“3 Secrets to Maximize Solar Return”

By:

Ben Colbert, Founder of City Renewables

In a nutshell, I learned how to generate income from my solar panels instead of paying money to Pepco without any financial return. I then founded City Renewables and went on to advise thousands of happy homeowners now reaping the same financial benefits as me from their solar panels.

You can read more about my story here in Authority Magazine's recent publication and follow our socials where we document our journey in the battle to convert the District to 100% renewable energy by 2032.Enough about me, let’s get to YOU!

Here are the 3 Secrets to Maximize Solar Return in the District:

Secret #1: How I went from a $150 to a NEGATIVE -$5.26 Pepco bill each month
Secret #2: How I collected $7,858 on last year’s tax return
Secret #3: How I generate over $300 per month of passive income

NOTE: If you would like to ask me additional questions, feel free to schedule a 15 minute call at your convenience. Or simply shoot me an email: bencolbert@cityrenewables.com

Secret #1: You DON'T need to pay Pepco Anymore!

From the time I moved out of my parent's basement, I dreaded paying the electric bill each month. Even as a working professional living on T Street in Bloomingdale, my group housemates and I absolutely hated paying Pepco...but we had to pay it at the risk of living in a dark, cold home.

Fast forward some years, I successfully talked my long-time partner, Bailey, into marrying me. We then managed to buy our first home in Eckington shortly after tying the knot. Oddly enough our home is located on T Street as well, only a couple blocks east of my former group house.

After paying yet another $150 Pepco bill, we converted to solar. And BOOM, the very next bill came in the mail negative in price. Seriously, it was negative in price, Pepco owed us $5.26 instead of charging us money. No bullshit. I still have a copy of our first bill- see screenshot below.

Summary of your charges

Balance from your last bill	$7.53
Your payment(s) - thank you	$7.53–
Balance forward as of May 14, 2020	$0.00
New electric distribution charges - Pepco	$13.66
New electric supply charges - SOS Provider Pepco	$18.92–
Total Credit Amount	**$5.26–**

If you have the same disdain as me when Pepco debits your bank account every month, then you will be excited to learn Secret #1: how you DON'T need to pay Pepco anymore.

ANSWER: "Net Metering" also known as the billing mechanism that allows homeowners to sell excess kWh production back to Pepco. When your solar panels produce excess electricity, your net meter spins backward sending electricity to your neighbors. When the sun goes down, or in bad weather, the meter will spin in the opposite direction allowing you to pull from the grid to avoid power outages. If you spin the meter back more than frontwards, then you get a negative bill.

Look at the second page of your Pepco bill compared to mine shown below. You will notice yours only has consumption (557 kWhs purchased from Pepco), not solar production (834 kWhs sold to Pepco). Pepco then subtracts the two numbers and credits the net kWh difference to my account each month, hence the name "Net Meter." See the screenshot of my bill below.

Details of your Electric Charges

Residential-R - service number 0500 2100 0182 7002 0155 69
Electricity you used this period

Meter Number	Energy Type	End Date	Start Date	Number Of Days	Total Use
NXA152633358	Use (kWh)	May 13	Apr 14	30	557
		Reading	**Reading**	**Multiplier**	
		003342	002785	1	

Meter Number	Energy Type	End Date	Start Date	Number Of Days	Total Use
NXA152633358	Excess Gen (kWh)	May 13	Apr 14	30	834
		Reading	**Reading**	**Multiplier**	
		002246	001411	1	

According to national data, electric rates increase between 3% - 5% per year. Let's assume your $150 Pepco bill stays flatlined for the next 25 years. Net Metering would save you a whopping $37,500 ($125 bill x 12 months x 25 years = $37,500). Factor only a 3% yearly increase, your savings is well over $70,000.

Secret #2: Collected $7,858 on Next Year's Tax Return!

"Child, there are only two things for certain in this world: Death, and paying Taxes." If my dad's words every year around tax season haunts you as an adult, then you will love the answer to Secret #2 the most: How I collected $7,858 on last year's tax return.

ANSWER: I collected the 26% "Investment Tax Credit" (ITC) on my Federal tax return this year, which totaled $7,858 in my pocket!

The ITC incentive is the easiest to understand out of all three secrets. Simply put, the Federal government will pay you a tax credit upfront for 26% of the cost of your solar panels. You can take this upfront payment even if you finance your solar panels at zero cost.

You missed the 30% ITC, so you definitely do not want to waste any time claiming the full 26% credit because it is set to expire.

Secret #3: Solar Renewable Energy Credits!

Interested in generating passive income each month? If yes, then like me, you will LOVE this secret the most.

Secret #3 is the "Solar Renewable Energy Credit" (SREC) program. This program allows you to generate passive income by selling carbon credits to dirty energy companies each month.

The District is required by the DC Sustainability Plan to convert 100 percent to renewable energy by 2032. In doing so, the District is requiring dirty energy companies to pay a $500 fine per 1000 kWhs sold into the District. Instead of paying the full $500, they buy carbon credits from you at $400 for every 1000 kWhs you produce from your solar array.

Most of our customers finance solar panels and generate passive income from SRECs on day one. SRECs pay MORE money than your solar finance payments. Pretty cool, right?