



RENEWABLE ENERGY



# CUSTOMER SUCCESS

CLIENT

CORY BARNARD

LOCATION

CEDAR RAPIDS, IA



CORY BARNARD, ECOBROKER

## ECOBROKER GOES GREEN WITH HOME SOLAR ARRAY

You know the old saying: practice what you preach. Skogman Realty's Cory Barnard, one of only two EcoBrokers in Iowa, is doing just that. This trailblazer recently completed a solar installation at his Cedar Rapids, IA, home with the help of the solar experts at Van Meter Inc. and Rabe Hardware.



## CHALLENGE

Barnard wasn't only interested in reducing his family's energy costs, but also their carbon footprint. As a certified EcoBroker, the premier green designation awarded to real estate professionals, it's his job and passion to educate clients on eco-friendly alternatives. He decided utilizing solar energy at his home would be the best way to show clients how going green can also save them green.

"There's really no better way to educate buyers than being able to show them first hand what I have experienced," said Barnard.

Barnard was purchasing 13,030 kWh (kilowatt-hours) annually from Alliant Energy, which means his solar array would need to produce close to that amount in order to significantly reduce his energy costs. Long-time partners Van Meter and Rabe Hardware teamed up to develop a plan.

## SOLUTION

"We designed this project with Cory's family in mind and their needs," said Jake Rabe, owner of Rabe Hardware.

"Our solar designs basically are...house by house. It's not a one-size-fits-all," explained Rabe. "We really have to get the information that we need based on the last 12 months usage history, and then we can really dial in an exact need for the consumer." Rabe also takes things into consideration like the age of children to determine how much energy a family will need in the future. Children use more power as they age, but household usage decreases when they eventually leave home for college and careers.

"Van Meter and Jake at Rabe Hardware have been huge in helping me with this," said Barnard. "Jake explained things to me better than any other company that I met with when deciding to do this project."

In order to meet Barnard's needs, Rabe Hardware's design called for utilizing all of the allowable roof space and installing 27, 60-watt solar modules. Because these modules would be visible from the street, Van Meter Solar Specialist, Ethan Wollbrink, who helped Rabe Hardware and Barnard wade through a sea of product options, recommended 60-cell, black-on-black modules to maintain the curb appeal of Barnard's home. After all, who would want an industrial-looking, silver eyesore on the roof when there are prettier options?



### DID YOU KNOW?

SOLAR ACCOUNTED FOR 64 PERCENT OF ALL NEW ELECTRIC GENERATING CAPACITY TO COME ONLINE IN THE U.S. IN FIRST QUARTER, 2016.

GENERATED 64 PERCENT OF ELECTRIC POWER



ACCORDING TO SEIA.ORG/SMI

"That product question is the largest overlooked detail in my opinion," said Wollbrink. "There are globally over 80 manufacturers of just modules."

In addition, Wollbrink recommended a SolarEdge inverter, which converts DC (direct current) electricity to usable AC (alternating current) power while also maximizing energy output. Rabe's licensed and trained electricians performed the installation.

## THE RESULT

**Taking advantage of a 30 percent federal tax credit and a 15 percent break at the state level, Barnard was able to save \$9,342, cutting the cost of the \$20,762 project down to \$11,420.**

The 27-module array will produce a minimum of 11,234 kWh's per year – 86 percent of Barnard's annual usage. This means his \$1,923.86 annual electric costs will be reduced to just \$265.18, and the savings will pay for his system in just 5.5 years.

After those 5.5 years, Barnard and his family will enjoy inexpensive, clean energy. And Barnard will enjoy being able to personally show clients the cost-saving benefits of utilizing a renewable resource. "The neighbors are actually very jealous of our utility bill when we start talking at the neighbor's pool or neighborhood get-togethers," said Barnard. "We're basically paying \$10 a month in a service fee that would be an extreme cost during the summer. I know a lot of people in the neighborhood that are having \$200 to \$300 bills and ours are staying the same at a low, low cost."

Together, Rabe and Wollbrink are making a big difference to customers like Barnard, the environment, and each other. "What Ethan was able to do with Rabe Hardware was get us up to speed very quickly with showing us the math of solar and how everything would work with design . . .," said Rabe. "He actually helped us do our own install on our own business and has really held our hand . . . [through] really understanding and learning what solar can do not only for us as a provider of solar, but also for the consumer."



## WORTH NOTING

SOLAR ENERGY IS THE **MOST ABUNDANT** ENERGY RESOURCE ON EARTH - **173,000 TERAWATTS** OF SOLAR ENERGY STRIKES THE EARTH CONTINUOUSLY. THAT'S MORE THAN 10,000 TIMES THE WORLD'S TOTAL ENERGY USE.

ACCORDING TO ENERGY.GOV





## YOUR ENERGY SOLUTION

Van Meter Inc. provides expert advice in the selection and design of solar energy solutions and more. We welcome your call to discuss your next project. To speak with a Van Meter representative, call 1-800-247-1410. We'll quickly connect you with the person or information you need.



### Skogman Realty

Skogman Realty is one of the largest locally-owned real estate companies in eastern Iowa. Cory Barnard is one of Skogman's top producers and one of only two EcoBrokers in the state of Iowa.

### Rabe Hardware

Rabe Hardware is a family-owned and -operated business in Blairstown, IA. It started in 1979 as a local hardware store and has grown into a full-service operation providing solar, geothermal, electrical, plumbing, HVAC, and indoor air quality services.

### Van Meter Inc.

Van Meter Inc. is a 100-percent employee-owned distributor of electrical, automation, lighting, datacomm, power transmission, utility and clean energy supplies, services and solutions. Headquartered in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, the company has 15 locations throughout the Midwest.

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#### OUR PRODUCTS

