

The MLP Residential Solar Rebate Program

Customer Information

The Department of Energy Resources (DOER) has partnered with certain Municipal Light Plants (MLPs) to offer a rebate program for the installation of solar photovoltaic systems in MLP service territories. The DOER and the participating utilities will offer rebates of \$1.20 per watt, up to 50% of system costs, on installations of 25 kW DC or less. DOER and participating MLPs will each provide half of the funding for these rebates. Energy New England will work on behalf of MLP's to administer the program.

Program Eligibility

- The applicant must be either the installer or the property owner
- The project site must be within the municipal utility's service area
- The solar panels must be installed by a professional, licensed contractor
- The DOER caps projects at 25 kW but check with your municipal utility, as some restrict the size
- The solar project must meet technical, installation, and equipment requirements outlined in the program manual
- All installations must use a Locus Production Meter

Program Term

DOER grant funds will be available from the program start date until either funds run out or June 30, 2020.

Finding a Contractor

Once you have determined that installing solar panels makes sense, you will need to select a licensed solar contractor. Get advice to help you make an educated choice and use the Solar Contractor Bid Comparison Form to evaluate your options.

Tips for choosing the right solar contractor:

- Request at least three detailed estimates from licensed contractors. Prices and project components (such as maintenance warranties) can vary significantly. Be sure to request that the system design addresses your specific goals.
- Only hire a licensed contractor. Verify that installers are properly licensed by checking the Massachusetts Home Improvement Contractor Registry (<https://services.oca.state.ma.us/hic/licenseelist.aspx>) and eLicensing Portal (<https://elicensing.state.ma.us/CitizenAccess/SearchaLicense.htm>).
- Make sure your contractor is bonded and insured. You need to understand the limits on your contractor's bonding and insurance to make sure you are sufficiently protected.
- Request at least three references from prospective contractors for projects similar to yours. If possible, you should also try to visit some of the recently completed projects. Ask relevant, longtime service providers such as your electrician contractor for referrals.



Solar Contractor Bid Comparison Worksheet

	Item number (See descriptions below)	Bid #1	Bid #2	Bid #3
System Description	1. Company Name			
	2. License Number			
	3. System size in DC kW			
	4. Does contractor understand interconnection rates & tariffs?			
System Cost	5. Base system cost			
	6. All Adders			
	7. Monitoring cost (if applicable)			
	8. Estimated permit fees			
	9. Total cost			
	10. Financial rebates, incentives and tax credits			
Other Factors	11. Final Cost			
	12. Percent of electricity covered			
	13. Meter reading and reporting			
	14. Warranty timeframe			

Choosing a bid

- Experts strongly recommend interviewing at least three potential solar contractors and compare their solar system bids before choosing one.
- Use this bid comparison form to compare the total electricity the system would produce versus the net cost of the system. However, take caution against automatically selecting the lowest bid.
- An unusually low bid may be a red flag the contractor is cutting corners.

Asking the Right Questions

- Do you have a valid contractor's license? May I see it?
- How long have you been installing solar systems?
- Have you installed solar systems in my area? Do you have references I can contact?
- What type of manufacturer or other training do you have for the type of system you will install?
- Do you offer a warranty for equipment workmanship?

Document Checklist

Reservation Request – Documents needed to apply for the rebate:

- ✓ Utility Solar Application, and documents required by the utility
- ✓ MLP Solar Rebate Application
- ✓ Participant's Agreement (includes Renewable Energy Certificate Assignment)
- ✓ Proof of Property Ownership (must show that you are the owner with a tax bill or copy of the Deed)
- ✓ Copy of Contractor/Homeowner Agreement
- ✓ Shading Analysis

Validation Request – After construction and interconnection of your solar project, you must submit the following documents:

- ✓ Certificate of Completion (from the utility)
- ✓ Project Completion Form (provided by DOER upon reservation award)
- ✓ Evidence of utility authorization to interconnect and permission to operate
- ✓ Locus Meter Connection Form
- ✓ Change Request Form (if applicable) (provided by DOER upon reservation award)
- ✓ Invoice from installer

Municipal Light Plant Solar Rebate Application: Application for the rebate reservation. This form contains necessary information about the project.

