's a cost comparison of installing a pool vs. solar panels:

Expense/Payback	Swimming Pool	Solar Panels
Installation	\$35,000 (in-ground pool)	\$35,000 (5 kW system)
Maintenance	\$750/year	\$50/year (wash panels/inspect)
Costs to Utilities (water & energy)	\$750/year	\$1
Savings	\$0 (does offer pleasure & exercise)	\$700 to \$1,000/year
Payback	A deficit of \$35,000 + \$22,500-\$30,000 for maintenance costs over 15-20 years	Complete payoff of system 15-20 years with rebates

What's the point of this comparison? Going solar can be an expensive investment. But the table above points out something remarkable. A solar purchase is an investment with a payback! It is a sound financial venture and has the additional benefit of reducing your carbon footprint and creating a healthier environment.

CHECKLIST FOR SAVINGS

- Invest in conservation** before investing in solar and make your home as energy efficient as possible. Visit our Web site to find simple tips to reduce your energy consumption as well as links to SRP, State, and Federal rebates or tax credits: www.mesaaz.gov/sustainability
- Learn more** by attending our Living Green Workshop on March 12, *Homeowner Basics for Going Solar*. Visit our Web site above or call (480) 644-4400.
- Find books** on solar and energy efficiency at the City of Mesa libraries, or visit www.mesalibrary.org/research/living-green.aspx.
- Check out Mesa's cool public swimming pools** instead of installing a pool and purchase solar panels instead. Find pool locations at www.mesaaz.gov/parksrec/aquatics/default.aspx.

Check out these helpful sites for solar information:

AZ Solar Energy INDUSTRIES Association (AriSEIA)

www.arizonasolarindustry.org

Arizona Solar Center www.azsolarcenter.org

DSIRE (Database of State Incentives for Renewables & Efficiency): lists state, local, utility and federal incentives and policies that promote renewable energy and energy efficiency.

www.dsireusa.org

Salt River Project (SRP)

www.srpnet.com/environment/earthwise/solar

These sites are helpful when selecting any contractor:

Better Business Bureau

<http://central-northern-western-arizona.bbb.org>

AZ Registrar of Contractors

www.azroc.gov

Learn to live Green

More on back

