

GATHER THE SUN

5 top advocates and their thoughts on solar energy



A RCHITECTS, DESIGNERS and an industry expert shine a light on best practices when it comes to integrating solar power into home design. Find out how to save money and make a great green practice look good, too:



MARTIN MANN

I STARTED USING solar in 1979 and I have never liked the way the panels have been installed. They're clumsy, just stuck on a roof plane with no thought for proper design.

My designs now allow me to use flush panels on the roof in an asymmetrical way. I just finished a home near Escondido (see story, Out of the Ashes, page 46) and I'm happy with the visual design integration into the roof. We are getting 85 percent of our electricity from these photovoltaic black panels and the electric meter is running backwards!

— NORM APPLEBAUM, ARCHITECT, AIA
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NO QUESTION about it. Solar energy is the way to go.

While the concept of your meter "spinning backwards" is great for our environmental ego, too often we forget that we can reduce the energy required in the home by practices as old as the sun itself.

We use the technical knowledge to design photovoltaic systems that can help keep the air conditioning churning and the pool water hot. More importantly, we use the common sense approach of proper orientation of the home and "cool roofs" that reflect the sun's energy from the roof surface. We can shield the sun on the glass before it hits those west-facing windows and design openings that let the breezes flow through the house. Everyone wins.

We can naturally reduce the energy consumption in our home and use technology to reduce the cost of that consumption.

— MARC TARASUCK, MARC TARASUCK AIA AND ASSOCIATES
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