

# Building a sustainable solar lifecycle



As a leading developer of utility-scale and community solar projects in the US, AES is committed to **sustainable and responsible clean energy development**.

## Solar as low-impact development

Compared to other types of commercial development, a solar project has relatively low impact and does not permanently alter the land. AES' development and installation practices involve minimal to no grading, limited topsoil removal, and where appropriate, planting a native and nutrient rich ground cover mix, ensuring we are developing projects that are thoughtfully and responsibly designed to fit within and benefit local ecosystems. This "foundation" is far less disruptive and permanent than the brick-and-mortar foundations used for housing, commercial buildings or malls.



## Growing the solar circular economy

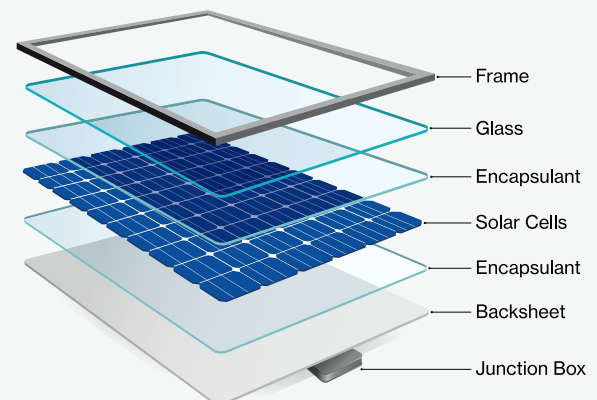
Planning for future generations includes not just energy production, but responsible decommissioning. Solar projects typically have a lifespan of 30 years or more before they begin to approach the end of their lifespan and need to be decommissioned. To ensure this transition is sustainable, it is critical that we work together with industry policymakers and regulatory entities to develop opportunities to create a circular economy that maximizes the entire lifecycle of solar panel materials and components. This will reduce both the environmental impact of the clean energy transition and create new economic opportunities and job growth.

## What's in a solar panel?

More than 95% of the materials used in solar panels are **commonly recyclable materials**. This makes solar panels more recyclable than other electronic waste from consumer products like cell phones, television screens and computers.

### Recyclable materials in a solar panel (panel percentage range):

76-97%	7-10%	5-7%	2-10%
Glass	Aluminum	Silicon	Polymer (coatings)



# AES solar recycling pilot program with SOLARCYCLE



## Building for a more sustainable future

AES has established a non-exclusive partnership with SOLARCYCLE, a SEIA-approved solar panel recycling services and circularity company, and launched a program to assess construction breakage and end-of-life solar panel waste across the company's portfolio. Under the agreement, AES can now send damaged or retired solar panels to SOLARCYCLE's advanced, high-recovery recycling facility in Odessa, Texas to be responsibly recycled and repurposed. This collaboration provides a foundation for AES to scale our sustainable development practices.

## Project decommissioning and restoration

Solar projects built today typically have a lifespan of 30 years, with very little maintenance and upkeep required. Our goal is to leave our project sites in as good or better shape than we found them. This is why many of our solar projects include a financially guaranteed decommissioning plan, which includes a commitment to remove all equipment from the site and to restore the land to allow a return to uses consistent with land-use policies at the time.

## Decommissioning plans typically include:

- Obtaining any permits required for decommissioning of the project
- Removal and recycling or proper disposal of all above-ground equipment and materials
- Removal and recycling or proper disposal of below-ground equipment and backfill any trenches
- Removal of aggregate material and foundations in the access driveway and equipment pad areas
- Re-grade project site in compliance with all applicable land use requirements and regulations
- Return and restore the topsoil on the project site to pre-project condition
- Re-vegetate, re-seed, and mulch as necessary to stabilize the former project area



## About AES

Founded in 1981, The AES Corporation is a Fortune 500 global energy company accelerating the future of energy. Headquartered in Arlington, Virginia, AES delivers innovative clean energy solutions that are flexible and tailored to meet the specific needs and objectives of our customers and communities.

[www.aes.com](http://www.aes.com)

