Thinking about Plug-In Solar?

What is Plug-In Solar?

Plug-in photovoltaic (PIPV), or "balcony" solar is a small array of solar panels that can be plugged into an outlet, providing power to a home. These systems can help offset the electric usage of appliances and HVAC systems. Allowed plug-in systems are 1,920 watts, making them too small to require interconnection. This means that even if the system sends power back to the grid, the customer will not receive credit for that excess power.

Following the passage of HB. 26.1007, plug-in solar is allowable in Colorado and Longmont starting January 1, 2027. Only one system is allowed per address plugged into a single outlet. The system may not be larger than 1,920 watts (1.9 kW).

What will be required in Longmont?

- Must be registered with Longmont Power & Communications
- Entire system must be listed by a Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory (NRTL), like Underwriters Laboratories, or UL, for safety compliance
    - UL 3700 is the standard for this type of installation (UL 1741 is for hard-wired and interconnected solar systems.)
- Must conform with the National Electric Code (NEC)
- Must automatically disconnect from the grid during a power outage to protect line workers
- Installation must comply with fire code requirements and applicable local building codes that pertain to health and safety
- Panels must be securely fastened

What will not be required in Longmont?

For systems 1921W or less:

- No permit required (if no alterations to existing electric equipment are needed)
- No fees required (if no alterations to existing electric equipment are needed)
- No contractor installation required (if no alterations to existing electric equipment or mounting is needed)

Before You Buy:

- Consult with a licensed electrician with questions about your home's electric service, circuit ratings, or general compatibility with plug-in solar systems.
- Neither LPC nor the City of Longmont are liable for any damage or injury caused by a portable solar device/system.
- LPC will not inspect the system or provide bill credits for energy returned to the grid.

- Check with your home insurance provider to understand any implications to your coverage from installing plug-in solar.

For specific questions regarding plug-in solar, please email Longmont Power & Communications at lpc.energystrategies@longmontcolorado.gov.

System Sizes and Estimated Generation/Savings

Systems 391 watts or less

a. Plug into standard outlets
b. May take up to 20 square feet for solar panels

Systems 392 - 1,920 watts

c. May require circuit or receptacle modifications (see UL 3700 for receptacle safety options)
d. May take up to 115 square feet for solar panels

Systems 1,921 watts or greater

a. Must be installed by a contractor and require an interconnection agreement.
b. May participate in net metering for excess power production.