

San Diego home and business owners have been inundated with articles, seminars, and conferences on integrating solar electricity to their existing roof also known as **Building Integrated Photovoltaics (BIPV)**. San Diego as a whole understands more than ever how important it is to conserve energy, save the environment, and contribute to our ever-growing imperative of being “green”. The question most people have once they have made the decision to never pay another electric bill is usually; “*What is the first step?*”

The checklist below covers the basic tools to help you make that “first step” in freeing yourself from a lifelong dependency on fossil fuels. So take a moment and cut out the below checklist and get started today!



Getting-Started-with-Solar Checklist

- Stay local!** A dealer who is close to your home or job site location will likely know much more about your local weather and climate conditions, shade vs. sunshine availability, and other relevant key points.
- Call a Photovoltaic (PV) contractor.** However, make sure you know the following information beforehand:
 - Call SDG&E or visit their website to learn how much electricity you’ve used in the 12 to 18 months, and how much it cost you each month. The more data, the better!
 - Amount of south and/or west facing roof or adjacent land you have available for your solar installation.
 - How much you are prepared to invest in solar? (should be at least \$15,000). Do you want a partial system or do you want to have no electric bill.
- Call for Estimates.** You can find a list of local contractors on California’s Center for Sustainable Energy (CCSE) website at: www.energycenter.org
 - Hire only licensed contractors.** Check the contractor’s license number by calling the Contractors State License Board at 1-800-321-2752 or visiting www.cslb.ca.gov.
 - Hire insured contractors.** Always insist upon a certificate of insurance for general liability insurance. Uninsured workers who are injured on the job can file damage claims against the homeowner.
 - Contact the Better Business Bureau** to find out if the business is legitimate.
 - Turnkey vs. unbundled services.** Ask about including all permits and rebate paperwork in the price of service. Less hands, less headaches.
 - Keep a job file.** Put receipts, permits, plans and anything else pertaining to your job in the file
 - Work with a company you can trust.** Is this a company that will be around in 5, 10, 15 years?

For more information please contact the writer James Adams at **RSI Roofing, Solar Services;** jadams@ThinkRSI.com or www.ThinkRSI.com

Additional info at:
www.energycenter.org and www.thesolarguide.com