

# Dirty Tricks Plague Clean Energy, but SunSolar Fights Back. And So Can You!

By Erick O'Donnell

As a mission-driven company, we tend to keep an eye on more than just our own bottom line. Together, we and our customers are investing in a clean, resilient energy infrastructure. The success of that investment depends on a culture of integrity, not just in our own firm but in the industry as a whole.

That is why news over the past few years gives reason for concern. Unscrupulous practices in America's solar industry have recently been the focus of scrutiny from government officials and watchdog groups, a trend that points both to a troubling lack of accountability and to a growing recognition of the need to create it.

State attorneys general throughout the country have launched a spate of investigations over the past few years into deceptive sales pitches and other dishonest business practices. Law firm Troutman Pepper, which has been tracking these investigations, has so far found one significant resolution to a legal action: a \$69,000 settlement between the New Jersey Attorney General's Office and a company based in the state, which was accused of failing to make good on claims about savings and costs related to system purchases. And it's not just state governments that are involved; the SEC has recently opened an investigation into allegedly defective panels sold by Tesla.

A few patterns stand out. Official investigations, as well as our own observations, show that solar companies often strategically rebrand themselves after receiving unfavorable public exposure, including a Missouri company that changed its name amid consumer complaints and an investigation by the state attorney general. And, in addition to being misled by sales pitches about the finances of investing in a solar system, customers tend to complain of shoddy installation work after being left with roof leaks or even structural damage.

Such slipshod work can be found in the recent attorney generals' investigations as well as news reports, such as a 2019 investigation by an east-coast ABC affiliate that uncovered severe damage to customers' roofs by major national installers. One customer suffered water damage to all her rooms after installers left severe leaks. The news outlet found another customer whose roof started cracking under the weight of his panels, which had been installed not by the company that sold the system but by a contractor.

That last detail highlights a recurring problem, the consequences of which are personal for our own company's leaders. Speaking to a reporter for Solar Power World, Val Berechet, co-founder and CEO at SunSolar Solutions, recently shared his own eye-opening experience dealing with subpar installation work. After a drawn-out regulatory process full of administrative delays and failed inspections,

the company Berechet had chosen ultimately left holes in his roof that were visible from the attic. The experience both angered and inspired him.

"I was angry that a contractor would disrespect a customer and their home this way, hacking up the roof and leaving holes," Berechet told reporter Kelly Pickerel. "[I also had this] feeling of motivation that this can be done better. From there, I set out to start a solar company."

The company he co-founded, SunSolar Solutions, has been devoted since its founding to honest quotes and high-quality installation, which it ensured at first by carefully selecting its contractors and then, starting last year, by performing all installation work in-house. The results are apparent in customers' responses; SunSolar is the top recommended solar installer on Yelp and is rated A+ by the Better Business Bureau.

Widespread ethical problems in the industry are especially unfortunate given the need for trust at this pivotal moment in history. Increasingly severe and frequent weather disasters around the world—from the perpetual wildfires in California to the massive floods that recently inundated much of Pakistan—are vindicating decades' worth of expert warnings about the consequences of continuing to rely on planet-warming fossil fuels. Meanwhile, with the tax credits that were extended and bolstered by Congress earlier this year, the federal government is effectively offering to pay homeowners, on better terms than ever before, to install their own distributed, sun-fueled power generators—a key component of plans to build an advanced, climate-neutral energy infrastructure.

In short, we are facing both the greatest need and the greatest opportunity to avert the worst consequences of an artificially distorted climate, and we can only do so through confident, concerted action. Such action is possible only in a climate of trust, the very thing that is undermined by greed-fueled, underhanded business practices.

Dirty tricks are threatening to erode trust in this critical industry, but vigilant investigative work—whether by public officials, journalists, or concerned citizens—can equip us with the knowledge to fight back against scammers and bolster trust.

But customers need to actively make use of that knowledge by hiring only companies with a proven track record of competence and fair dealing. SunSolar Solutions has been helping homeowners go solar for over 7 years, and in that time it has proven its outstanding craftsmanship and integrity through our service to over 8,800 satisfied customers. (And we've had the same name the whole time!)

If you're ready to bypass fossil fuels and scammers, then call SunSolar Solutions today at 623-562-9009 to have a design prepared for your home free of charge.

**GO SOLAR**

**GET  
NEW TAX  
CREDIT  
AMOUNT!**



Call Today  
**623-562-9009**

8932 W Cactus Rd Peoria AZ 85381  
[www.SunsolarSolutions.com](http://www.SunsolarSolutions.com)

**We Make it Easy**



\$0 Down  
No upfront cost



Save up to 90% off  
your utility bill.



Significantly increase  
the value of your home



Provide clean, reliable  
energy for your family  
powered by the sun.

Receive  
**\$500  
CASH**

Limited time offer. With lease or purchase.  
Ad must be present at time of purchase. Call for details.  
Not valid with any other offer or on  
previous purchases.

**ZERO  
MONEY  
DOWN**

Call for details.

