



Pacific Panel Cleaners LLC
solar cleaning and maintenance



The Value of a Monitoring System

If you own a photovoltaic (PV) system, you know it's one of the biggest investments you'll ever make. Wouldn't it be great if you could just install it and forget it? Unfortunately, that's often not the case, and problems always creep up unexpectedly. The best thing you can do to protect your investment is to recognize immediately when something goes wrong and get it fixed right away.

The trouble is, it's not always obvious. A partial malfunction or slow deterioration could go undetected for months or even years, potentially costing you thousands of dollars. Luckily, there is a solution and it's usually built right into your system. We're talking about the monitoring system, and it's one of the most important parts of your overall PV system.

What is the monitoring system? It's an electronic system attached to your solar panel system that continuously tracks your energy output and sends you the data remotely so you can read it from the comfort of your living room. No need to climb on the roof! It's like having an X-ray machine for your PV system, telling you what's going on at all times.

The data often comes in the form of a report, that's either emailed to you regularly or is available for download from the company's website. We recommend that you make it a habit of reading it at least once a month. Treat it the same way you would your bank statement or stock portfolio. After all, it's your money, and you want to make sure you're getting the most out of it.

There can be a lot of information to sift through in the report, depending on what kind of system you have. But start off with the basics--learn how to read your energy output. Then, when you notice something out of the ordinary it'll alert you, like the check engine light on your car dashboard. From there you can call a professional with the facts to back up your claim. Just make sure you check your contract first. It might be something that's fully covered, and you want to know ahead of time, so you don't get ripped off.

As you get the hang of it, you'll start to notice trends, like fluctuations with the weather or the seasons. You might also be able to recognize how many inverters you have and how well each one works so that you can pinpoint any problems with even more accuracy. Finally, check your firmware to make sure you're running the latest version. This assures that your system is up to date and running at maximum efficiency. Again, this is something that can easily be updated and can sometimes be done remotely if needed.

As you can see, a little knowledge goes a long way. With just a little extra effort, your PV system will last and reward you many times over. You'll be glad you did it!