



# Shavings

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## Good To Go Solar

In the past few months, I've personally noticed a spike in interest regarding solar energy production. I don't know if it's due to storm related roof work, or just a general shift in attitudes, but the interest is certainly welcome. Whether you're presently contemplating an installation, or interested in going solar "down the road", it pays to understand some basics.



The basic technology of photovoltaic cells used to convert sunlight to energy is truly "nothing new under the sun". The first pv cell was actually created in the 1880's! Over time, cells have become increasingly efficient, cheaper, and easier to produce. Current research

in "thin film" technologies proposes that pv cells may someday be incorporated directly into building components like roofing shingles and siding. For the time being though, panels are the principal medium employed for solar installations. Panels may differ in terms of price, efficiency, and reliability, so research is warranted before choosing one for your home.

Site considerations, such as orientation and shading, play a significant part in determining the efficiency and feasibility

of your proposed solar installation. Solar professionals use specialized tools and GPS technology to analyze these features. If your site is a good candidate, you should also give some thought to your roof (assuming a rooftop assembly). If your 15 year asphalt shingled roof is 12 years old, you should probably have it replaced before the panels to avoid costly remove and replace expenses when the roof does inevitably require repair. Most quality panels are warranted for 20 years or more, so make sure your underlying roof is good for the same.

A residential solar installation can be a significant investment, but there exists several options for financing. Installation costs are often offset in part with government rebates and "energy credits" which can be sold back to utility companies. Some companies also offer minimal or zero down payment options. In this case, the installing company owns the panels, and gives you a preferential rate for your electric usage. Either option can benefit you, the homeowner, by lowering your utility bills and providing the peace of mind that comes from clean energy production.

If you're interested in learning more about solar for your home, R. Craig Lord University will be hosting an informational seminar Saturday, November 5th, 2011 at 10:00 AM. To register, give us a call at (856) 235-4237.

## Smart Choices for 2012

There are many exciting new products on the market. Some will save money and some are downright unique. Here is a sampling of products to look for in a well designed project:

### KITCHENS:

"Pyrolave" Kitchen countertops, extracted from slabs of lava. Available in 32 colors and will not be affected by corrosive products, acids or extreme temperatures.

"Danver Stainless Steel Cabinetry"- stainless steel cabinets suitable for interior and exterior use. Available in custom colors including wood grains and a clear coat that retains the look of stainless.

### MUDROOMS AND LAUNDRY ROOMS:

Wellborn cabinet company has increased their line of cabinets that offer custom storage options for these typically cluttered rooms. With their new line everything has a place.

### ENERGY SAVINGS:

"Wiser Energy Management Systems"- A demand management system that allows consumers to shift energy use to non peak times.

"Rainwater Collections Systems"- The original "Rainwater Pillow" is designed to fit under porches or in crawl spaces. One pillow can hold 1,000 gallons of reclaimed rainwater to be used for lawn irrigation or washing your cars.

For more information on any of these products you can contact our office at (856) 235-4237.





## News in the Neighborhood

Bill and Ruth Hannum are enjoying their new Master Shower. They like the easy entrance, the open feeling and brightness. Martha and Doug Derry will soon have some curb appeal with new windows, siding and roofing. Skip and Annette Emerson have a brand new maintenance free deck from which to enjoy the view.



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## Attention Friends

If we have worked for you in the past you may want to take advantage of our “Preferred Client Program”. We are currently offering a free, no obligation home inspection that covers the interior and exterior of your house to any former clients. The inspection takes about an hour and provides a lot of good information. To sign up simply call the office.



## Three Things to do this Fall:

- 1) Get an Energy Audit - Find out easy ways to make your home more efficient.
- 2) Inspect your exterior to get ready for winter. Gutters cleaned?
- 3) Recommend your favorite remodeler. The greatest compliment is a referral.