



Cost of Solar Panels Lower Than Ever, Americans Optimistic about Future of Technology

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- *Global Installed Solar Power Doubled in 2010*
- *Innovations in Technology Driving Scale and Efficiency*

SANTA CLARA, Calif., June 20, 2011 - In advance of June 21, when the northern hemisphere will celebrate the summer solstice, Applied Materials today announced the results of its third annual solar energy survey.

"The solstice is a time to recognize the power of the sun and raise awareness of the significant advancements that have been achieved with solar power technology and use, especially in the past few years," said Dr. Charlie Gay, president of the Applied Materials Solar division.

The price of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels has dropped 70 percent since 2008 from \$4 per watt, and is expected to reach \$1 per watt in the next couple of years. As a result, electricity produced by solar PV panels will cost the same as traditional sources of residential power in 19 countries, including Italy and Spain and Brazil, and California by the end of 2011.

Applied Materials forecasts that by the year 2020, more than 100 countries - representing 98 percent of the world's population, 99.7 percent of the world's Gross Domestic Product and 99.2 percent of energy-related CO2 emissions - will have access to solar power at the same cost as current residential power.

Dr. Gay added, "We've reached a critical inflection point in the cost of solar energy. At the end of 2010, 36 gigawatts of solar PV had been installed worldwide with 18GW installed last year alone, thus doubling the total amount of solar capacity installed in the history of the technology. This tremendous growth, coupled with new technologies that are making panels more efficient and scalable, has made solar power more affordable than ever before."

Americans Overestimate U.S. Solar Power Leadership and Contribution to Energy Mix

When asked about renewable power sources-including solar, hydroelectric, wind, geothermal and biomass-the survey found 32 percent of Americans believed solar energy is the most efficient renewable energy source, that is, the most easily converted from a raw material into useable energy.

One-fifth (21%) of Americans believe the U.S. is the solar energy leader, when in fact Germany, Spain, Japan and Italy use more solar power than the U.S and China is by far the global leader in solar manufacturing.

Today, less than one percent of U.S. energy consumption is sourced from solar energy. More Americans understand that solar energy makes up a small portion of the U.S. energy use mix (one-fifth in 2009 compared to one-third in 2011 believe solar energy provides anywhere from zero to five percent of U.S. energy consumption). Still, 51 percent of Americans incorrectly believe that solar energy makes up more than 5 percent of total U.S. energy consumption.

One in Four Americans Would Consider Installing Solar Panels on Their Home

The survey found that more than a quarter (27%) of Americans would consider installing solar panels on their home. While 48 percent of consumers are not likely to consider solar installations at this time, a significant number (80%) of those surveyed would be motivated to take a closer look at using solar power, especially if there were more opportunities for cost savings-both in the front end installation and as a long-term investment. Leading factors that would make consumers more likely to install solar panels include:

- Government incentives to help offset the installation costs (65%)
- Increase in the home's value (54%)
- Having more information (49%)
- Ability to sell excess power to an energy company (47%)

The likelihood to consider installing solar panels is higher among younger consumers. Almost one-third (32%) of those 18 to 44 would consider installing solar, compared to 27% of those 45 to 64 years old, and 15% of Americans age 65 and older (15%). The vast majority of consumers (72%) would expect the energy savings from solar panels installed on their homes to equal the cost of installation in 10 years or less.

For more detailed information on the [2011 Summer Solstice survey results, related social media activities and the Summer Solstice Infographic](#), please visit the [Applied Materials blog](#).

METHODOLOGY

This solar energy survey presents the findings of a telephone survey conducted by Opinion Research Corporation among a national probability sample of 1,011 adults comprising 503 men and 508 women 18 years of age and older, living in private households in the continental United States. Interviewing for this CARAVAN® Survey was completed during the period June 9-12, 2011. The margin of error is +/-3 percent.

ABOUT APPLIED MATERIALS

Applied Materials, Inc. (Nasdaq: AMAT) is the global leader in providing innovative equipment, services and software to enable the manufacture of advanced semiconductor, flat panel display and solar photovoltaic products. Our technologies help make innovations like smartphones, flat screen TVs and solar panels more affordable and accessible to consumers and businesses around the world. At Applied Materials, we turn today's innovations into the industries of tomorrow. Learn more at <http://www.appliedmaterials.com/>.

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