



SOLAR ENERGY SOLUTIONS

The BRIGHT Choice

Public Utility Commission,
RE: Docket #UM 1538, Comments of Ken Hayes, October 10, 2013

Dear Commissioners,

On behalf of Ken Hayes and Solar Energy Solutions, Inc. I would like to thank you for considering a time extension for the Hayes' project.

I would like to start off by telling the Commission that Ken is about as sincere of a solar guy as we have ever seen. In 2011 we installed a 3.2kW on his house. When the VIR/Net metering opportunity came along he was glad for the chance to install more. After having won the October 2012 VIR/ Net Metering, he signed a contract with us and put a \$1,000.00 non-refundable deposit down while we went about getting permits and further processing of PGE paperwork. Unfortunately, his and our desire to install a VIR/Net metered system challenges the norm. Specifically, systems incentivized differently are not currently allowed on a single meter. So this sent us on quite a long and complicated odyssey to figure out how we could install a PGE "Solar Payment Program" system on his house. This took months to figure out. We conducted multiple meetings with PGE on and off the property to make sure all obstacles and costs were addressed. It also required multiple meeting with Washington County for them to grant us permission for the rather out of the ordinary scenario of installing a second service on his house. While all of this was unfolding PGE told us, and you will have to bear with me because my memory is a bit vague here, that the grid capacity for solar in his area was full and that they would have to conduct further engineering at a cost of \$500.00 +/- to determine if the grid could handle the additional capacity of his desired 6.876 kW system. Ken paid this addition fee to PGE and continued to get excited about installing his system. Meanwhile, it was finally determined the one and only way Ken could install his new system would be for us to bring a second service to his house. After having all the aforementioned interested parties sign off on this course of action we were ready to update our quote for all the additional costs anticipated in bringing the second service to the house. The additional costs of installing a second service to his house put the whole process on a bit of a pause as Ken came to terms with the facts and unanticipated additional costs and of his desire to go solar... as you can probably imagine.

I can honestly say, any lesser person might have bailed. But not Ken. He gave us a call in mid to late September telling us he was ready to pull the trigger and has sent us an additional \$3,000.00 to round out his deposit. Unfortunately, proceeding with his project is not going to be a quick thing and we could not promise him a completion by the October 15th deadline. Therefore, on his behalf Solar Energy Solutions would like to ask for a waiver of the installation deadline of October, 15. Believe it or not, **we may need 6 months.**

We understand 3 months is more the norm. However, there are enough mitigating conditions and circumstances which are completely beyond our control that, in all likelihood, would make a 3 month timeline unattainable.

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To proceed with this project we need to get permits. The time needed for the permitting process on a normal solar electric installation is between 4 and 8 weeks. Currently, half of our installations are permitted in 4 weeks and half in 8 or more weeks. Given the unorthodox nature of this installation and the permitting of a second service to a house that already has a service, we expect a long and painful road even though we have been given verbal approval by the local building jurisdiction.

Once we get the permits we can order the parts. From the time an order is placed to the time it arrives at our warehouse take anything from 3 to 6 weeks. This part of the process could also be longer due to the unpredictable availability of SunPower Panels.

Once the equipment arrives at our warehouse, the next factor beyond our control is the weather and roof condition. Ken's roof is steep. Additionally, mounting hardware and solar electric panels can only safely be installed on dry days. By the time we get the system to our warehouse it will be the wettest and most difficult time of the year to schedule an installation.

Finally, our company is a small, high quality company. This means all of our employees have been with us for years and know what they are doing. Our work force is not transient. Given this, it is easy for us to get overwhelmed certain times of the year. The end of this year looks to be one of those years where we will be overwhelmed. We have 7 systems on the books ready to install. However due to many if not all of the aforementioned issues of permitting and panel availability we are in a holding pattern waiting, waiting, waiting. Once the waiting ends and we are able to get boots on the ground we are not a big enough company to install 7 system in 1 week or even 8. Installations take time and care and we are not comfortable in compromising on quality.

We thank you in advance for your time and considerate consideration and understanding on this matter. We will be present on Tuesday the 15th to address any questions of concerns you may have on the Hayes project.

Sincerely,

Andrew Koyaanisqatsi

Andrew Koyaanisqatsi
President
Solar Energy Solutions, Inc.
Since 1987,
Moving Portland and Beyond
to an Environmentally Sustainable Future.
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