



Kim Briddle stands outside of Fremont Veterinary Clinic near Shoshoni, Wyoming.

Kim Briddle - Shoshoni, Wyoming (November, 2017)

I have always been interested in solar energy. My dad was interested in this stuff back in the 1970s, and built a Passive Solar, earth berm house in Riverton in 1981. My brother built a similar house in Worland in the 80s also. We talked a lot about using solar, and how Wyoming, with its beautiful clear skies, is a good place to utilize it.

I read about solar energy in *Mother Earth News* and followed the development of alternative energy globally. I was very pleased to finally be able to afford the solar array on the clinic. I'm a black belt tightwad, and the idea of free energy from the sun is awesome to me.

We installed our system in February 2014. We worked with Creative Energies out of Lander to install. It's a 4.65 kW grid-tied system with 15 310-watt solar panels, plus the inverter. The panels generate 100% of our electrical use at the clinic. We also produce a small amount that we sell back to the grid.

I like being on the cutting edge of the technology (even though solar isn't cutting edge). I like the idea of being independent and the idea of sustainability. I only wish battery backup was not so expensive. It would be terrific to go off-grid.

The benefit to the business is the money saved over the life of the panels. The benefits to the community is the use of renewable energy.

There's no maintenance to our system. It just works. We haven't experienced any problems and the system has held up to hail. There are no drawbacks at all.

When we installed, We received federal tax credit, and depreciation expense for the business. We also received a Renewable Energy for American Program (REAP) grant for 25% of the cost of the project. With the credits, depreciation, and grant, the total cost of the system to us was \$6,817. That made the project affordable! The state could have a tax credit similar to the federal credit.... maybe tied to property tax? Or a refund of the sales tax? Anything the state could do would be great!

If you're thinking about installing solar today, you should see if you can get a grant, there is no downside, just saving money for years to come! I would encourage every business to apply for the REAP grant to take advantage of this awesome opportunity to install renewables.

I can't say enough about the opportunity to go solar. It was a project that I have been contemplating for years. The REAP grant gave us the means to carry out the project.