



## FL SUN EXPLAINED

### SUMMARY

The ultimate goal of FL SUN (Florida Solar United Neighborhoods) is to see Florida realize its solar capacity potential for being #3 in the nation. FL SUN was initiated through a partnership between the League of Women Voters of Florida and the Community Power Network, a 501(c)(3) located in Washington D.C. As a non-profit organization, FL SUN seeks to help communities learn about and affordably participate in solar by using group purchasing power.

### HOW DO THE CO-OPS WORK?

Based on the same principle as buying in bulk, co-op members purchase solar systems together to save money and share knowledge. Once the co-op kicks off several information sessions are organized for citizens to learn about solar and ask questions. The group uses a competitive bidding process to select a single company that will install systems on all of the participating homes. Each participant signs his or her own contract with the installer, but everyone gets the bulk discount. By going solar as a group, the price of a solar system can be reduced up to 20%. Participants also have the support of the group, and professional staff, instead of navigating an often-complicated process alone.

### SPACECOAST TIMELINE

August 24, 2016	Introduction & Information Session	Recruit Partner Organizations
Early September	Meeting with local municipalities	Recruit support and introduce PACE funding for resolutions to local governments
October 17	Kick-off press conference and local supporters to announce opening of FL SUN Co-op	Generate press and additional interest
November – Early January	Several informational sessions geographically dispersed throughout County	Recruit interested households and businesses; send Request for Proposals to Solar Installing companies
December	Form resident sub-group from co-op to evaluate proposals	Rate and recommend proposals
January-February	Installations begin	

Installations will be completed in early Spring. As have been the case with previous co-ops, when neighbors see solar panels being installed they often become more interested. It is likely there will be another co-op being organized even as the first is completed.

## EXPERIENCE TO-DATE

Solar co-ops are not new. In fact, hundreds have been created all over the United States in the last decade as solar has become increasingly affordable. Community Power Network has organized numerous co-ops over the last 10 years in Washington, D.C., Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Ohio.

Co-ops have already been organized in Florida serving several hundred residents. Orange County is on its third co-op. There also is a new co-op in St. Petersburg, and Sarasota is preparing to kick-off a co-op.

## FUNDING

Numerous funding mechanisms are in place, but the one that will most likely assist adoption of solar for moderate and low income families is PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) financing. These are voluntary, community-based finance programs for energy efficiency, renewable energy, and wind resistant improvements (in Florida this includes a new roof).

## PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY

This program is funded for the first year through Foundation Grants. Future funding will be supported through municipal support, additional foundation funding, and by fees generated from contracting installers at \$600 per installation. There is no cost to participating local governments.

## MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the local FL SUN initiative, visit <http://www.flsun.org/spacecoast/> . Sign up there to be notified of Space Coast FL SUN developments.