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CITY GOV New player in solar gardens

POSTED BY [PAM ZUBECK](#) ON FRI, NOV 11, 2011 AT 11:35 AM



Clean Energy Collective's array near Rifle.

A solar gardens applicant has dropped out of the program approved last month by the City Council that enables Springs Utilities customers to pay for solar on their electric bill without having panels placed on their home.

Solar Synergy LLC of Colorado Springs has told Utilities it won't participate as originally planned, a Utilities official said. The withdrawal is for a 500-kilowatt solar array, and that applicant is **Clean Energy Collective of Carbondale**.

The company offers an ownership model, which differs from the plan of **SunShare**, started by a former Colorado College student, v

Here's what Clean Energy Collective said about its plan in a press release:

CARBONDALE, Colo. (November 11, 2011) Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) has chosen community solar garden developer to develop a 500 kW community-owned solar facility within the municipally-owned utility's service territory. This is a boon to Colorado's renewable energy portfolio. It also is significant for Colorado Springs residents because the CEC's admired model allows for net metering of solar arrays.

A Colorado company, the CEC was the first in the nation to build and operate a community-owned renewable energy facility. The CEC's ownership model allows an educational customer—such as property renters, poorly sighted properties and individuals of all incomes—will now have their own clean energy system without having to build a costly system on their home or business, and through the utility directly reaping the benefits.

The CEC will be the only solar garden provider in CSU territory offering customers the ability to own, not lease, solar panels. The CEC's ownership model claims several advantages over leasing, including a significantly higher payback, additional flexibility with ownership (where a solar lease ends without the customer owning anything). Independent reports have found that ownership is more than five times more beneficial than leasing.

This will be the CEC's fifth solar facility in Colorado, along with an 858 kW facility operating in Rifle (currently the largest solar facility in the state), a recently approved 1 MW facility to be located near Telluride, and an 80 kW pilot facility (the first of its kind in the nation) operating in El Jebel. The location of the Colorado Springs array will be announced upon finalization of the land lease. To support community-based power production, the CEC expects the array to sell out quickly.

"We are very excited to be chosen to introduce community solar to Colorado Springs and look forward to offering all CSU customers the opportunity to benefit from local community solar ownership," said Paul Spencer, the Clean Energy Collective's president and founder.

About the Clean Energy Collective
The Clean Energy Collective is a developer of community-based renewable energy facilities and a leader in community power generation. The Colorado-based company has pioneered the model of delivering clean power-generation through large-scale facilities that are collectively owned by participating utility customers. The CEC's proprietary RemoteMeter® system automatically calculates monthly credits and integrates with existing utility billing systems, enabling all utility customers to easily have clean, renewable power credited on their monthly utility bill.



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This is a great step forward for our community.

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