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La Crescent Designated “SolSmart Gold” for Advancing Solar Energy Growth



La Crescent, Minn. — The City of La Crescent is receiving a Gold designation from the national [SolSmart](#) program for making it faster, easier, and more affordable for homes and businesses to go solar. This designation recognizes La Crescent for taking bold steps to encourage solar energy growth and remove obstacles to solar development. SolSmart is led by The Solar Foundation and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and funded by the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Energy Technologies Office. More than 300 cities, counties, and small towns have achieved SolSmart designation since the program launched in 2016.

Sustainability coordinator Jason Ludwigson noted that as a member of the Minnesota GreenStep city program La Crescent is continuing to advance opportunities for businesses and residents to benefit from the installation of solar energy. The SolSmart gold designation makes the solar install process faster and reduces the cost associated with solar energy. This designation will help improve our community resilience and reduce air pollution.

As a SolSmart designee, La Crescent is helping solar companies greatly reduce the cost of installations and pass those savings on to consumers. This allows even more local homes and businesses to obtain affordable, clean, and reliable electricity through solar. The actions La Crescent has taken will help encourage solar companies to do business in the area, driving economic development and creating local jobs. To receive designation, cities and counties make changes to their local processes to reduce the time and money it takes to install a solar energy system. This includes evaluating local permitting processes, as well as planning and zoning procedures. SolSmart designees also develop innovations in areas such as market development and finance.

SolSmart uses objective criteria to award communities points based on the actions they take to reduce barriers to solar energy development. Communities that take sufficient action are designated either gold, silver, or bronze. As part of the SolSmart program, a team of national experts provides no-cost technical assistance to help communities achieve designation. All cities and counties are eligible to join the SolSmart program and receive this technical assistance. Interested communities can learn more at [SolSmart.org](https://www.solsmart.org).