

## Solar energy incentives attract local business and home owners

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (WAAY) - With a growing interest in solar energy, tax incentives are now making solar systems even more affordable and more appealing. Southern Solar Systems Vice President Chris Shearburn says his company in Huntsville specializes in the installation of solar panels throughout the Tennessee Valley. For someone wanting to by solar power the federal government has a 30% tax credit which they can take against the entire cost of the system to install. Locally there is a group called Nexus Energy Center and they have some funding, they have opened up a program where you can get up to \$3,000 or 30 percent against the cost of a solar system, Shearburn said. With the available incentives and decrease in the cost of solar panels, businesses in Huntsville can expect to see a return on investment within five to six years. Businesses owners especially should consider solar because its just a great way to reduce any kind of future energy cost that they have. Solar panels are installed facing south. The sun hits and creates usable energy. That energy powers your house delivered through a utility company. All the power that you produce gets delivered to the utility grid first so you don't actually take that power and store it at your house and consume it but you sell it all back to the power grid and in return they pay you a premium which is actually 12 cents a kilowatt hour above the current rate which means they pay you more than twice as much for all the power you produce that what it cost you to buy it from them, Shearburn said. Joshua Collinsworth said his family's poultry farm, Hollow Ridge Farms, switched to solar two years ago and it is already making a big difference in their family's budget to not receive a big bill each month. Some months when we don't have chickens in all of our houses, we actually get a credit balance. According to Shearburn the benefits of solar energy are drawing a larger number of businesses, farms and homeonwers in the Tennessee Valley to consider solar energy systems.