Before you buy solar panels or a wind turbine. . .

Be informed before you buy!

Be informed before you sign a contract to buy solar panels or a wind turbine. A little research ahead of time is time well spent.

- Become educated with the technology. Learn the terminology.
- It is recommended that you have an energy audit performed first and that you follow-up on the recommendations of the audit. This will assist in making your building energy efficient and may allow you to purchase a smaller renewable energy system.
- Check with your planning and zoning department and the building permit department of your city or county to determine if there are any special requirements for a renewable energy system or if any special permits are required.
- Determine if your property is covered by restrictive covenants that would affect the installation of a renewable energy system.
- Talk to your utility company to determine their requirements for interconnection, which allows your renewable energy system to connect to the grid.
- Determine what your utility will pay for the electricity you produce and put on the grid. Determine what you will be paying for electricity that you must purchase if you are not able to generate enough electricity to meet your needs.
- Your utility company may also offer rebates if you purchase a renewable energy system.
- Determine if you want to be off the grid or if you want to retain connection with the electric utility to receive power and to send excess power to the grid.
- Look at several vendors’ products. Don’t buy the first product you see. Check warranties.
- Determine the vendor’s qualifications. Have they done this kind of project before?
- Get estimates from the vendors.
- Ask if the vendor has insurance and what it covers.
- Ask for references from other customers. Check the references. Look at other installations made by this vendor. Include questions about reliability, performance and repair needs.
- The vendor should be able to help you determine if there are special tax incentives that the system would be qualified to receive.

With the information you have gathered, you are prepared to make an informed choice.