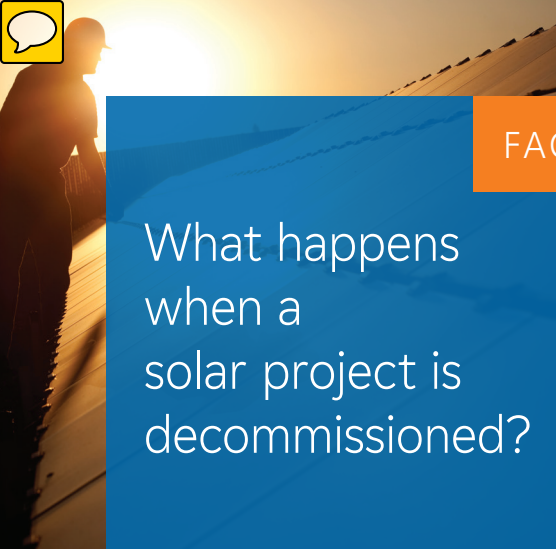




FACT SHEET



What happens when a solar project is decommissioned?

As we seek to transition to cleaner sources of energy, communities across the country are welcoming solar projects and the benefits they bring. But what happens when a solar project reaches the end of its operational life and is no longer wanted or needed?

Solar projects typically have operational lifespans of 30-40 years. Over time, equipment and components that age or wear out can be replaced or upgraded, extending the lifespan of the facility and potentially increasing the amount of clean power it produces. However, if the time comes when a solar project is no longer wanted or needed, its removal is relatively straightforward, and the land can be returned to its original state.

What is Decommissioning?

Decommissioning refers to removal of equipment and restoration of the site. Unlike some other forms of development, once a solar project has been decommissioned, the site can be returned to the way it was before and used for other purposes, such as agriculture.

What's a Decommissioning Agreement?

Prior to the construction of any project, EDF Renewables enters into a decommissioning agreement with the relevant local jurisdiction(s) that includes a plan for the removal of all equipment at the end of the project's life.

The agreement requires EDF Renewables to adhere to all state and local rules pertaining to decommissioning, thereby ensuring

landowners and other taxpayers are not impacted. In many cases, these agreements will require some form of financial security to ensure the project will have the resources needed to complete the decommissioning process.

Who Pays for Decommissioning?

The costs of decommissioning a project are the responsibility of the project owner and are not borne by landowners or the community. That said, in many cases the salvage value of the materials recovered can exceed the cost of the decommissioning process, although this can depend on the project's size and location.

LET'S TALK SPECIFICS.

Want to know more about decommissioning? Here's additional information on how various elements of a solar farm are removed and handled.

Panels

EDF Renewables has partnered with SOLARCYCLE to recycle the panels from our sites in North America. Read our fact sheet on this topic to learn more!

Wires

Wires connect the solar panels to a collector system and ultimately deliver the electricity to the grid. During decommissioning, above-ground





wires and those at depths less than 3 feet underground are removed. Copper and/or aluminum wiring and associated electronic equipment is sold as scrap or recycled to the extent practical.

Inverters, Transformers & Substation Equipment

Inverters convert the direct current generated by the panels into alternating current for the grid; transformers “step up” the voltage of the project’s electricity to match that of the transmission line to which it interconnects at the substation. During the decommissioning process this equipment is dismantled, and various parts are refurbished, recycled, or disposed of as appropriate.

Foundations

Inverters and transformers are typically bolted onto steel or concrete foundations. Upon decommissioning, the foundations are broken up and removed, and the recovered concrete is recycled, sold as scrap, or disposed of. Once debris is removed, the area is backfilled with native or similar soils.

Racking

Solar panels are mounted on racking systems supported by posts set in the ground. The posts are typically pile-driven several feet below ground to ensure the system is secure and sturdy enough to withstand severe weather. During decommissioning, these posts are pulled from the ground using backhoes or other tools.



Posts that cannot be removed are cut below grade at a depth specified by the decommissioning plan. Racking systems are typically made from aluminum or galvanized steel, and posts are made from galvanized steel, and both materials can be easily recycled or sold as scrap.

Fencing

Fence posts can be pulled out using skid-steer loaders or other light equipment. All fence parts and foundations are removed from the site and either reconditioned and reused, recycled, or disposed of as appropriate.

Vegetation

Any portions of the site with compacted soil will be de-compacted and any excavations backfilled with

appropriate soil to restore the site and return it to agricultural or other use. As a final step in the decommissioning process, the site can be revegetated to help with erosion and dust control.

Access Roads

Unless agreed upon by the landowner and allowed by permit, access roads will be removed by excavating aggregate for reuse elsewhere, replacing soils to level the terrain, and de-compacting the soil.

Let's connect.



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