

Spring 2026 Small DG Customer Satisfaction Survey

Results and Analysis

November 2026

Illinois Shines | IPA ILLINOIS POWER AGENCY

Energy Solutions
Program Administrator

v110526

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Purpose

The Illinois Shines Customer Satisfaction Survey is intended to obtain insights from customers about their experiences navigating the process to participate in Illinois Shines.

The pilot customer satisfaction survey was issued in 2023 to obtain insights from customers about their experiences navigating the process to participate in Illinois Shines. The second survey was distributed in 2025, and the spring 2026 customer satisfaction survey serves as a continued effort to gather customer feedback.

The specific goals of the surveys are:

- To understand customers' overall experiences and satisfaction levels with their project and entities that participate in Illinois Shines.
- To gain insight into the level of awareness and understanding customers have about the Illinois Shines program.
- To provide customers with an additional avenue to provide written feedback to the Program Administrator about their experiences with Program participants.
- To identify customers willing to more fully discuss their program experiences with the Program Administrator, individually or as a part of a small group.
- To provide the Program Administrator with customer experience data that may be used to inform Program updates and improvements.

In addition, because the spring 2026 survey followed the pilot customer satisfaction survey issued in late 2023 and the 2025 customer satisfaction survey issued in spring 2025, the Program sought to measure how customer satisfaction may have changed as compared to the previous surveys.

Audience

The spring 2026 DG Customer Satisfaction survey was launched in early April 2026 and was sent to 22,505 Small Distributed Generation ("DG") customers whose Illinois Shines applications were submitted, verified, and paid, and the project energized, allowing respondents to provide a complete project perspective. The audience included Purchase, Lease, and Power Purchase Agreement ("PPA") customers whose projects were invoiced after November 28, 2024, (to avoid any overlap with the prior Customer Satisfaction Survey); and prior to January 6, 2026, which is 90 days before the date the survey was issued.

Survey Logistics

The Program Administrator issued the survey via email using Microsoft Forms. The survey was open for a two-week period following the issuance of the survey. The Program Administrator sent reminder emails to customers who had not responded to the survey to encourage participation.

Timing

April 6 – 8, 2026
Initial survey emails were sent to customers.

April 12 – 14, 2026
An email reminder was sent to customers who had not yet provided responses to the survey.

April 17 – 22, 2026
A final email reminder was sent to customers who had not yet provided responses to the survey.

April 23, 2026
Deadline for survey completion.

Analysis and Results

Sections One through Five below provide results and analysis of the survey responses, including the distribution of responses, distribution of customer satisfaction scores for each statement, general insights from the survey responses, and free text comments provided by customers.

The Role of CSAT (Customer Satisfaction Score)

We used the CSAT (customer satisfaction score) metric to demonstrate customer satisfaction. CSAT is a metric that indicates how satisfied customers are with a company's products or services. It is measured through customer feedback and expressed as a percentage (A 75% CSAT score indicates 75% of respondent Strongly Agee or Agree with a statement about their experience).

All satisfaction-oriented statements in the survey prompted respondents to use the following 1 to 5 scale:

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree



Surveys for customers who purchased their solar projects included 10 satisfaction-oriented statements while the survey for Lease and PPA customers included 13 satisfaction-oriented statements, with these three additional statements pertaining directly to their Lease and PPA agreements. Statement 9, concerning customers' feedback and use of the Program website, contained an additional "N/A" option for customers who had not yet visited the website.

We calculated the CSAT score using the responses of 4 ("Agree") and 5 ("Strongly Agree"), and the following formula:

> **(Number of satisfied customers (4 and 5) / Number of survey responses) x 100 = % of satisfied customers)**

The CSAT score provides a standardized and consistent approach, which allows for tracking of customer satisfaction year over year.



