



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **WHAT IS THE REGULATORY PROCESS THAT MAPLE RIVER SOLAR MUST GO THROUGH TO RECEIVE APPROVAL TO BUILD THE PROJECT?**

**A:** To receive approval to build the Maple River Solar Project, the regulatory process occurs at both the local and state level. Zoning or development permits must be obtained from the county where the project will be located. This is because all solar energy projects are subject to local land use controls and regulations regardless of size. In addition, due to the project's scale, Maple River Solar must also apply for a generating certificate with the Iowa Utilities Board at the state level, following the requirements outlined in Iowa Code 476A. This state-level process allows for input from the local county and town councils as well.

### **HOW WILL THE PROJECT IMPACT FARMLAND AND LOCAL AGRICULTURE?**

**A:** Solar development and traditional agricultural can co-exist side-by-side and are increasingly found together. Responsible solar development provides benefits to both agriculture and ecosystems by improving soil health, retaining water, nurturing native species, and supporting native pollinators which improves local food production. In addition, solar projects help farmers and landowners diversify their income through a reliable, drought-resistant revenue stream. This steady income means that farmers are less vulnerable to fluctuations in market prices on their products, uncertain trade regimes, and volatile annual weather, thus helping farmers stay in business. Additionally, at the end of the project's operating period, the project will be decommissioned, at the project owner's expense, and the land will be available for all future potential uses including traditional agriculture.

### **IS THERE A FIRE RISK ASSOCIATED WITH UTILITY-SCALE SOLAR POWER GENERATION FACILITIES?**

**A:** There is a very low risk of fire at large-scale solar facilities. The equipment at Maple River Solar will be monitored 24/7 electronically, and physically throughout a standard work week. It is the Project's number one priority to ensure the safe operation of the Project facility and the safety of nearby residents and landowners. As Maple River Solar is being developed, the Project team will work with local fire departments regarding all necessary procedures for the safe handling of fires within the facility. Irrespective of this prudent planning, fires within the Project are unlikely to occur.

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## ARE PROPERTY VALUES IMPACTED BY THIS FACILITY?

**A:** Studies show that large-scale solar power facilities economically benefit the community and do not decrease residential property resale values. The increase in revenues generated by the facility typically lead to more funding for local services like schools, roads and emergency services. Additionally, many homeowners view the solar facility as a safe and quiet neighbor.

## HOW IS THE SOLAR PROJECT TAXED?

**A:** The Maple River Solar Project will provide an estimated property tax of \$7 million over the expected project life of 40 years.

## WHERE WILL THE POWER GENERATED FROM THE PROJECT GO?

**A:** Power from Maple River Solar will be delivered into the Iowa electric grid, helping to diversify the state's energy portfolio. Power generated by the Project will be used both locally and transmitted to where it's needed, based on demand.

## ARE SOLAR PANELS TOXIC?

**A:** No. Maple River Solar will utilize monocrystalline silicon photovoltaic (PV) solar panels, which account for over 90% of solar panels installed today. These panels use a crystalline lattice of silicon atoms to convert sunlight into electricity. Silicon is the second most abundant material on Earth (after oxygen) and the most common semiconductor material used in computer chips. It is nontoxic and does not pose a risk to public health or safety. When a project is decommissioned, panels can be recycled.

## WHAT WILL THIS DO TO LOCAL WILDLIFE?

**A:** Impacts on local wildlife are expected to be minimal. State certified third party environmental experts will assess the Project footprint by conducting site-specific studies to understand and mitigate potential impacts on wildlife. The Project will comply with all state and federal wildlife regulations, including any requirements of the United States Fish and Wildlife service and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. Small, local wildlife will be able to come and go through wildlife-friendly fencing, including rabbits and other small mammals, turtles and small reptiles. The Project fencing will be set back from public roadways, and larger animals, such as deer, will be able to safely travel around the Project area.

## WHAT HAPPENS TO SOLAR PANELS AT THE END OF THEIR LIFE?

**A:** As part of the permitting process, Maple River Solar will provide a detailed decommissioning plan and the funds necessary to decommission the project at the beginning of it's operation. At the end of the Project's useful life (40 years on average), panels can be removed and recycled. Up to 90% of the materials used in panels, much of which is glass and aluminum, are recyclable.

## FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION ON THE MAPLE RIVER SOLAR:

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