A Consumer’s Perspective on Going Solar/Net Zero
Who Am I?

- Former UI/UX designer
- Background in communications and information design
- Tech enthusiast and early adopter
- Full time YouTube creator talking about sustainable and renewable technologies
What have I done?

Built a net zero home

Hopefully
The details
We went a little nuts

- Factory built home (near Passive House level efficiency)
- Geothermal heating and cooling with desuperheater for hot water
- Heat pump water heater
- Energy Recovery Ventilator (ERV)
- Heat pump dryer, induction range, etc.
- Smart home features (automatic shades, etc.)
- Solar panels and home battery (NET ZERO!) …hopefully
Why do this?
It’s nuanced

• Environmental
• Security
• Financial
Finding a Solar Installer
AKA - The Wild West

- Used car salesmen-like practices
- EnergySage
- Great Sky Solar repeat customer
Financing

The “not bad” side of this

• Pretty good options through credit unions and local banks
• Seamless experience with installer
• Online options like Atmos Financial
PV System and Installation

It can be overwhelming

• Trusting your installer’s recommendations
• Doing your own due diligence
• Understanding your goals and needs
Predicting Energy Use
Smart Home To The Rescue

• Using data from my Span to narrow in on what was going to transition with us
• Reading a lot of appliance spec sheets
• Spreadsheet madness
PV System and Installation

It can be overwhelming

- Free online tools that help
  - opensolar.com
It’s done … almost
This has to get better
Navigating the Incentives
The DOER Maze

• A lot falls on the shoulders of your installer

• Hopefully you chose a good/trustworthy installer

• Random accounts, forms, and authorizations
RECs
SRECs, RECs, SMART, oh my

• SMART is no longer worth it

• REC market will be better financially
  • Average: 3.5 cents per kWh generated
  • Expected: ~$600/year
Home Batteries
AKA “It’s not worth it”

• Common refrain I kept hearing from random trades, “Batteries aren’t going to be worth it.”
• Regulations limiting the size
• Heat Loan madness
Connected Solutions
The secret weapon for batteries in MA

- No time of use rates
- Peak shaving benefits
- Previous benefits with 1 Tesla Powerwall: $700-$800/year
Final Verdict
It has to be better than this

- DOER red tape
- Bad communication and instructions
- Leap of faith feeling
Net zero?

Hopefully