

# SOLAR FAQs

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



### Can you explain how the local community, specifically those not hosting the project on their land, will benefit financially?

The Moraine Solar Project is expected to contribute to the community in several ways: through new revenues that will reduce the property taxes paid by residents; a host community electricity benefit program, and establishment/ funding of a committee to fund community groups, initiatives, and scholarships. These contributions include:

- Annual rebates of approximately \$100 on electricity bills for all households in the Town of Burns for the first ten years of operation;
- \$10,000 annually for community groups and initiatives during construction and the first 10 years of operation. A local committee will determine who receives these funds;
- \$10 million over 35 years in new revenues for the Town of Burns, Allegany County and Canaseraga Central School District in the form of payment in lieu of taxes and host community agreements (about 10 times more per acre than the current tax contributions on farmed land); and
- \$20,000 in scholarships (up to \$2,000 annually over 10 years) to students entering the trades or a renewable energy post-secondary program.

### How are you connecting to the grid? Where is the power generated by the grid going?

We need to build a substation that collects all of the electricity generated from the solar panels and increase the voltage for injection onto the 115kv transmission lines. That substation would be located on leased property. It will interconnect to the New York State Power Grid via a new point of interconnection in the Town of Burns, connecting to the Moraine Road substation.

Most of the energy generated will be consumed locally, most of the remaining energy will be consumed upstate, and a small percentage will be delivered to New York City. Much like the dairy, corn, grains, and vegetables produced locally feeds both rural and urban centers, so does the electricity we will generate.

### What happens to a solar panel at the end of its life? Can panels be recycled?

Solar panels do not result in emissions to ground, air, or water, and the land upon which they are sited may be safely used for grazing both during operations and after decommissioning. Upon decommissioning, the solar panels will be disposed of in accordance with all governmental, environmental, and legal requirements.

Most solar panels are classified as non-toxic waste and are accepted at ordinary landfills. EDF Renewables uses crystalline silicon solar panels which do not contain heavy metals. The crystalline silicon panels can be reused and recycled. This includes metal, glass, and wiring components, as well as the silicon cells which can be melted down to reclaim the silicon and various metals by specialty recycling companies.

EDF Renewables continues to explore recycling options and is a member of the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA), which established a national program to connect businesses to US-based recyclers of solar panels. Members of this program are committed to responsible end-of-life management and are proactively developing collection and recycling processes for the solar industry. Many SEIA member module manufacturers already operate takeback and recycling programs for their products. EDF Renewables met with one of the recyclers who is part of SEIA's recycling partners in April 2021, who confirmed that they can process solar modules from New York State. The glass recycled from solar panels is used for many products, such as fiberglass, glass containers, fillers in paint, bead manufacturing, abrasives, and specialty glass. The metals are separated and sent to their recycling partners. Here is some information from one of the recyclers working with the SEIA recycling program: <https://www.cascadeecominerals.com/solar>. EDF Renewables has also met with WeRecycleSolar ([www.werecyclesolar.com](http://www.werecyclesolar.com)), another company committed to recycling solar panels in New York State.

### Is the land underneath the panels suitable for farming again at the end of the project's life?

Solar projects can be viewed as a form of long-term farmland conservation, as the land underneath the panels is suitable for farming both during solar production and at the end of the project's life. Moraine Solar must follow

strict guidelines by the Department of Agriculture and Markets during construction and decommissioning to preserve topsoil and repair soil compaction. During construction, an agricultural monitor must be hired to make sure these provisions are followed. During operation, the soil can benefit from sheep grazing or other uses to improve soil quality, and as a part of decommissioning, the land is restored and returned to farming.

### **Are panels safe for neighboring bodies of water?**

Panels do not contain or leach hazardous materials and no chemicals or sprays are used to clean or coat panels. In addition, pesticide and herbicide use is limited to the extent needed to control invasive species or meet the requirements to manage vegetation. Through the state permitting process, projects are mandated to manage stormwater to prevent off-site runoff. The National Renewable Energy Lab also currently has a program dedicated to research-based, PV-specific tools and best practices for stormwater management and water quality at ground-mounted PV sites. Please see [https://bit.ly/pv\\_stormwater\\_management](https://bit.ly/pv_stormwater_management).

### **Can neighboring property owners to the solar center hunt on their land?**

Yes, neighbors to our solar project can continue to hunt on their land. We know that many people in the communities where we are active are avid hunters. Our project components, like the solar panels, inverters and transformers are surrounded by fences in accordance with electrical codes. The areas within the fences will not be available for hunting. However, provided that hunters have permission from landowners and are following applicable hunting guidelines and regulations, hunting can occur in the vicinity of and adjacent to our solar facilities. With respect to setbacks, The New York Hunting and Trapping Guide requires certain setbacks (500' for firearms, 250' for crossbows and 150' for bows) from dwellings, farm buildings, or structures in occupation. While this could mean some setbacks would be required from some project components like inverters, transformers, and energy storage containers that are typically installed well within the project fence, we do not anticipate establishing setbacks from solar panels themselves. Therefore, we anticipate any additional setbacks outside of the project fence occurring and on nonparticipating lands to be negligible.

### **What kind of buffers will be put up around the project?**

As part of the Section 94-c application submitted to the Office of Renewable Energy Siting, Moraine Solar is proposing to install visual buffers along the road and next to neighboring homes. The visual buffers include various species of trees and shrubs designed to provide a more substantial buffering closer to homes and a lesser density were further away from homes or adjacent to seasonal roads. Typically, our visual buffers are comprised of various plantings of trees and bushes that will, with time, grow to visually buffer the project from neighboring roads and homes. The buffering is normally more significant immediately next to a home, with plantings of ~4-8 feet high trees, while less sensitive areas will receive 2-4 feet high trees at planting. We would plan to increase the density of trees near neighboring homes.

### **How will glare from the sun bouncing off the solar panels be reduced or eliminated?**

The Moraine Solar Project will use solar tracker technology. The tracker design allows the solar panels to follow the path of the sun throughout the day. As a result, the solar rays hitting the panels will reflect off the panels and back into the sky rather than reflecting horizontally toward the ground. The inherent nature of solar panels tracking the sun greatly reduces and even eliminates the potential for glare at ground level. In addition, the solar panels will have an anti-reflective coating applied to them, further minimizing any glare from the solar panels.

### **Do these solar panels give off any radiation or have any detrimental environmental effects?**

No, solar panels do not give off any radiation. A White Paper by the University of North Carolina titled "Health and Safety Impacts of Solar Photovoltaics" concludes that "silicon-based PV panels do not pose a material threat to public health and safety." Moraine Solar project will install silicon-based PV panels.

The small amounts of EMFs anticipated from the facility inverters and transformers will quickly dissipate. A study completed by the University of Massachusetts concludes that at the facility fence, the levels of EMFs are typically no higher than at background levels. [https://bit.ly/accoustic\\_levels](https://bit.ly/accoustic_levels).

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