



## 9. SOLAR: Boulder County, Colo., running out of rooftops for solar arrays

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Over the past three years, cities in Boulder County, Colo., have installed more than 2.5 megawatts' worth of photovoltaic solar panels, using them to power water and wastewater plants, libraries and recreation centers.

The county, which was virtually solar-free three years ago, has another 1.4 megawatts in solar projects in planning. The town of Superior predicts that the amount of sun-derived electricity could soon become up to or more than 10 percent of its annual power consumption.

"Boulder County has definitely been a leader," said Mona Newton, central regional representative with the Colorado Governor's Energy Office. "Most of the communities in the county have some sort of power purchase agreement [to fund the installation of panels] in place."

Rooftop spaces in some areas are running out because of the popularity of the systems, which received a boost from financial incentives.

Much of the buildings in downtown Boulder have been maxed out for solar panels, said Ron Diederichsen, Boulder County's facilities management project coordinator. But the county is still planning to install another 98-kilowatt system on a building it's currently remodeling.

Solar isn't without its critics in the region. In December, some in Louisville, Colo., objected over the city's plans to install 300 kilowatts of photovoltaic cells at its wastewater treatment plant and two water treatment plants. It was a waste of money, some said.

"When you target a particular industry and you make a public policy to benefit that industry, that's unfair to other industries that don't get that benefit," said Dan Pilcher, senior vice president of the Colorado Association of Commerce and Industry. "The market is being distorted, plain and simple" (John Aguilar, [Boulder \[Colo.\] Daily Camera](#), Feb. 5). -- JJP

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