

Dear Mass Save,

I work in the solar industry and more specifically, I install solar hot water systems for Spartan Solar in Greenfield, MA. As of December 2020, incentives for solar hot water will be discontinued. This will have a direct impact on solar hot water installations. I could write about the significant energy savings by switching from fossil fuels to solar hot water. I could talk about the reliability of our systems. I could talk about how we installed our 100th system in early September. What seems to have been unsaid with respect to solar hot water system subsidies though, is the sizable and significant impact on the local economy. Most installs require a plumber and many also require an electrician. Excavators may be necessary for ground mounts that require a trench. Occasionally, roofers may be involved when a client needs to re-shingle or upgrade to a metal roof.

When I first entered the solar industry in 2011, I had my first steady income since 2008. I bought a house in 2011. Since then, I have paid off my house, upgraded my tool shop, bought a couple of bicycles, had my driveway redone, installed solar on my own house, had a giant tree removed from my property and invested thousands of dollars in retirement funds. I have been making a good living doing this job well. Much of the money I make goes back into the community in which I live and at Spartan Solar, we buy materials from local plumbing supply businesses, we purchase from lumber yards and electrical warehouses. Despite being a small company, our \$0.5M gross receipts are a significant part of the larger web of our local economy.

If solar hot water incentives go away as planned, installs will slow dramatically and, as a result, I am going to become very thrifty and more concerned about where I spend my shrinking income. Prices of items and services may become a top priority, leading me further afield from local vendors (e.g. online) for things that I need in my daily life. I will hesitate more when considering large purchases and make-do for longer. I will not be alone in this belt-tightening. This is going to have an effect on the local economy. Incentives do more than merely get energy saving solar hot water installed, they help invigorate local economies. Consider also that every system we have installed has given our clients more pocket money through energy savings, money that can then be allocated elsewhere.

I encourage the Mass Save to pursue a stable, long-term solar hot water incentive program. Our earth and economy need this support as we move into a greener future.

Regards,
Adam Heintz
Installer at Spartan Solar