

# MEET YOUR SOLAR INSTALLER GREEN MOUNTAIN SOLAR, SOUTH BURLINGTON, VERMONT

Green Energy Times staff

Green Mountain Solar (GMS) was founded in 2017. At that small beginning, Paul Lesure was the only employee (not counting his pickup truck), and he worked from his kitchen table.

Lesure explained the growth after that. "By the next year, we'd added batteries into our regular rotation of installs. By 2022, we have grown to about 30 people. And of course, our larger team doesn't fit around my kitchen table

any more – we have out grown two offices and are now in our permanent office and warehouse in South Burlington. GMS installed slightly less than two megawatts (MW) of solar systems in 2021. For 2022, that grew to about three MW."

Lesure explained that GMS has an overarching business objective. "I would say our goal as a company is to deliver a great customer experience," Lesure told us. "My favorite thing is just working with a homeowner to switch to renewable energy."

GMS installs Qcells solar panels, which are regarded as among the best available. Lesure pointed out that their new factory in Georgia makes it possible to have panels that are made in the United States. GMS almost always installs Enphase micro-inverters because, though they are a little more expensive than others, they are very reliable, with a failure rate of less than 1%, and they have strong performance advantages over string inverters for nearly all purposes smaller than utility-scale installations.



The Green Mountain Solar crew stands proudly in front of their hard work: a 20-panel, 8.4kW ground-mounted solar system. (Courtesy photos)

Also, Lesure noted one thing really special about the Enphase micro-inverters. "Our customers really love the production monitoring that they get through the Enphase app."

GMS often installs batteries for grid-tied systems. The batteries it uses are the Tesla Powerwall, SimpliPhi, and Fortress Power. Lesure said, however, "Battery backup doesn't offer a return on investment (for comparison, you wouldn't expect a generator to have a payback period). With a battery it is all about energy independence and peace of mind." It is something a person may pay extra for to be able to face stormy weather.

GMS does not do off-grid projects. However, they have been involved in some unique applications of batteries. A short article explaining one example of this, "Green Mountain Solar Retrofits Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity's New Mobile Outreach Vehicle with Green Technology," appeared at the *Green Energy Times* web site in March 2022 (<https://bit.ly/GMS-heat-pumps>).

Installation of heat pumps is very important for switching people away from fossil fuels and to renewables, and this is the reason GMS has taken on this line of work. The same can be said for chargers for electric vehicles (EVs). Progress on taking a specific home off fossil fuel dependence need not be undertaken all at once, however. "Many customers take steps, to electrify different parts of their lives as a way to reduce their dependence on fossil fuels. That's why we also offer heat pumps and car chargers. They're such a natural pair with solar."

Lesure said he is personally excited about the emergence of bidirectional EV chargers. Such chargers allow an EV that is equipped to support them to power the house. The Ford F-150 Lightning is one vehicle that can do this. And yes, Lesure has a Ford F-150 Lightning. But no, he has not put in a bidirectional charger quite yet – every time he gets one, it goes to some customer who needs it.

Clearly, for GMS, the customer comes first. Lesure described its approach to business as including a promise of an "education-forward approach and our no-hard-sales-ever." He said, "Our customers say that our team is communicative, transparent, and professional. We offer high-quality products that will stand the test of time so that our customers get the most value out of their home improvement investment. We work with the homeowner to walk through the experience."

Like most solar installers, GMS does not do financing for customers, but it does help them get financing through VSECU, which is broadly available to almost anyone living or

operating in Vermont.

We might point out that Green Mountain Solar is not associated with the utility, Green Mountain Power, which operates in Vermont, nor is it associated with Green Mountain Energy, which is a subsidiary of NRG Energy operating in Texas.

The Green Mountain Solar website is [www.greenmtnsolar.com](http://www.greenmtnsolar.com). ♻️



Top: a roof-mounted solar system. Bottom image shows a 17kW roof-mounted solar array in central Vermont. Both solar systems were installed by Green Mountain Solar.



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