Participant's Agreement: The applicant signs this agreement to adhere by the program's terms. As part of this agreement the customer will assign any Renewable Energy Credits created by their systems to their local municipal utility in exchange for the rebate.

Project Completion Form: Provided by the DOER upon reward reservation. This form is completed and returned upon validation request.

Change Request Form: Provided by the DOER upon reward reservation. This form must be provided for any changes in technical or site conditions from the original application.

Locus Meter Connection Form: Information and picture of activated Locus meter so that ENE can set up customer account and connect to meter.

Solar Loan Program

Participants in the MLP Solar Rebate program may apply for loans through Mass Solar Loan, run by MassCEC, and the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources that connects homeowners with low-interest loans for residential solar projects.

<https://www.masssolarloan.com/>

Locus Meter Phone App

Once your Locus meter has been connected, homeowners will have access to their production data through the My Locus Android Google Play and iPhone App. Download the app from the Play store and login using the email address provided on the Solar Rebate Application and the password 'welcome'. Please change your password once you have logged in.

Q&A

Q: Who is eligible for this program?

A: Customers of the participating municipal utilities that own the property/project site.

Q: When does the program start and end?

A:

Projects must have a commercial operation date of November 27, 2018 or later. Projects that were interconnected before this date are not eligible. The Municipal Solar Rebate Program ends when available funding runs out or June 30, 2020, whichever comes sooner.

Q: Can I apply to the program if I've already completed a solar project?

A: It depends. If your project meets all requirements then you would be eligible for a rebate.

Q: What properties/sites are eligible for PV projects?

A:

1. The property/site's shading must be less than 20%.
2. It must have an azimuth between 90 and 270 degrees.

Q: How can I assess my property for shading and azimuth requirements?

A: Many contractors provide free site assessments.

Q: What are the PV system's requirements?

A: Your system must be equal to or less than 25 kW DC. Some utilities have additional size restrictions, so make sure you check with your utility.

Q: Can I receive a rebate if I add on to a previous system?

Yes, as long as the addition meets all requirements and the combined size of the new and old PV does not exceed the 25-kW size limit. For example, if you have an existing 10 kW DC system, your new project must not exceed 15 kW DC, because $10 + 15 = 25$. The new system will also need to be separately metered from any existing systems to ensure appropriate reporting of the rebated system's output.

Q: How much of a rebate can I get?

A: The rebate amount is \$1.20 per Watt of PV capacity of the project, not to exceed 50 % of the project's cost.

Q: Who completes my application?

A: Your installer will assist you in completing your application. Typically, the contractor will complete all necessary paperwork, and communications with town departments and the utility. If the customer is required to be on site, the contractor will inform the customer.

Q: How will the DOER communicate with me?

A: Program communication is electronic (email) only. No paper communications will be accepted. You must provide a valid email address.

Q: What if I don't have access to email?

A: You may designate a contact person to receive communications from DOER, your utility, and program administrators.

Q: Should I submit my application if I have most of the forms completed?

A: NO. Submitting partially complete applications – anywhere in the process – will delay your application more significantly than if you waited for the outstanding documents. You want your application to be complete and correct by the time it enters the processing line. If it's not, your application gets yanked out of the line to await outstanding documents and is placed in the back of the line once those documents are received.

Q: Will I get a rebate if I start work on the project before I get an award from the state (DOER)?

A: All work completed before DOER sends you an Award Reservation Letter is at your own risk even if you have documentation that your project meets all listed requirements. Remember that rebate awards are affected by availability of funding.

Q: When is a project considered complete?

A: Technically, when DOER reviews and approves the Project Completion Form and accompanying documentation. The following must be complete:

- ✓ Installation and interconnection
- ✓ An invoice from the installer
- ✓ Post-install inspections required by town and/or utility
- ✓ Letter of Approval (from utility) and permission to operate
- ✓ Project is operational

Q: Is there a deadline for approved project to be completed?

A: Yes. You have one (1) year to complete the project once DOER approves it. Remember, in order for DOER to approve your project, you will already have a signed contract with an installer and all the necessary local permits. One year should be plenty of time to install the panels and obtain the necessary documents.

Q: What if I can't find an installer? What if I can't find someone to assess my property?