Section One: Summary of Findings

The spring 2026 Illinois Shines DG Customer Satisfaction Survey was distributed to Small DG Purchase, Lease and PPA customers beginning on April 6, 2026, and closed on April 23, 2026. The survey had a response rate of 9% (1,979/22,505); the overall customer satisfaction score was 65%.[1]

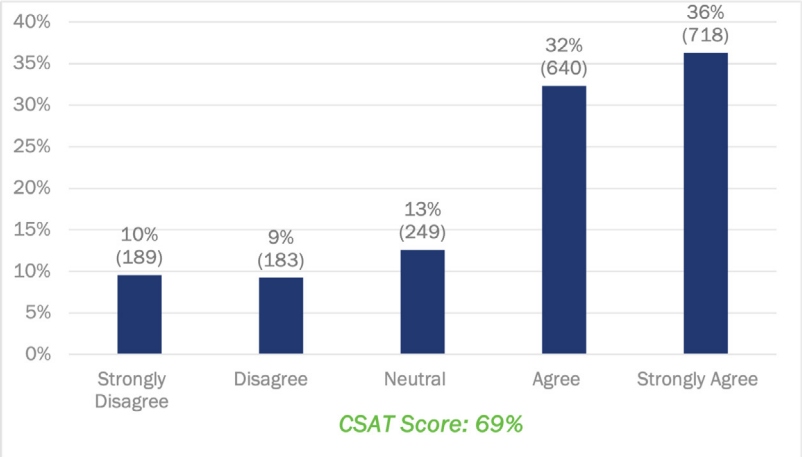
The 1,979 respondents include 1,498 Purchase customers, 373 Lease customers, and 108 PPA customers.

Section Two: Customer Satisfaction Survey Results

(Based on the responses of 1,979 Program participants)[2]

Overall CSAT Score for Statement 1

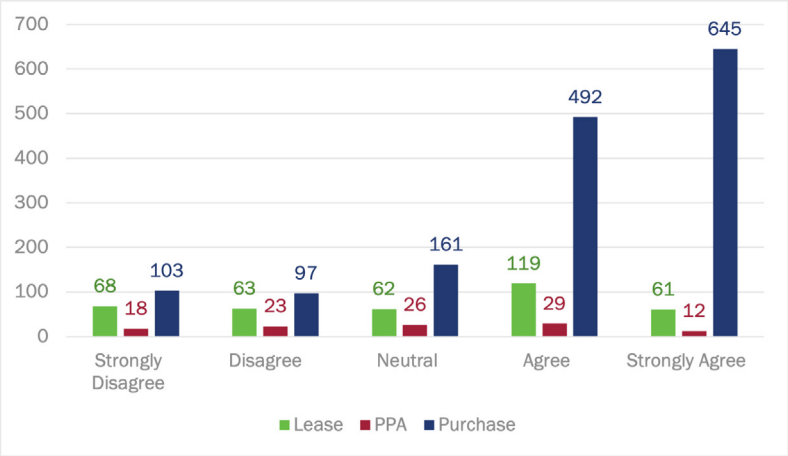
(Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company helped me develop a clear understanding of my project and how the Illinois Shines Program works).



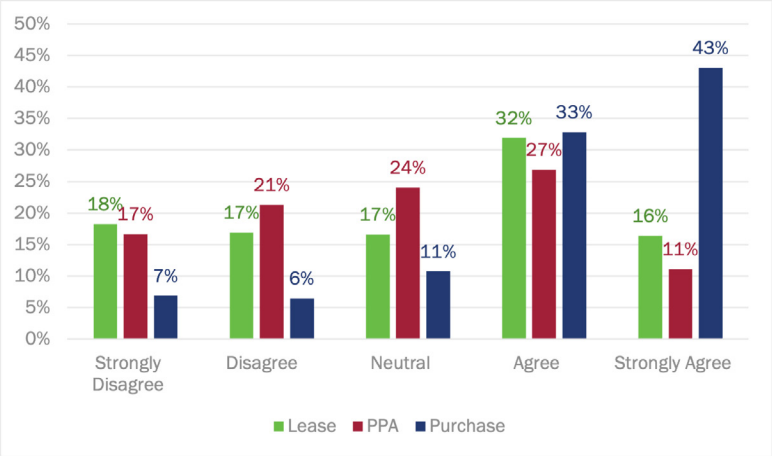
1 The overall CSAT score is calculated by dividing the total responses received for Strongly Agree and Agree (13,832) by the total number of responses (21,233) to all 13 statements included in this survey.

2 Note: for each of the following charts, the cumulative percentages of all individual bars may equal 99% or 101%, and the CSAT Score may be 1% off the combined Agree/Strongly Agree percentages, due to rounding of individual response percentages to the nearest whole percent.

