



# Village of Northbrook

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## ***NORTHBROOK DESIGNATED “SOLSMART GOLD” FOR ADVANCING SOLAR ENERGY GROWTH***

**Northbrook, IL:** Northbrook received a Gold designation from the national [SolSmart](#) program for making it faster, easier, and more affordable for homes and businesses to go solar. SolSmart is led by the Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and funded by the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Energy Technologies Office. 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 distinguished either gold, silver, or bronze. Gold is the highest designation communities may receive, and Northbrook secured this after a year of preparation and coordination.

This designation recognizes the Village of Northbrook for taking bold steps to encourage solar energy growth and remove obstacles to solar development. For companies looking to expand, a SolSmart Gold designation is a signal that Northbrook is “open for solar business.” As a SolSmart designee, Northbrook 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 Northbrook 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. To become a SolSmart Gold community, Northbrook took steps to streamline the zoning process with a code amendment that allows solar panel installation by-right in all districts. Additionally, the Department of Planning and Development Services committed to ensuring a three-day turnaround time on permitting small rooftop solar panels. Northbrook also facilitates a Community Solar program in which residents can invest in solar energy generation from a local solar farm to achieve savings and renewable energy credits on their utility bill. These are just some of the many actions taken to engage solar development within the Village of Northbrook: visit <https://www.northbrook.il.us/1032/Solar-Initiatives> to learn more.

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