A: There are many installers throughout Massachusetts. MassCEC provides a list of licensed contractors in Massachusetts. <https://services.oca.state.ma.us/hic/licenseelist.aspx>

Q: Can I lease a system?

A: No, to be eligible for the rebate you must own the system, however you may get financial assistance with a loan through MassCEC. <https://www.masssolarloan.com/>

Q: Are there any loans available for the part of the system that isn't rebated?

A: Residents can get loan assistance from MassCEC. <https://www.masssolarloan.com/>

Q: What are the tax benefits to having solar installed?

A: You can find information about the federal tax credits for solar PV installations here: http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=tax_credits.tx_index#c3 and state tax credits here: <http://programs.dsireusa.org/system/program/detail/144>.
or contact a tax professional.

Q: Is the rebate taxable?

A: A rebate received by a homeowner in a residential context usually does not have to be reported as income when the rebate is received from the local utility, however Grants from state or local governments must ordinarily be reported as taxable income. Since this rebate is funded half through your local utility and half from the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources, half of the rebate may need to be reported as taxable income.

Q: Will I receive Solar Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs)?

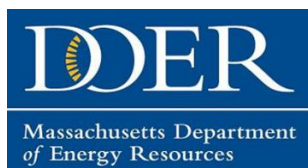
A: No, in order to receive the rebate, system owners must agree to sign over their Solar REC's to their local utility. The Participant's Agreement provides the authorization to do so.

Q: What if I have questions during the process?

A: You can contact ENE at solar@ene.org or call 888-772-4242.



To contact DOER, email MLPsolar@mass.gov





Application Directions

Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) will award rebate money on a first come, first served basis. Incomplete or inaccurate applications will be returned to applicants for correction. Only completed applications will be processed.

Methods of completing and submitting the application:

All applications and accompanying documents must be submitted to your (Municipal Light Plant) MLP for approval. There are two options to complete the application: (1) download the .pdf and enter information into the form fields, or (2) print it, handwrite the information, and scan the completed form to submit via email. If you choose to fill it in by hand, print clearly. If you do not have access to a computer, you may designate another person to receive communications for you.

Form Field Information and Directions

Section A: Customer Information

MLP name:

Select the MLP where your system will be installed. If you do not see your MLP's name on the drop-down list, check with your MLP. Your MLP's name is located on your electric bill.

Name & address information:

This section is for the applicant's contact information. Section C asks for system location information. Homeowners installing a system in a secondary home or investment property will show differing address information between Sections A & C.

City/town information:

Participating towns are displayed in the drop-down menu. If your town isn't listed, simply type it in the subject field.

State & zip code information:

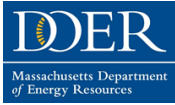
The state is already entered. Use your five digit zip code. The subject field will not accept more digits.

Email:

Do not leave this field blank. This program is digital-only. If we do not have your email, we cannot communicate with you. Additionally, add us (solar@ene.org) to your email contacts to ensure that our emails arrive in your inbox and not in spam or junk mail folders.

Phone:

We do not anticipate using the phone as a method of communication. We use it as an additional identifier for your application. No dashes needed.



Form Field Information and Directions

Section B: Installer Information

Name & address information:

Make sure that your installer fills out this information completely, including the town, state and zip code. Companies with corporate headquarters outside of Massachusetts are permitted, but the installing electrician must hold a MA license.

Installing electrician:

Enter the electrician's name exactly as it appears on their MA electrician's license.

Company contact person:

This should be a person who will respond quickly to questions or issues about your application. If they do not have a phone extension, leave it blank.

Section C: System Location Information

Street Address, unit #, city/town, & zip code:

If installing the system at a dwelling other than your primary residence, Section C's info should differ from that of Section A.

Facility Type:

If you are a homeowner, living in either a detached house or a residence with 1-3 residential units, the default selection for this field is correct - *Residential (three or fewer units per building)*.

Sections D, E, & F:

Your installer will complete sections D, E & F.

Section G: Massachusetts State Employee Question

Massachusetts state employees must consult the state's ethics commission before participating in this program.

Section H: Signature Page

You and your installer must print and sign your names and date the application.



MLP Solar Program Rebate Application



A. Property Owner Information

Utility Name: _____
(Select your utility from the drop-down menu.)