Lease, PPA, and Purchase number of responses for Statement 1

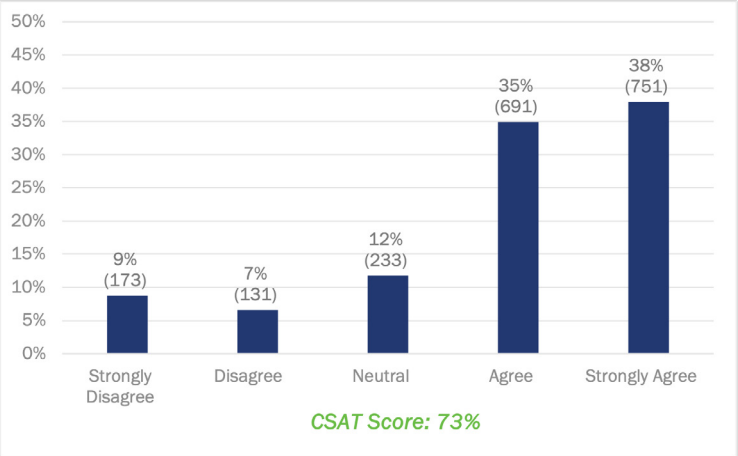


Percentage of responses for Lease, PPA, and Purchase customers for Statement 1

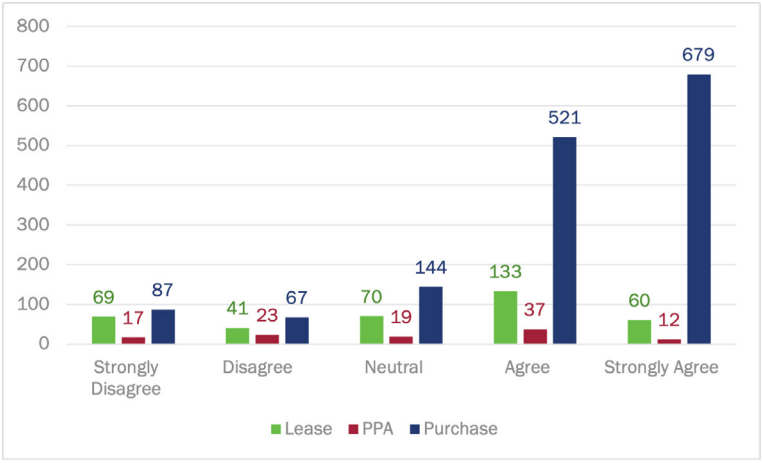


Overall CSAT Score for Statement 2

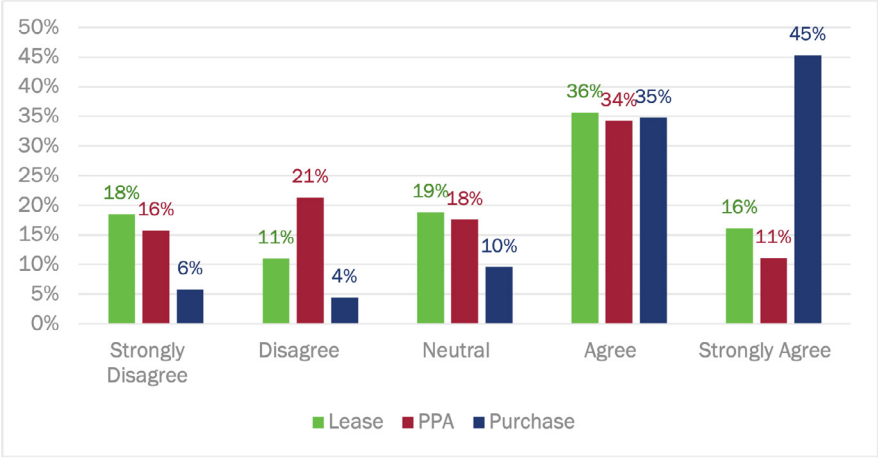
(Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company helped me understand any economic benefits I would receive by participating in Illinois Shines)



