



**COLORADO**  
Energy Office



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Office of Gov. John Hickenlooper

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## Colorado Launches First Low-Income Rooftop Solar Project within its Weatherization Assistance Program

*Partners come together to demonstrate feasibility of combining energy efficiency and rooftop solar  
to help address energy burden*

**DENVER – August 23, 2016** – The [Colorado Energy Office](#) (CEO), [Energy Resource Center](#) (ERC), and [Colorado Springs Utilities](#) announce the installation of a 2kW rooftop solar array as part of the state's [Weatherization Assistance Program](#) (WAP). The CEO WAP provides free, cost-effective energy efficiency measures to income-eligible households in all of the state's 64 counties. Historically, the WAP has only allowed energy efficiency measures, but the [U.S. Department of Energy](#) recently authorized CEO to be the first state to integrate rooftop solar into weatherization services. This project with ERC and Colorado Springs Utilities will demonstrate the feasibility of combining energy efficiency measures with rooftop solar offerings to help reduce utility bills for residents most in need—those paying more than 4 percent of household income on energy costs.

“The impact of this project is threefold: it addresses energy burden by reducing both home heating and electric costs; it enhances opportunities for distributed generation; and it demonstrates the viability of rooftop solar offerings for low-income households,” said Joseph Pereira, Director of Low-Income Energy Services for the Colorado Energy Office. “We appreciate the Department of Energy’s receptiveness to this innovation in the program and the forward-thinking efforts of our partners at Energy Resource Center and Colorado Springs Utilities as we explore the best use of solar to assist those in need.”

CEO partners with eight local agencies throughout the state to provide WAP services including ERC, which serves the counties of Denver, Jefferson, Douglas, Elbert, Teller, El Paso, Fremont, Saguache, Mineral, Rio Grande, Alamosa, Conejos and Costilla. ERC is the first weatherization agency in the state to pilot the installation of rooftop panels as part of its site-specific weatherization services. In addition to rooftop solar panels, the project home will receive insulation, storm windows, low-flow showerheads, LED bulbs and a refrigerator. These integrated measures will save an estimated \$600 annually in energy costs.

“This family has struggled to pay high energy bills due to low household income,” said Howard Brooks, Executive Director of Energy Resource Center. “These improvements to their home are a game-changer; it allows the family to be safer, more comfortable, and more able to afford other necessities.”

Colorado Springs Utilities is also a key partner in the development and implementation of this project. "In support of our Energy Vision, we are constantly exploring affordable energy efficiency and renewable energy options for our customers," said Kenny Romero, Demand Side Management and Renewable Energy Manager at Colorado Springs Utilities. "In addition to our rooftop solar rebate program and large-scale renewable energy sources, projects such as this one will help us achieve our 20 percent renewable energy goal by 2020, diversify our energy supply, and responsibly manage our operations to help protect our natural resources now and into the future."

All measures, including installation of the rooftop solar array, were completed last week. The solar panels were installed by [El Paso Green Energies](#), a family owned and operated contractor specializing in commercial and residential PV solar.

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### **About Colorado Energy Office**

The Colorado Energy Office works to improve the effective use of all of Colorado's energy resources and the efficient consumption of energy in all economic sectors by providing technical guidance, financial support, policy advocacy and public communications. Go to [www.colorado.gov/energyoffice](http://www.colorado.gov/energyoffice) to learn more.

### **About Energy Resource Center**

The Energy Resource Center helps income-qualified residents of El Paso, Denver, Jefferson, Teller, Fremont, Elbert, Douglas, Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Saguache and Rio Grande counties assess and upgrade their energy efficiency. Visit [www.erc-co.org](http://www.erc-co.org) for more details.

### **About Colorado Springs Utilities**

Colorado Springs Utilities provides safe, reliable, competitively-priced electric, natural gas, water and wastewater services to its citizen owners and customers. See [www.csu.org](http://www.csu.org) for additional information.