First Name: _____ **Last Name:** _____

Street Address: _____ **Unit#:** _____

City/Town: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip code:** _____

Email: _____ **Phone:** _____
The MLP Solar program is digital only. Applications with blank email field will be returned.

Unique identifier: _____
(electric account #)

B. Installer Information

Company Name: _____

Street address: _____ **Unit #:** _____

City/town: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip code:** _____

Installing Electrician's Name: _____

MA electrician license #: _____

Solar Application Contact Person

First Name: _____ **Last Name:** _____

Email: _____

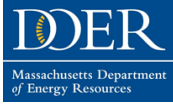
Phone: _____ **Extension:** _____

C. System Location Information (if different from property owner information)

Street address: _____ **Unit #:** _____

City/town: _____ **State:** MA **Zip code:** _____
(Type directly or select from drop-down.)

Facility Type: _____
(Select from drop-down if needed. Residents dwellings with three (3) or fewer units use default selection.)



MLP Solar Program Rebate Application



D. System Equipment Information

PV Module
Manufacturer: _____

PV Module Model: _____

Number of PV Modules: _____

Inverter Manufacturer: _____

Inverter Model: _____

Number of Inverters: _____

E. System Performance

PV Panel Orientation Type: _____ System Azimuth (degrees): _____

System Inclination (degrees): _____ Percent of System Shaded (%): _____

F. Additional System Details

System Capacity (kW DC): _____ Total Installed Costs for Project: _____

Roof or Ground Mounted (choose one): _____

G. Massachusetts State Employee Question

Is the Generation Unit Owner (system owner) an employee of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts?

H. Signature

By signing below, I certify that all information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

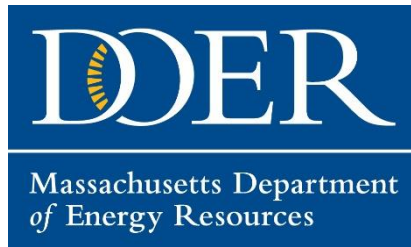
Property Owner (Print Name): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Installer (Print Name): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

MLP Solar Rebate Program Participant's Agreement



The following Participant's Agreement (the "Agreement") is issued by the Department of Energy Resources ("DOER"). Any changes or electronic alterations to the official version of this form shall be void. Each Party acknowledges and agrees that they have read and understand all of the terms and conditions of this Agreement, the MLP Solar Rebate Program Manual, and the MLP Solar Rebate Program Technical Requirements (Attachment C) and specifically agrees to be bound by their contents upon the execution and submission of the MLP Solar Rebate Application. This Agreement shall become effective as of the date indicated on an Award Letter from DOER.

Accepting the following Agreement as part of the MLP Solar Rebate Application does not entitle the Parties to an incentive award by the DOER.

Whereas, DOER is offering financial assistance in the form of rebates under the MLP Solar Rebate Program Manual Version 1.0 (the "Program Manual") for the design and construction of solar photovoltaic projects;

Whereas, the Applicant (the "Primary Installer/Integrator") has submitted the Application on behalf of the System Owner to a Program Administrator, and the Program Administrator has submitted the Application to DOER for its review and approval; and

Whereas, as a condition of their participation in the MLP Solar Rebate Program (the "Program"), the Applicant, System Owner, participating MLP, and Program Administrator ("Applicant Parties") agree to abide by the terms of this Agreement.

Now, therefore, for good and valuable consideration, the Applicant Parties agree as follows:

1. Applicant Parties represent that they satisfy all eligibility requirements set forth in the Program Manual and that they will comply with all terms and conditions set forth herein and in the Program Manual.
2. Installation Contract. System Owner has entered into a contract with the Primary Installer/Integrator to design and construct the PV Project (the "Installation Contract") which requires, in part, that the Primary Installer/Integrator meet all requirements set forth in the Program Manual and incorporated by reference herein.
3. The PV Project.
 - a. *Performance of the Work*. System Owner shall ensure that the PV Project is installed and completed in accordance with the specifications set forth in the Application and that the PV Project satisfies all eligibility requirements set forth in the Program Manual, including the Minimum Technical Requirements. System Owner is responsible for ensuring that the installed PV Project continuously complies with the Minimum Technical Requirements on an ongoing basis for its useful life. For purposes of this Agreement the term "useful life" shall mean a period not less than ten (10) years from the date of project completion.
 - b. *Rebate Rescission/Reduction*. DOER reserves the right, acting in the sole exercise of its discretion, to rescind the award of the Rebate in the event of noncompliance with this Agreement, including the Program Manual or other document incorporated by reference.