Lease, PPA, and Purchase number of responses for Statement 2

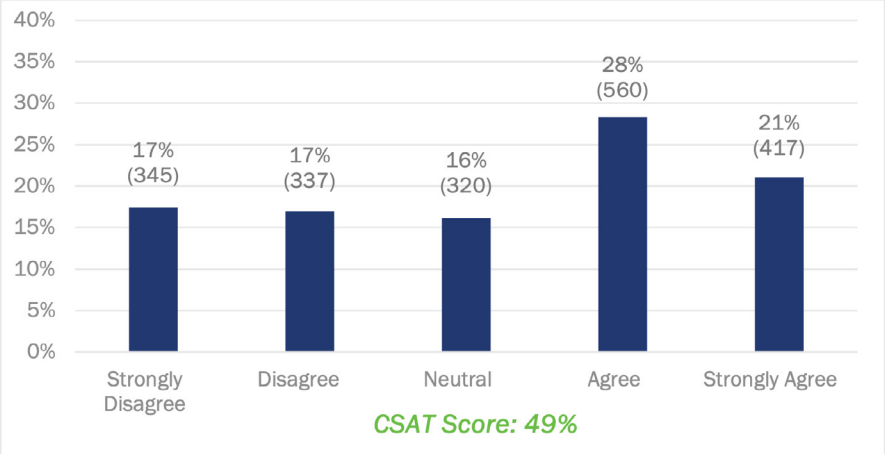


Percentage of responses for Lease, PPA, and Purchase customers for Statement 2

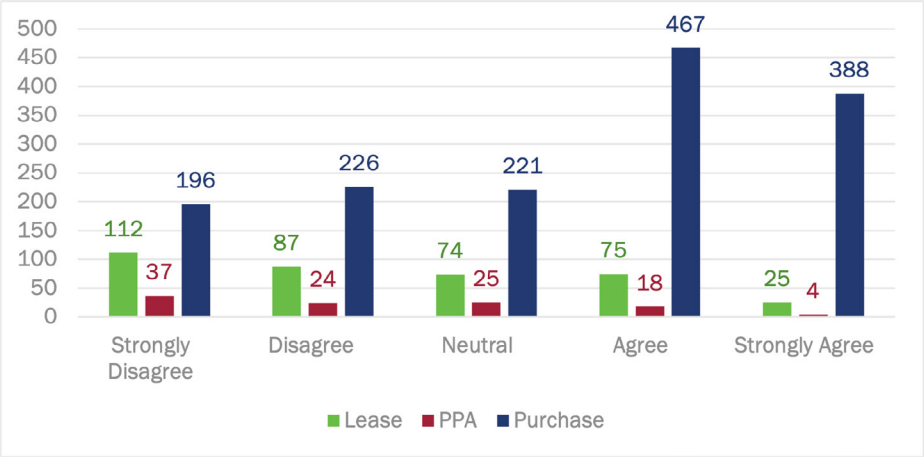


Overall CSAT Score for Statement 3

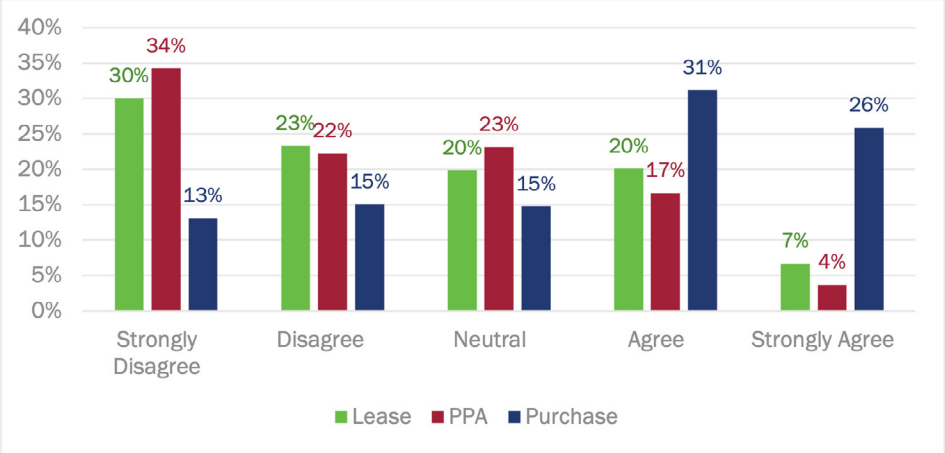
(Before I signed my installation contract, I "shopped around" and compared proposals from multiple solar companies for my project)



