



SOLAR RATES

What Do Residential Utility Customers Think?

E Source recently conducted a major market research study on US and Canadian residential customers' attitudes toward a wide variety of pricing options, including those associated with solar.

Before asking residential customers questions about solar power rates, E Source took several steps to educate them about a utility's need to cover its fixed costs to support the grid.

What we learned may surprise you.

80% of respondents say that policy-makers should encourage, through **subsidies**, those who install solar panels

69% said it would be fine for solar customers to **pay nothing to the utility each month** if they produced enough electricity to cover their own needs in aggregate

82% said that solar customers should be compensated **at or above retail** for the kilowatt-hours their systems produced



So ...

Any changes that could be perceived as reducing support for the expansion of solar power are likely to be seen in a negative light by over three-fourths of the population, not just by intervenors and lobbyists.

Utilities will need to start now to educate customers about the need for and reasons behind pricing structure changes related to fixed charges, to demand rates, or to lower net metering support, but even that effort may be insufficient to stem negative sentiment from the majority of customers.



The data presented above represent just a small portion of the results from the quantitative and qualitative surveys conducted by E Source. For more information about "Innovative Residential Rate Design and Pricing 2015," our market research study investigating customer preferences for and acceptance of different rate options, email us at esource@esource.com.