Furthermore, where there are proposed changes to the scope of a PV Project, DOER will not provide an adjusted rebate that is more than the originally approved rebate. Notwithstanding the foregoing, DOER reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to adjust the rebate amount in a manner proportionate to proposed changes from the approved Application.

- c. *PV Project Location Change.* Changes to the physical location of some or all of the components, except in the case of warranty replacements, of an installed PV Project during the first ten (10) years of the PV Project's useful life are prohibited (a "Location Change"). In the event that DOER receives information concerning a Location Change and confirms that a Location Change has occurred, DOER shall rescind Rebates that have not yet been paid to the designated Payee (as identified in the Application) and seek repayment of any portion of the Rebate that has been paid. System Owner agrees that if it has received the Rebate and subsequently makes a Location Change within the first ten (10) years following project completion, it shall notify and return the full amount of the Rebate to DOER. Examples of a prohibited Location Change include, but are not limited to, moving the specific site of a solar installation or transferring a PV Project to a property other than the one set forth in the Application.
 - d. *Project Completion.* The System Owner and Primary Installer shall work cooperatively to achieve PV Project Completion within the timeframes specified in the Program Manual. For purposes of the Agreement, "Project Completion" shall mean that the installation has been completed and interconnected in accordance with the Minimum Technical Requirements and inspected and approved by the authorities having jurisdiction over official permitting and interconnection. Failure to achieve Project Completion within the specified timeframes may result, at DOER's sole discretion, in forfeiture of all or a portion of the Rebate. DOER shall consider, at its sole discretion, written requests for an extension of the Project Completion Deadline specified in the rebate award letter sent to the System Owner. Consideration of a requested time extension shall be strictly limited to circumstances that are beyond the control of the System Owner or Primary Installer.
4. Rebate Payment. DOER shall pay the Rebate to the Program Administrator within sixty (60) days after the receipt of a complete Project Completion Form, Change Request Form (if applicable), and any associated supporting documentation necessary that demonstrates that the installation has reached Project Completion. Upon meeting the aforementioned requirements and with no changes to the system or its ownership, the Program Administrator shall be paid a rebate in an amount no greater than what was contained in the Rebate Award. The Program Administrator shall be responsible for working with participating MLPs to distribute a rebate to a System Owner in accordance with its contractual obligations with DOER.
 5. Indemnification. To the fullest extent permitted by law, the Applicant Parties, for themselves individually, shall indemnify and hold harmless the Commonwealth, DOER, and each of their respective agents, officers, directors and employees (together with the Commonwealth and DOER, the "Covered Persons") from and against any and all liability, loss, claims, damages, fines, penalties, costs and expenses (including reasonable attorney's fees), judgments and awards (collectively, "Damages") sustained, incurred or suffered by or imposed upon any Covered Person resulting from (i) Applicant Parties' breach of any of the terms of this Agreement or any false representation of the Applicant Parties under this Agreement and/or the Application, or (ii) any negligent acts or omissions or reckless or intentional misconduct of the Applicant Parties or any of the Applicant Parties' agents, officers, directors, employees, contractors or subcontractors. Without limiting the foregoing, the Applicant Parties, for themselves individually, shall indemnify and hold harmless each Covered Person against any and all Damages that may directly or indirectly arise out of or may be imposed because of the failure to comply with the provisions of applicable law by the Applicant Parties, individually, or any of its agents, officers, directors, employees, contractors or subcontractors.
 6. System Owner Responsibilities
 - a. The System Owner acknowledges that it is solely responsible for directing and controlling all PV Project decisions, including, but not limited to:
 - i. Selecting and entering into a written contract with the Primary Installer, including requiring