Lease, PPA, and Purchase number of responses for Statement 3

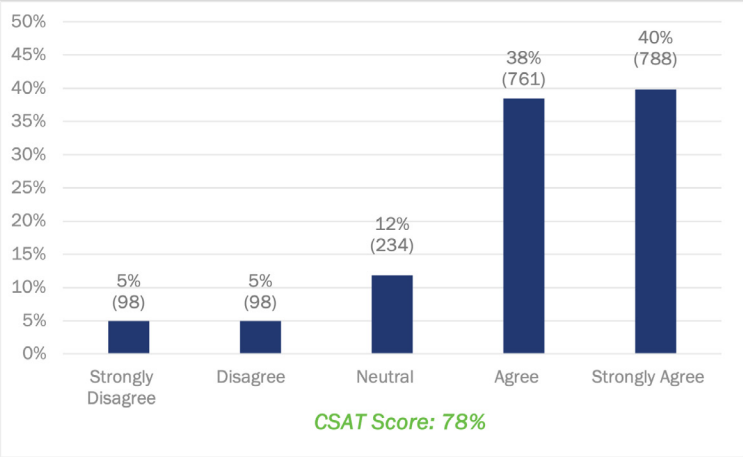


Percentage of responses for Lease, PPA, and Purchase customers for Statement 3

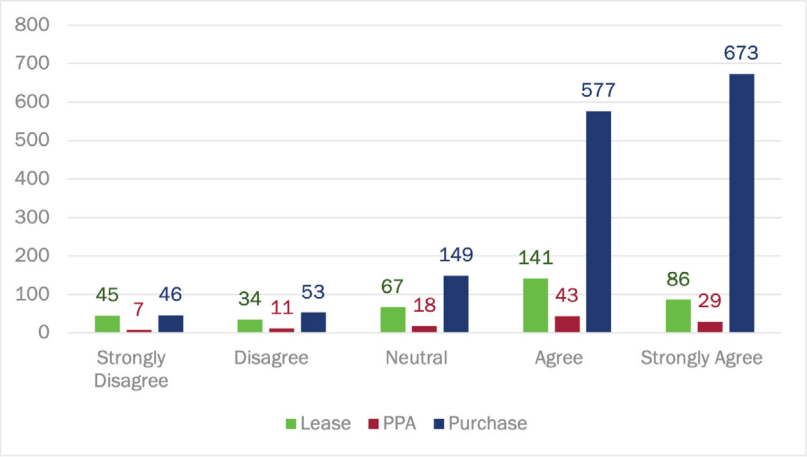


Overall CSAT Score for Statement 4

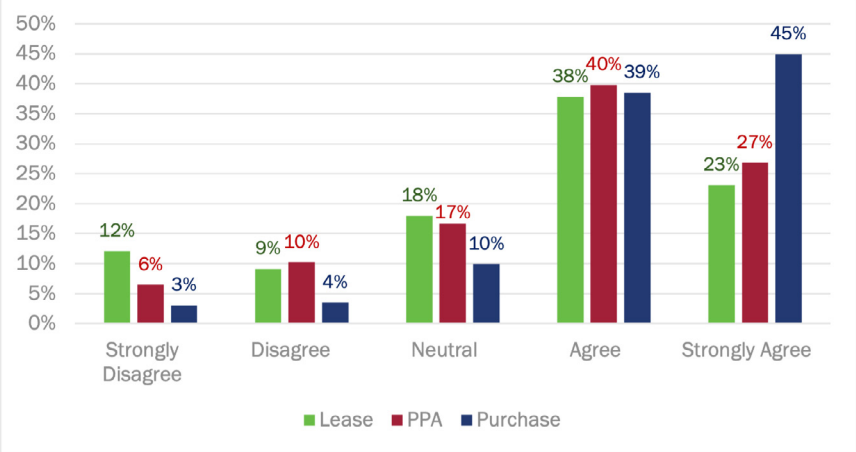
(My decision to go forward with my project was driven by the economic benefits from participating in Illinois Shines.)



