

# Santa Barbara ranks in top solar cities

Megan Birney on Wednesday, 08 February 2012.



Environment California recently released a study comparing adoption of solar among California cities. As expected, big cities, San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Jose (respectively) came in on top for total number of installed systems, and total installed capacity. Environment California also analyzed small and medium sized cities, and installations per capita. That's where things get interesting.

Of the 170 municipalities in California with populations over 50,000, Santa Barbara ranks 9<sup>th</sup> in number of solar installations per capita (0.81 installations per 100 people). While we don't fair quite as well in installed capacity per capita (19<sup>th</sup>), we are by far above average in both categories.

The other cities in our region that made the list are Ojai, ranked 12<sup>th</sup> in the small cities category with almost four solar installations per 100 people, and Paso Robles ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in the large town category with 0.17 installations per 100 people.

We give credit for this accomplishment to a combination of forward thinking individuals and good government policies.

Ever since the 1969 oil spill, Santa Barbara residents have recognized the importance of moving away from our dependence on fossil fuels for environmental and economic reasons. By installing solar, residents have stabilized their energy costs and those with electric vehicles have switched to fuel supplied by the sun for their transportation needs. We at CEC like to think that we might have helped some of those people make the decision to go solar with events like [CEC's Earth Day Festival](#) and [Solar SUNday](#), and our publications like [Get Started with Solar \(PDF\)](#).

The City of Santa Barbara also deserves recognition. Not only has the City has installed solar on government facilities; they have also created a streamlined permitting process for rooftop solar, allowing homeowners to get a permit in less than an hour. Streamlined permitting creates certainty and reduces costs for solar. CEC is proud to have helped develop that process years ago and continues to work with the City on further improvements to the solar permitting process.

And a big thanks to Environment California for collecting and analyzing the data. We look forward to next year's report.

Rank	City	# of Installations per 100 people
1	Santa Cruz	1.44
2	Clovis	1.18
3	Rocklin	1.09
4	Davis	1.09
5	Watsonville	1.09
6	Roseville	0.98
7	Santa Rosa	0.87
8	San Ramon	0.85
9	Santa Barbara	0.81
10	Berkeley	0.76
11	Rancho Cordova	0.76
12	Pleasanton	0.75
13	Petaluma	0.75
14	San Rafael	0.72
15	Chico	0.71
16	Palo Alto	0.70
17	Livermore	0.68
18	Napa	0.66
19	Novato	0.66
20	Walnut Creek	0.63
21	Cupertino	0.57
22	Madera	0.57
23	Encinitas	0.56
24	El Cajon	0.54
25	Woodland	0.53
26	Mountain View	0.52
27	Brentwood	0.50
28	Escondido	0.49
29	San Marcos	0.49
30	La Mesa	0.48