

Over \$1 Million in Value Earned by Solar Club Members in 2020



Solar photovoltaic (PV) technology has come a long way since the first solar panels were installed here in Alberta. What was once a niche technology is now an efficient and easily deployable means of generating electricity.

The first grid-connected PV system in Alberta was installed in 1995. By 2010, the number had grown to 122. Fast forward another decade, and now there are over 6,000 PV Solar Micro-Generators operating across the province.

Over the next few years, you will see a steady improvement in technology, and the cost to install a solar PV system will continue to drop. Adding solar modules to your home is affordable, and the number of Micro-Generators in our province could easily double.

Those involved in the solar industry are at the forefront of renewable energy. Solar is a smart choice as it provides consumers with a hedge against high electricity prices and is a clean, low-emissions solution.

Is solar a viable source of electricity in Alberta? We think so! And, we are investing in it.

[Ridge Utilities](#) as a retailer of electricity in Alberta's deregulated market, together with over 20 other [Energy Marketers](#) across Alberta, created the "Solar Club." The club was created with a focus on helping customers capitalize on the investment they made by installing a Micro-Generation system on their homes, farms, commercial buildings, and irrigation fields.

The Future is Now

Sustainability is no longer on the fringes of a business strategy; it is intrinsic to any successful business' future.

A Solar Club Member's investment in renewable energy should be celebrated. The surplus electricity produced from their solar system and exported onto the grid helps to green the local community.

The Solar Club is built upon four pillars, upon which we will gauge our success:

- Help increase Members' return on investment in their solar system through attractive rates and a cash back program.
- By aggregating Member's exports, achieve net-zero status.
- Collectively make a positive environmental statement by exporting 100 million kWh onto Alberta's electricity grid by 2030.
- Promote Renewable Energy Certificates (REC offsets) as an environmental benefit in addition to solar energy that is exported to the grid by Members.

If you have installed a PV solar system and are not a Club Member, consider joining. [Ridge Utilities](#) to learn more.

Over \$1 Million Earned by Members in 2020

The Solar Club has proven to be a financial success story in Alberta.

2020 cash back payments to Members went out this week.

In addition to the \$55,000 in cash back and green offset benefits, which were earned during 2020, it's amazing to realize that Solar Club Members, dispatched and were paid just shy of a million dollars (\$979,300 to be exact) for green energy exported to their local grid.

Across all customers, when you combine the value of the cash back, free RECs, and electricity exported to the grid, the Solar Club has provided over \$1 Million in value to Members in 2020!

The Net-Zero Quest

Micro-Generators are grid-tied to draw from the power grid when the sun isn't shining and export surplus energy back onto the grid during peak production hours—one of the benefits that we all share.

The Solar Club's collective goal is to achieve the status of "Net-Zero." This, in turn, is supportive of both our Provincial and Canadian climate and environmental initiatives to lower our carbon footprint. To be clear, we are not suggesting that solar will replace Alberta's oil-based economy, but rather it is a complementary piece of the overall jigsaw puzzle to be incorporated and not dismissed. Everyone benefits.

Here are the hard numbers: during 2019 and 2020, Solar Club Members imported 7.9 million kWh from the grid, which was offset by 7.9 million kWh of surplus solar electricity exported back onto the grid produced from their solar PV systems. The collective group of members in the Solar Club achieved the objective of being "Net-Zero." From where we're standing, congratulations are in order! In just the two

short years that the club has been operating, we are well on the way to the 100 million kWh Net-Zero by 2030 goal. Join us!

No Solar System? No Problem!

Many Albertans want to do their part to green Alberta's grid but aren't able to add solar to their residence for a number of reasons.

Consumers everywhere, regardless of whether they are a solar producer or not, are encouraged to help green the grid – it is affordable. Consumers have the option of purchasing RECs through Ridge Utilities to participate in the collective quest to help green our environment and reduce our province's carbon footprint.

How much does a REC cost? You may be surprised at how affordable it is. To green 25% of the average amount of electricity used by a residential homeowner, it would cost only 10 cents per day. Consumers are encouraged to green what they can afford, whether it's just 5% or 100% of their consumption, as every little bit helps. Sign up with Ridge Utilities, and not only will you save on the energy you purchase, but by adding RECs to your energy plan, you will also be helping to green the grid. Learn more [Ridge Utilities](#).

Join the Club

Together, we can make a difference. If you have installed a solar system on your home, business, or farm, this is your invitation to join the Solar Club. Together, we can reduce our carbon footprint.

As with all clubs, there is a cost to participate; as a member, we ask that you share in the spirit of generosity by making a voluntary donation to your local Food Bank or charity of your choosing. That's it! Giving back to the community in which we all live is at the heart of our business. Let's face it, you have to buy electricity anyway, so why not feel good about your purchase by supporting a local provider that is invested in your community?

WIIFM (What's In It For Me?)

You might be asking yourself: why should I invest in solar? "What's in it for me?" Consider this: a solar system provides a hedge against high electricity prices, helps you offset some of the grid connection wires and distribution costs, and is clean, low-emissions electricity.

Don't dismiss solar as a viable solution to your home energy plan. Take the time to discover the benefits of this alternative energy source. It will not replace the grid – and no, it does not work at night, but it could help you reduce your home energy bill. Here is a [valuable link](#) to help you find a solar installer.

Again, "Congratulations" to the collective Club Members in achieving Net-Zero in 2020. Together, we are doing what we can!