

# Solar Secrets:

(or how I started learning to love my electric bill)

"My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I have an electric bill.", a phrase that can be uttered by everyone. Like taxes and 40th birthdays, energy bills are an annoyance that will never go away. But while your friends and neighbors are paying through the nose, you could be smelling the sweet scent of savings each time you open your monthly envelope. And the secret is that solar doesn't need to be a secret any more. What was once thought high-tech and futuristic — only for engineers and astronauts — can now be your pocketbook's best friend. Renewable energies are undoubtedly the future, and while most people have at least heard of solar power, the technology is not something you can find at your local convenience store, that's for sure. The question remains: what exactly are these solar products, and how can they help you?

## Top 3 Ways to Use Solar to Save Energy and Money

### 1. Therma-Shield Radiant Barrier

A home that harnesses solar is built upon a foundation of insulation and ventilation. Insulation may keep you warm, and ventilation helps keep you cool, but there's a way to do both with one product: Therma-Shield Radiant Barrier. Created by NASA, and used to protect the space shuttle from the raw damaging solar rays, Therma-Shield is a remarkably strong, foil-like product used to actually reflect radiant heat. Place it in your attic on top of your insulation. Hide it under your floorboards.

Wrap your whole home in it. Use it to create an energy efficient envelope around your home or business. The heat you pay to create will be reflected back into the living/working space during the winter, while during the summer months, the unwanted heat from the sun will be reflected out of the building. Try it today and immediately see 7%-9% savings on your energy bill annually!

### 2. Solar Thermal (Hot Water)

Little known fact: if you have an electric water heater, about 30% of your electricity bill is directly attributed to the hot water heater. By replacing your energy-inefficient water heater, you put yourself in a great position to knock out a major portion of your energy bill. Solar Thermal Energy can be put to two major uses: water heating and space heating. A properly sized solar hot water system can meet 90-95% of your domestic hot water needs. But combine the solar hot water system with a radiant floor or a water-to-air heat exchanger to put that hot water energy toward heating your home or business.

### 3. Solar Photovoltaic (PV)

Everybody has seen at least one solar panel. They're on your traffic cameras, they're powering the lights to your garden paths, they're on the satellites flying high above you. Solar power is all around us, whether you know it or not, saving the environment with clean, green energy and saving our

pocketbooks by putting the money from self-generated energy back into our bank accounts. Photovoltaic panels can be your silent best friend, sitting up on your roof collecting solar rays all day, every day. Solar panel technology has been around for over 60 years and is here to stay. With maintenance costs next to zero and power output warranties of 25 years, solar PV panels are a solid investment. The true secret in solar is this: Solar products working together give you the greatest savings; the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. And now, when you open that energy bill, your inside information can help you save energy and money!



Michael Conrad & Scott Mele  
**Solar Energy Professionals**  
SolarTEK Nashville



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