THE SOLAR OPPORTUNITY

How home inspectors can super charge their businesses with solar inspections

Presented by

INSPECTOR SERVICES GROUP

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INTRODUCTION

A new roofline of opportunity

Millions of homeowners across the United States currently have solar installations of one kind or another, and over the next few years, millions more will add these systems to their homes. Most of those homes may eventually enter the resale market, and buyers will rely on a home inspector to help them understand its condition.

That's good news for you. Solar panels sit right on the roofs and walls you already inspect, yet many inspectors skip them because they're not familiar with how to conduct a solar inspection. Home inspectors who learn the basics, add solar inspections to their service list, and back it with the right protection will stand out against the competition. You'll build stronger ties with agents, and you'll add real money to every job that involves a home with a solar installation.

This guide will walk you through the basics of performing solar inspections. Here's what's inside:

- How big the solar market is in the U.S. and what it means for your business
- Why adding solar inspections pays off, in dollars and in reputation
- How to do a solar inspection, including the tools you need and where to get trained
- How Inspector Services Group (ISG) helps you turn this into protected, branded revenue with the Solar Protection Plan

Whether you're brand new to solar or ready to add it to your list of services, this guide gives you a clear next step.

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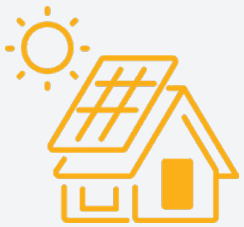
CHAPTER 1

The solar opportunity for home inspectors



The United States: A fast-growing residential solar energy market

In 2026, the U.S. surpassed 6 million solar installations, according to the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA). About 97% of all U.S. solar systems sit on residential rooftops. **Roughly 9% of U.S. homes have solar today. SEIA expects that to hit 11% by 2030.** In early 2025, a new solar project was installed every 59 seconds.

6M+
Total U.S. solar installations reached in 2026 (SEIA)

97%
Share of U.S. solar installations that sit on home rooftops

9%
U.S. homes with solar today, headed to 11% by 2030

Despite steady growth, solar power installations aren't spread evenly across the country. They're concentrated in certain states, which matters when you're deciding where to invest in training. In the table below, you can see selected states with large numbers of residential rooftop solar installations as of June 2026:

State / Territory	Solar Installations	National Rank
California	1,561,000+	1st
Arizona	228,000+	2nd
Puerto Rico	191,000+	
Texas	176,000+	3rd
New York	162,000+	4th
New Jersey	150,000+	5th
Nevada	149,000+	6th
Florida	142,000+	7th
Massachusetts	132,000+	8th
Colorado	102,000+	9th

Source: SEIA state-by-state solar data (2026) and U.S. Energy Information Administration data on Puerto Rico rooftop solar (end of 2025). These nine are the states and territories we could confirm at over 100,000 installations with hard numbers. SEIA counts 15 states and territories past that mark nationally; Hawaii and Maryland are close behind.

What this means for your business

Here's the bottom line: many of the homes you already inspect have solar on them, and that number will grow.

If you work in a region with a high concentration of solar installations (the West Coast, the Southwest, or parts of the Northeast), homes with solar already comprise a significant share of residential properties.

Inspectors who move quickly to learn more about solar inspections and get the right training will win more referrals from agents, helping them to stand out against the competition and, of course, potentially grow their businesses faster.

CHAPTER 2

Benefits of offering solar inspections

Adding solar inspections isn't just about keeping up. It's a chance to stand out, build stronger agent relationships, and earn more on every job.

Average cost of a solar inspection, by region

Solar inspection prices depend on your region, the system size, how hard the roof is to access, and how deep you go, from a quick visual check to a full electrical and thermal-imaging review. Nationally, a standard solar inspection runs $150 to $350. Most homeowners pay around $200 to $300 for a straightforward check of the panels, wiring, inverters, and mounting hardware.

Region / Market	Typical Add-On Inspection Range	Notes
U.S. National Average	$150 to $350	Basic visual and function check; most jobs land at $200 to $300
California, New York, Hawaii	$225 to $450	High-cost markets run 20 to 40% above the national average
U.S. South & Midwest	$150 to $275	Lower labor costs keep prices near the low end
Advanced (thermal imaging)	$250 to $500+	Available anywhere; spots hot spots and micro-cracks
Advanced (drone-assisted survey)	$400 to $800+	Used for steep or hard-to-reach roofs

Sources: Angi 2026 Solar Panel Inspection Cost data; HomeGuide and Fixr solar maintenance cost data; regional home-inspection pricing benchmarks. Figures are national industry ranges for solar-specific inspection or maintenance-check services and will vary by local market, system size, and roof accessibility.

