

SOLAR FAQs

What is the permitting process that Mink Solar must go through to receive approval to build the project?

A: Mink Solar will submit an application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need (CECPN) with the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB). The OPSB staff, including staff from all OPSB member agencies, will review the application to ensure that the Project will be properly sited within the proposed footprint. Prior to submitting an application for a CECPN with the OPSB, Mink Solar will be required to host two Public Informational Meetings (PIM) to inform the public and log and address questions and concerns from the community. After the application is filed, the OPSB will hold two hearings that are open to the public prior to making a decision on the Project. This process ensures proper public notice of the proposed Project and holds the developer accountable for meeting all regulations required by the OPSB.

How will the project impact farmland and local agriculture?

A: Solar development and traditional agriculture can co-exist side-by-side and increasingly are 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 farms help farmers and landowners diversify their income by providing 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 its useful life, the project will be decommissioned, and the land will be available for all future potential uses, including traditional farming practices.

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 Mink Solar will be electronically monitored 24/7, and physically monitored 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 Mink Solar is developed, the Project team will work with local fire departments regarding all necessary procedures for the safe handling of fires within the facility. While this is prudent planning, fires within the Project are highly unlikely to occur.

Are property values impacted by this facility?

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



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Where will the power generated from the project go?

A: The power from Mink Solar will be delivered into the local Ohio electric grid, helping to diversify the state's energy portfolio. Power generated from the Project will be used both locally and transmitted to where it is needed based on demand.

Are solar panels toxic?

A: No. Mink Solar will utilize monocrystalline silicon photovoltaic (PV) solar panels, which account for over 90% of solar PV 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 semi-conductor 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 to local wildlife are expected to be minimal. Project environmental experts have been assessing 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 requirements of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR). Small local wildlife will be able to come and go through wildlife friendly fencing, including rabbits and other small mammals as well as turtles and other small reptiles. The Project fencing will be set back from public roadways, and larger animals, such as deer, will be able to safely traverse around the Project area.

What happens to solar panels at the end of their life?

A: As part of the permitting process, Mink Solar will provide a detailed decommissioning plan and a commitment to implement the same. At the end of the Project's useful life (35-40 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.

Are solar panels noisy?

A: No, solar panels themselves are completely silent. Certain pieces of equipment in a solar facility, which includes inverters, transformers, and motors, do emit a small amount of sound during the day from sunrise to sunset. The impact of this sound is negligible because the equipment is strategically placed within the solar layout and is typically distant from the property lines. Transportation and maintenance equipment – including cars, trucks, lawnmowers and string trimmers – are also a common source of noise on solar farms that most people are used to hearing elsewhere. A noise study will be conducted to ensure that the project operates within applicable noise limits.



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ON THE MINK SOLAR PROJECT:**

info@minksolar.com
419-789-4123

minksolar.com