

# These are the good old days: What's driving the solar phenomenon on Long Island?



**Joe  
Milillo**

The demand for solar power has been incredible. People are finally "getting it." I think the concept of solar energy has always been solid but the economics have not been favorable until now. In the past the equipment has been expensive and the payback period was way too long for it to make sense.

Now we are in a perfect storm, but the good kind. Here is what is driving the solar phenomenon on L.I.:

1. Equipment prices have come down drastically. A combination of the lower price of silicone and high demand that spurred mass production, have driven prices down a lot this year.

2. LIPA rebates are still in place. Although not as generous as they once were, they are still substantial. The main reason for the drop in rebates has been the unexpected demand. LIPA wants to keep the program going

## FXFOWLE's SAP Americas gets LEED Platinum certification



**SAP Americas, Newtown Square, Penn.**

**NEWTOWN SQUARE, PA** FXFOWLE's headquarters expansion for SAP Americas has achieved LEED Platinum Certification by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). Totalling 210,000 s/f, the four-story building received the maximum LEED points in the water efficiency and innovation in design categories.

Located on the 110-acre campus of SAP Americas and adjacent to its existing Certified LEED building, the expansion features a floor-to-ceiling glass exterior and an open-space plan that takes advantage of daylight. A triple-glazed, high-performance curtain-wall system with exterior sunshades reduces direct sun penetration and eliminates the need for perimeter heating.

Extensive and intensive green roofs, the use of native and regional vegetation species in landscaping, and the maintenance of extensive open space integrate the building with the surrounding natural environment. The new building also collects rainwater in a 50,000-gallon cistern that supplies water for landscape irrigation and the flushing of toilets in some of the building's bathrooms.

Members of the expansion design team included WSP Flack + Kurtz, Severud Associates, Advanced GeoServices Corp., Wallace Roberts & Todd, YRG Sustainability, S+S Lighting Design. Gilbane Building Company was the construction manager.

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but resources are limited. This kind of puts the pressure on clients to get their paperwork in before the rebate reduces. We can do that for you for a nominal fee and if you want to, you can withdraw at any time.

3. Sizable state and federal tax credits are available. NYS will pay 25% of the cost of your PV system, capped at \$5,000. The Federal government will pay 30%, no cap. The debate on whether the cost is pre or post rebate is still ongoing but either way, it's a nice tax break. Between the LIPA rebate and tax credits, someone else is paying about 80% of the cost of your system but you are getting 100% of the benefit. Pay back periods are between 5 and 6 years in most cases.

4. Many towns have simplified or eliminated the permits needed for solar power. Some towns dropped the requirement all together, and some do not require a town inspector to come on your property. They will accept a private engineer and/or electrical inspection. This way you don't have to worry about a fence that is 6" past where it is supposed to be or whatever else the town can bug you about.

5. Low interest rates. If you want to finance, the rates are at a historic low right now. Plus, through our partnership with Sperry Federal Credit Union and The Great Green Race, you will receive an additional .25% discount for green projects. If you have money saved, you're not earning anything significant in the form of interest from your bank, so why not invest in solar and enjoy a 15 - 20% rate of return?

6. Solar power just makes sense, in every way. No pollution, no noise, no foreign oil, no oil spills, no danger of explosion, no significant environmental impact at all, and NO LIPA. What's better than that?

It's just a wonderful time for solar power on L.I.

**Joe Milillo is a founder, VP of marketing at Long Island Power Solutions, Bohemia, N.Y.**

## Kipcon, Inc. hired as for five New Jersey weatherization projects

**NORTH BRUNSWICK, NJ** Kipcon Inc. has been hired to provide five separate HUD apartment complexes with the engineering services required in order to take part in the N.J. Housing & Mortgage Finance Agency's Multifamily Buildings Weatherization Assistance Program. As a Pay for Performance Partner with the state of N.J., Kipcon is qualified and was chosen to provide American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 funded energy audits and weatherization plans for five senior living and low income apartment communities.

The N.J. Dept. of Community Affairs (DCA) Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) funds energy audits for income-qualified residents to determine measures of increasing energy efficiency.

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