

Helping Regional Organizations Become Solar Energy Leaders

WHAT is SolSmart?

SolSmart is a national designation and technical assistance program that helps local governments and regional organizations encourage solar market growth. As of 2023, 500 cities, towns, counties, and regional organizations have achieved SolSmart designation, sending a signal that they are “open for solar business.”

All local governments and regional organizations in the United States are eligible to participate in SolSmart, regardless of their level of solar expertise. The reward is a prestigious designation of SolSmart Platinum, Gold, Silver, or Bronze.



HOW can regional organizations support solar?

Creating a strong solar market, supporting local jobs, and making clean energy more affordable for homeowners and businesses requires an approach that extends beyond any one city or town. Regional organizations can develop a vision for a vibrant solar market, implement strategies that bring communities together, and leverage the power of regional collaboration. They can provide expertise and capacity to support their member communities, convene regional trainings, coordinate joint solar procurements, and more!

WHY join SolSmart?

When you Join SolSmart, you will be connected to free technical assistance to help you adopt and implement nationally recognized best practices. As a regional organization, SolSmart can help you:

- Support energy resilience and local power generation.
- Achieve your organization’s energy and sustainability goals.
- Increase jobs in the clean energy sector and spur business development.
- Support best practices in permitting and inspection processes among member communities.
- Reduce and stabilize energy costs for homeowners and businesses.
- Offer regional education and engagement activities.
- Create equitable and inclusive programs that enable all residents in the region to access the benefits of clean energy!

Join SolSmart today!

Visit [SolSmart.org](https://solsmart.org) or follow the QR code to our website to get started. Already designated? Consider taking action to “level up” and reach a higher designation level.



Community Spotlights

SolSmart designees include major metropolitan areas, suburbs, counties, rural communities, and regional organizations. Here are a few of their stories:

The Centre Region Council of Governments, Pennsylvania worked with 15 local governments and organizations to develop a solar power purchase agreement.

In greater Cincinnati, Ohio, the **OKI Regional Council of Governments** provided guidance on building and zoning permitting, solar-ready design, innovative funding options, and utility engagement.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments worked to educate staff from over 20 cities and counties about solar through webinars, trainings, and meetings so that they would be better equipped to review proposed projects and implement locally-driven strategies.



Centre Region Council of Governments, PA (Silver)

Designation Levels



Bronze designees have created a regional website to provide a common vision and set of tools and have coordinated regional trainings.



Silver designees have further supported the transfer of best practices in the region and trained permitting and inspection staff to support local implementation.



Gold designees have deepened their work with member communities, tracking and reporting metrics, expanding community engagement, and supporting implementation.



Platinum designees have established a model zoning ordinance and model permitting and inspection process that can be adopted by their member communities, and are engaging with these members to participate in SolSmart and adopt best practices.

There is no one path to achieving SolSmart designation. Each regional organization works with technical advisors to choose from a menu of options that fits the region's needs and goals. Full information on the designation criteria is available on the SolSmart website.

About SolSmart

SolSmart is led by the International City/County Management Association and the Interstate Renewable Energy Council. It is funded by the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Energy Technologies Office.

SolSmart is a Justice40 Program

SolSmart advances the goals of the federal Justice40 Initiative to provide equitable opportunities for communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution.



Get Started at [SolSmart.org](https://solsmart.org)

