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Beware of Shady Solar Sales Tactics

GRANTS, N.M. – Door-to-door salespeople are pressuring Co-op service-area homeowners, including some Continental Divide employees, to sign up for solar panel installations before a tax credit expires Dec. 31st.

In the process, these solicitors are spreading misinformation about Continental Divide, telling residents the Co-op is raising its electric rates by double digits later this year. This information is **FALSE**. Continental Divide **IS NOT** raising electric rates in 2025.

The rogue sales campaign comes at a time when New Mexico's solar industry braces for fallout from the Trump administration's sweeping tax and domestic policy bill which terminates tax credits for rooftop solar, geothermal heat pumps and other home devices as of Dec. 31, 2025.

The residential clean energy tax credits, created by the Inflation Reduction Act during the Biden administration, had been set to expire in 2035. The elimination of the residential solar tax credit represents a fundamental shift in federal energy policy.

"It's unfortunate the tax credits are sunseting, said Mac Juarez, Continental Divide's member services manager.

Solar industry experts predict job losses in the thousands and a rush to complete as many installations as possible before year's end, leading to longer wait times and scheduling challenges for homeowners.

It also means the increased likelihood of "too-good-to-be-true deals" by some salespeople, Juarez said.

"If a salesperson tells you they are working with Continental Divide or your electric company, they've lied to you already," he said. "We do not endorse *any* sales companies, solar or otherwise."

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Often, visions of slashed electricity costs lure homeowners to solar power. But beneath the shiny photovoltaic panels is a web of hidden expenses that many never see coming.

And if you expect a return on your investment, through a net metering agreement with our Co-op, there are other cost considerations – insurance coverage on the panels, engineer-stamped plans and permits are just a few. If a system's size exceeds 10 kilowatts, there is a cost for transformer upgrade.

Net metering allows any excess energy to flow back onto the electric grid, not all energy produced. For example, if a homeowner with solar uses 8,000 kilowatt-hours (kWh) a year and generates 10,000 kWh, then the payback to the member is based on 2,000 kWh.

“This payback, which is set by state regulators, is marginal compared to the cost of a system, making a return on investment decades, or longer, Juarez said. “Your most important consideration is doing your research.”

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