Here's the takeaway: You don't need to price a solar add-on like a big specialty service to make money on it. If you already charge $50 to $150 for add-ons like sewer scope, mold, or radon, a basic solar check can sit in that same range. Thermal imaging is a natural upsell on top of that.

Stand out to real estate agents

When a listing has solar, buyers ask a lot of questions: How old is the system? Is it owned, leased, or financed? Is it under a warranty? Is it working well? If your inspection skips the panels, those questions go unanswered right up to closing.

Learn how to perform solar inspections and become the inspector who has the answers. A trained inspector can document the system's visible condition, identify available equipment and operating information, explain important limitations, and direct clients to the appropriate records and professionals for ownership, financing, warranty, and transfer questions. In a business built on repeat referrals, that kind of trust is hard for other inspectors to catch up to.

Drive more revenue per inspection

Every add-on you offer grows your average ticket size without needing a new client. Solar is a valuable add-on because it only typically adds 30 to 60 minutes to your inspection, far less than a second trip. And you can charge the same as other add-ons, like sewer scope or mold testing.

Do it right and solar opens another revenue stream: a branded protection plan you offer at the point of sale (see more about this in Chapter 4). Between the home inspection and solar inspection fees, even a modest number of solar homes each month helps drive additional revenue, all without chasing a single new client.

CHAPTER 3

Tools and training for solar inspections

So, what exactly is a solar inspection and when does a home inspector get involved? For the most part, they're generally a visual, non-invasive assessment of accessible components and available operating information. Lastly, home inspectors typically perform a solar inspection as part of a real estate transaction.

In general, most solar inspections break down across four main types, with most home inspectors falling into levels 1 and 2:

Level 1

Visual solar inspection

Observing and documenting the visible condition of the system. This is what an inspector can do today without added training, and it is what most inspectors who "look at solar" actually do.

Level 2

Analyzed solar inspection

Combines a level 1 visual inspection with analytics to measure the health of the system: what it is producing against what it should be producing, how much useful life remains, and whether it is safe and correctly installed. Performed by a trained and certified home inspector inside a real estate transaction.

Level 3

Solar repair inspection

Performed by a repair technician or a licensed solar contractor, a solar repair inspection produces a repair specification or a repair quote. This is the direct equivalent of a contractor following up a home inspection to confirm what the inspector found and price what it takes to restore the item to full functionality.

Level 4

Solar forensic inspection

Determines why a system failed catastrophically and establishes the source of a major failure affecting the solar system or the property it sits on. It attributes that failure to its code source and backs the finding with full industry, manufacturer and code documentation. Insurance dispute and litigation work.

Tools needed per solar inspection type

Tool	Level	Typically carried by
Camera or phone	1	Home inspector
Binoculars or optical zoom	1	Home inspector
Manufacturer and equipment identification resources	1	Home inspector
Solar inspection checklist	1	Home inspector
Clamp-on multimeter	2, required	Certified home inspector
Digital multimeter	Any	Useful at any level
Drone	Any	Depends on roof access, not on level
Infrared camera	3 to 4	Repair technician, forensic practitioner
Insulation-resistance tester	3	Licensed solar contractor or electrician
Irradiance and shade measurement equipment	3 to 4	Repair technician, forensic practitioner

Of course, **safety is crucial.** Electrical measurements and testing should be performed only by inspectors properly trained and qualified for the equipment and hazards involved, legally permitted to perform the work in their jurisdiction, and appropriately insured. Equally important, inspectors should not remove covers, disconnect conductors, open energized equipment, or perform live electrical testing outside their training and authorized scope.

How and where to get trained

Training breaks down into two types. The first is quick-start training built for real estate: it teaches you to spot problems and write a solar section for your inspection report, fast. The second is more comprehensive training that gives you a real technical grounding in how PV (photovoltaic) systems work, plus ongoing continuing education to keep your skills current as codes and equipment change.

Many inspectors start with quick-start training and add more comprehensive education as their solar business grows. Licensing and permitted inspection activities vary by state, province, and local jurisdiction, so inspectors should verify their permitted scope, training requirements, insurance coverage, and applicable Standards of Practice before offering solar inspections or performing electrical testing.

Quick-start training options built for real estate: Sprk and Solar Spek

Sprk certifies home inspectors to inspect solar. The certification course is three hours, on demand, and covers what inspectors look at on the roof and how to talk to clients about it. Sprk also publishes the Residential Solar Inspection Standards of Professional Practice, the standard for this work.

Certified inspectors use the Sprk Pro app to collect data on site. Sprk returns the Solar Inspection Certificate within 24 hours, a certified report grading the system A through F on production, storage, remaining life, and installation safety, and supports the inspector and their client through the transaction.