- documentation that any workers, contractors, or subcontractors employed on the PV Project have valid licenses issued by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to perform the required work and are in compliance with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations related to employment in the Commonwealth including, but not limited to, those laws pertaining to workmen's compensation, non-discrimination and eligibility to work in the United States;
- ii. Preparing all plans, drawings, and specifications;
 - iii. Procuring equipment and obtaining appropriate warranties from the equipment vendor(s) and/or Primary Installer(s);
 - iv. Obtaining all permits required by state, local, or federal law or regulation to perform the work required to complete the PV Project and complete interconnection to the electric utility grid;
 - v. Construction means, methods, techniques, sequences, and procedures;
 - vi. Supervising and directing work performed to complete the PV Project;
 - vii. Safe operations and maintenance of the PV Project, including any required replacement of parts; and
 - viii. Agreement upon the selected MLP Solar Rebate Payment terms.
- b. System Owner agrees that it shall abide by the Commonwealth's rules regarding employment discrimination when selecting the Primary Installer, equipment vendor(s), and/or subcontractor(s) for the PV Project.
 - c. System Owner agrees to allow DOER, or its agents, to enter onto the site of the PV Project to inspect the installed PV Project during the first ten (10) years of its useful life.
 - d. System Owner agrees to participate, upon DOER's, a participating MLP's, or a Program Administrator's request, in other information gathering activities required to prepare case studies, monitoring and evaluation studies, or other educational materials that may be beneficial to DOER or the public to disseminate knowledge gained as a result of the program.
7. Disclaimer: DOER has not investigated, and DOER expressly disclaims any duty to investigate any company, product, service, process, procedure, design, or other matter regarding the installation of the PV on the PV Project by the Primary Installer presented in the Application. The approval of the Rebate does not constitute an endorsement, warranty, or guaranty of any kind or circumstance by DOER of any company, product, service, process, procedure, design or other matter regarding the installation of the PV on the PV Project by the Primary Installer, equipment vendor and/or subcontractor(s) for the PV Project. The entire risk of use of any Primary Installer, equipment vendor, company, product, service, process, procedure, or design is assumed by the System Owner as part of its obligations under this Agreement.
8. Insurance: DOER recommends that every Installer purchase and maintain adequate insurance coverage until completion of the PV Project. DOER also recommends that the Applicant Parties discuss the types and amounts of coverage maintained and the appropriateness of those coverages for the PV Project. Applicant Parties acknowledge the sufficiency of the types and amounts of insurance coverage maintained and the appropriateness of those coverages for the duration of the PV Project. The carrying of any of the insurance required hereunder shall not be interpreted as relieving the Applicant Parties of any responsibility to DOER, and the amount and type of insurance coverage will in no way be construed as limiting the scope of indemnification under this Agreement.
9. Consumer Disclosure – Renewable Energy Certificates: The participating MLP shall have title to the PV Project's non-energy attributes and the associated Massachusetts Renewable Portfolio Standard Class I Renewable Energy Generation Attributes ("RPS Class I RECs"), as defined in 225 CMR 14.02. The RPS Class I RECs shall be retained by the participating MLP, who shall settle the RPS Class I RECs in the New England Power Pool Generation Information System ("NEPOOL GIS") on an annual basis for the lifetime of the PV Project. The System Owner can make no claims that they utilized the solar power generated by the PV Project to meet their electrical energy needs, as the RPS Class I RECs created by the PV Project are the property of the MLP.

10. Metering: The participating MLP will be responsible for installing metering equipment that meets the specifications outlined in the MLP Solar Rebate Program Manual and may assess the costs associated with installing such a meter on the System Owner.
11. Mediation / Arbitration: In the event of any dispute concerning the Parties' respective rights and obligations under this Agreement, the Parties hereby agree to submit such dispute to binding arbitration ("Arbitration"). If any of the Parties' requests mediation prior to Arbitration, the Parties will work in good faith to mediate their dispute through a jointly selected mediator. The Parties to any such dispute shall share the fees of the mediator or arbitrator jointly and shall be individually responsible for any legal fees they may respectively incur.
12. The following documents are incorporated by reference into this Agreement:
 - a. The Program Manual, including but not limited to Minimum Energy Efficiency Requirements and Minimum Technical Requirements,
 - b. The MLP Solar Rebate Application, including any additional information submitted by the Applicant Parties as requested by DOER.

Applicant/Contractor

Program Administrator on behalf Participating MLP

Name _____

Name _____

Address _____

Organization _____

Signature _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Date _____

System Owner

Name _____

Address _____

Signature _____

Date _____