

Virtual Inspections Help Clean Energy Projects Move Forward

The new process for energy-efficient projects benefits project developers and customers.

Before COVID-19, Donnie Martin, president of Going Green NRG, spent hours daily driving on busy Southern California roads. Many of those hours were spent driving to and from inspections on projects his company was completing to help clients save energy and money.

When he would arrive, the inspection process wasn't as easy as it could be. Showroom floors and stores were busy with customers, often making it challenging to make sure the needed work wasn't disruptive to his client.

When Gov. Newsom issued the stay-at-home order, everything changed. Most businesses had to adapt their work process, many were closed or required their employees to work from home. It also meant the mandatory inspection process that required physical site inspections for energy-efficiency, solar, and battery installation projects was mostly put on hold. Without inspections, many incentives and rebates that help customers install equipment that reduces energy use or supports clean energy would be at risk.

Key to Incentive and Rebate Eligibility

The SCE team that helps customers implement these projects quickly realized it needed to find a way to adapt the current process to meet the new and existing guidelines and requirements.

“We knew we had to move quickly to come up with a solution so our customers wouldn't be in a position where their projects were no longer eligible for the incentives and rebates that were available to them,” said Alok Singh, SCE principal manager of Engineering Services, Customer Services and Programs.

In a few months, SCE worked with customers, vendors, and third-party technical reviewers to design, test, and roll out a virtual site inspection process that minimized the impact on customers and vendors while still providing the necessary results.

“I would prefer using the virtual inspection process,” said Martin. “The process was explained to me beforehand, it was very easy to do, and there were no surprises. Plus, it was also less disruptive for my customer.”

Safe, Flexible, and Seamless

The virtual inspections use smartphones, computers, and video conferencing software to safely complete the inspection process. Since different programs have different inspection needs, the process is flexible so it can meet specific equipment requirements.

Before a virtual inspection takes place, the “when, what, and how” of the process is discussed and agreed on by SCE, the project developer, and end customer. This enables a seamless experience for everyone involved and makes sure the needed results are achieved.

The virtual inspection has proven to be successful, with more than 300 energy-efficiency, solar, and battery storage installation virtual inspections completed by the end of May. Due to the success of and benefits from virtual inspections, the process will continue to be used by SCE even after the pandemic is over.

That should help project developers like Martin, who believes it's a better use of everyone's time. He has saved up to eight hours each week through virtual inspections.

For more information on SCE programs that can provide financial incentives and energy savings, contact your Account Manager or visit [sce.com/business/savings-incentives](https://www.sce.com/business/savings-incentives).



A recently implemented process enables virtual site inspections of energy-efficiency, solar, and battery installation projects that are eligible for incentives and rebates.

Earn Financial Incentives Through Demand Response Programs

A key to business success is keeping electricity costs down, especially during the hot summer months – and at SCE, we're committed to helping you do just that.

We offer Demand Response (DR) programs to help you reduce your costs. Your business may **benefit** from temporarily lowering energy usage during high-use or peak times, or from shifting usage to off-peak hours. This, in turn, helps reduce overall electricity demand and alleviate strain on our electric system. You'll not only potentially save money, you'll also help the environment.

The following select DR programs are currently open to new enrollment and offer smart ways to lower your bills through rate discounts, bill credits, and incentives.



- **Automated Demand Response (Auto-DR):** Auto-DR provides equipment control incentives to enable you to participate in DR programs by reducing electricity usage without manual intervention. The controls incentivized by Auto-DR let you preselect your load reduction strategies and automatically respond to DR events for maximum flexibility and ease-of-use. You also can override Auto-DR signals or revise your load reduction strategies when necessary.
- **Critical Peak Pricing (CPP):** CPP is a rate that offers a discount on summer electricity rates in exchange for higher prices during 12 CPP event days per year, usually occurring on the hottest summer days. By reducing your electricity use during CPP events, you can lower your electric costs during the summer season – when your bills are typically the highest.
- **Real-Time Pricing (RTP):** If your business has flexibility around its operating schedule, you may want to consider the RTP rate. This rate schedule is beneficial if you can reduce energy usage during hours with higher temperature-driven prices, and/or shift usage to lower-priced hours. You may want to sign up for RTP courtesy email notifications that alert you of temperature-based price changes.
- **Summer Discount Plan (SDP):** Through SDP, you can receive monthly credits on your summer season bills. SCE installs a small remote-controlled device on or near your central A/C unit(s). The device allows us to turn off or cycle your A/C compressor(s) for up to six hours a day during an SDP event.
- **Capacity Bidding Program (CBP):** This flexible bidding program pays you for reducing energy during events in which energy prices are high, demand reaches critical levels, or supply is limited. You can change your monthly level of participation depending on your business needs. If you take part through a third-party DR aggregator, participation and incentives are managed by the aggregator.
- **Third-Party Demand Response Providers:** Third-party DR providers develop and manage their own DR programs that may be available to you. By partnering directly with businesses, DR providers can pool or aggregate customers under their DR program(s) to achieve energy reductions. Your participation and incentives are managed by the third parties.

For a complete list of SCE's DR programs, a list of third-party DR providers, and to learn how we can work together to help you manage your company's energy use and improve your bottom line, contact your Account Manager or visit [sce.com/drp](https://www.sce.com/drp).