Lease, PPA, and Purchase number of responses for Statement 4

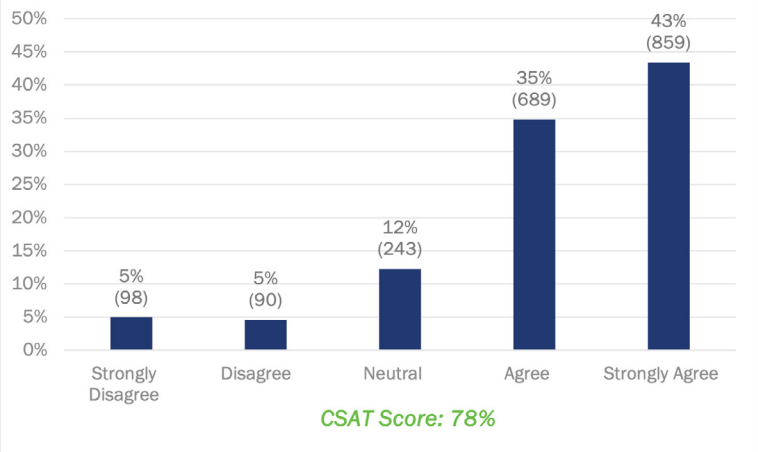


Percentage of responses for Lease, PPA, and Purchase customers for Statement 4

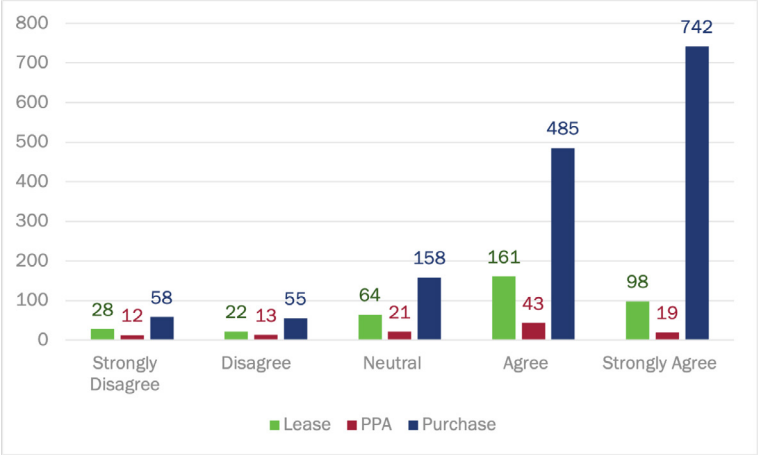


Overall CSAT Score for Statement 5

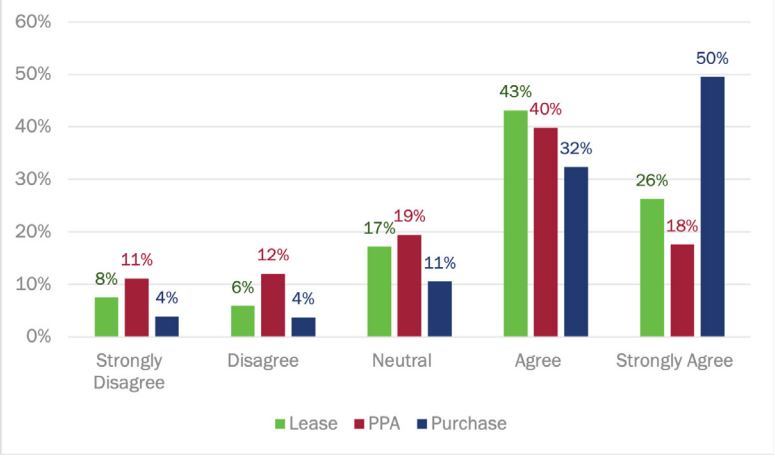
(My solar company was responsive to my questions and concerns before I signed the installation contract.)



