Dana,

It was five years ago today that you tied my system to the grid. I'm taking this opportunity to share some statistics on a "real world" system with you. Feel free to share this information with prospective customers.

My system has twenty 195 watt panels for a total capacity of 3,900 watts (although I've seen it putting out as much as 4,150). My roof angle is 23 degrees which is a little off optimum for a grid-tied system and the roof is a few degrees off of true south. Still, the installation is close to optimum. Even though there's quite a bit of snow here at an elevation of 7,800 feet, I've only removed snow from the panels once--I just let the sun melt it. The one time I removed it was in January 2013 when the panels had been snow covered for a month.

I didn't have you install my system for financial reasons, but because it was the "right thing to do." Still, in my opinion, it's been a good financial investment. In the five years that the system has been in operation it's put 28,598 kWH into the power grid. At the current cost from SMPA of $0.13755 per kWH, that amounts to $3,934 worth of power. My system cost $30,000, but with rebates and tax credits it actually cost me $15,000. That's an annual return on my investment of 5-1/4 percent. That return on investment is pretty hard to come by these days.

Thanks for doing your part to keep carbon dioxide out of our air.

Roger