Solar Spek makes getting started simple for home inspectors through a comprehensive online training program designed for fast, seamless onboarding. Once trained, inspectors conduct evaluations directly through Solar Spek's dedicated app, which leverages AI to analyze data in real time. The app dynamically adapts questions based on previous inputs and flags anomalies while the inspector is still on-site, ensuring complete data collection in a single visit. A team of licensed solar professionals then reviews and certifies the comprehensive findings, issuing a final report within 24 hours.

Comprehensive, in-depth training

If you want deeper technical training, a few organizations stand out:

NABCEP®

Quality Assurance Through Board Certification.

NABCEP (North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners):

A key certifying body for solar, its PV System Inspector (PVSI) credential is built specifically for people who inspect residential and commercial solar systems and check them against code

SOLAR ENERGY INTERNATIONAL

Educate. Engage. Empower.

Solar Energy International (SEI):

Nonprofit solar training provider with both online and hands-on courses, from an entry-level PV basics class up through a full Solar Professionals Certificate Program

heatspring

HeatSpring:

An online training provider and NABCEP Registered Provider. It offers self-paced NABCEP PV System Inspector exam prep, built around solar code (the National Electrical Code's Article 690 and 705)

CHAPTER 4

How Inspector Services Group can help

Learning to inspect solar is only half the job. The other half is turning that skill into something real for your clients, something that lowers your risk, strengthens your agent relationships, and adds revenue without any extra work on your part.

The Solar Protection Plan from ISG

ISG's Solar Protection Plan is a branded warranty you can offer right at the point of inspection for just $10. It only covers what you reported as present and working at the time of inspection, which keeps the plan simple and easy to explain. Key components of the plan include:

$10
Cost per warranty submission

90 Days
Coverage from inspection, or 22 days post-closing

$2,000
Total coverage limit per policy

Covered components

- ✓ Solar panels and modules
- ✓ Inverters and microinverters
- ✓ Solar wiring and junction boxes
- ✓ Disconnect and shutdown devices
- ✓ Grounding and bonding components
- ✓ Battery storage systems
- ✓ Monitoring hardware

Why offer it

- Provides eligible clients with added financial protection when a covered component fails after the inspection
- Gives you a real selling point that helps you book more solar inspections
- Comes as a custom policy with your own logo on it, ready to hand to your client
- Comes with marketing support, including ISG-branded materials for your website and listings
- Backed by fast claims processing; clients see it as real protection, not paperwork

How the Solar Protection Plan compares

SOLAR PROTECTION PLAN

The table below compares ISG's Solar Protection Plan with a standard 90-day inspection warranty.

Feature	ISG Solar Protection Plan	General 90-Day Inspection Warranties*
Covers solar equipment	Yes, built for solar	No, usually just plumbing, electrical, HVAC & appliances
Sold by the home inspector at the inspection	Yes	Yes
Cost to offer	$10 per warranty	Roughly $12 to $50 per home, varies by plan
Coverage period	90 days from inspection, or 22 days post-closing (whichever is later)	Typically 90 to 120 days from inspection or closing
Coverage limit	$2,000 total per policy	Varies by plan and provider
Deductible	$300 per claim	Varies; some plans have no deductible
Branded to your business	Yes, your logo on the policy	Varies by provider
Best fit for	Resale inspections at point of sale	General home inspections without solar

* Based on industry-standard 90-day inspection warranty programs

Here's the takeaway: General home-inspection warranties cover the common home systems such as plumbing, electrical, HVAC. Solar usually isn't included. ISG's Solar Protection Plan is a low-cost, inspector-branded safety net you can offer a buyer the same day you hand them the inspection report.

CONCLUSION

The time to add solar is now

Six million U.S. homes have solar installed, and that number grows every month. Learn how to perform a solar inspection now and you set yourself up for years of potential referrals as more and more U.S. homeowners adopt the technology.

Here's the simple path: Find the right level of training for your business, pick up a small set of solar tools, and back your new service with a protection plan that lowers your risk and adds revenue without you having to do any extra work.

Inspector Services Group's Solar Protection Plan makes that last step easy with a $10, inspector-branded warranty that turns your new solar inspection service into a real benefit for clients. It's backed by fast claims and marketing support to help you sell it.

Solar inspections are becoming an increasingly valuable service, and inspectors who gain the knowledge now will be well positioned as more homes with solar enter the real estate market. For more information on how Inspector Services Group can help you build a business around solar inspections, visit **InspectorServicesGroup.com** today!

SOLAR
PROTECTION PLAN

Sign up for ISG's new Solar Protection Plan today!

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