Lease, PPA, and Purchase number of responses for Statement 5

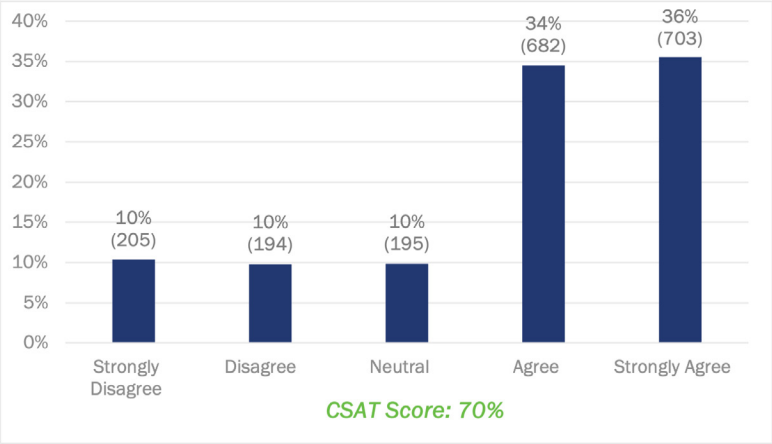


Percentage of responses for Lease, PPA, and Purchase customers for Statement 5

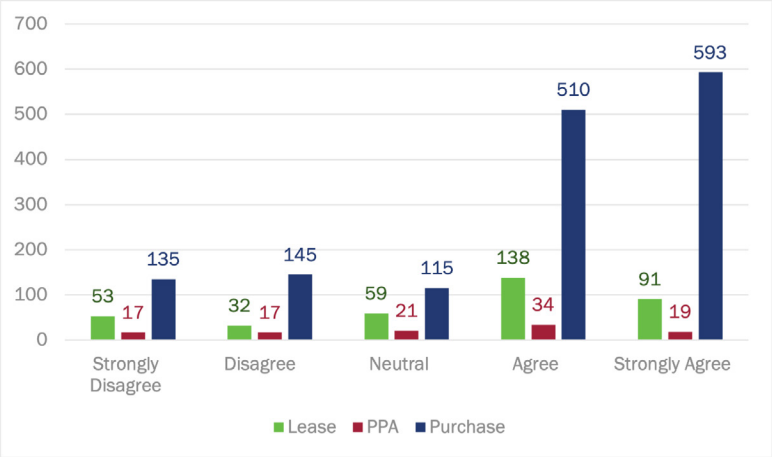


Overall CSAT Score for Statement 6

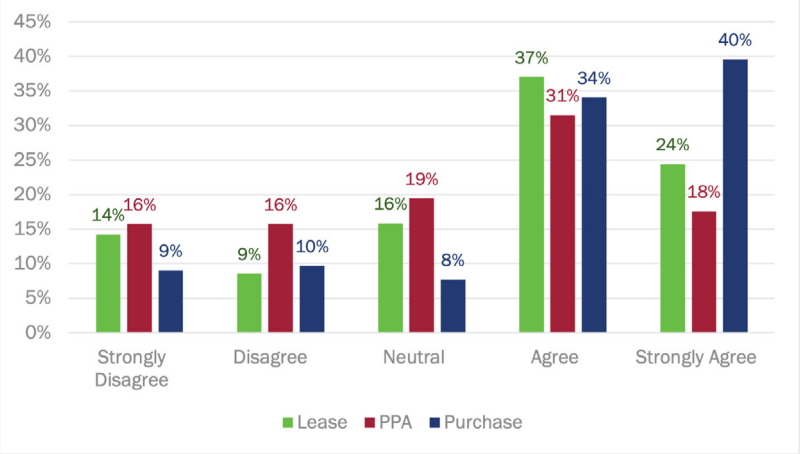
(The timeline provided by my solar company for the installation and energization of my system ended up being accurate.)



Lease, PPA, and Purchase number of responses for Statement 6

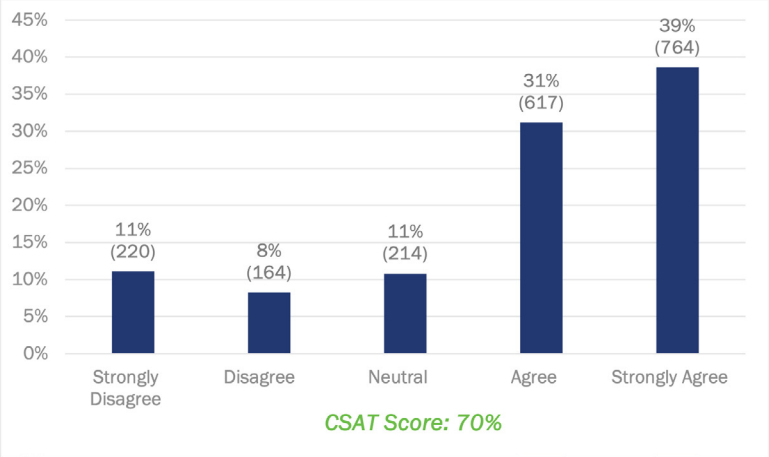


Percentage of responses for Lease, PPA, and Purchase customers for Statement 6

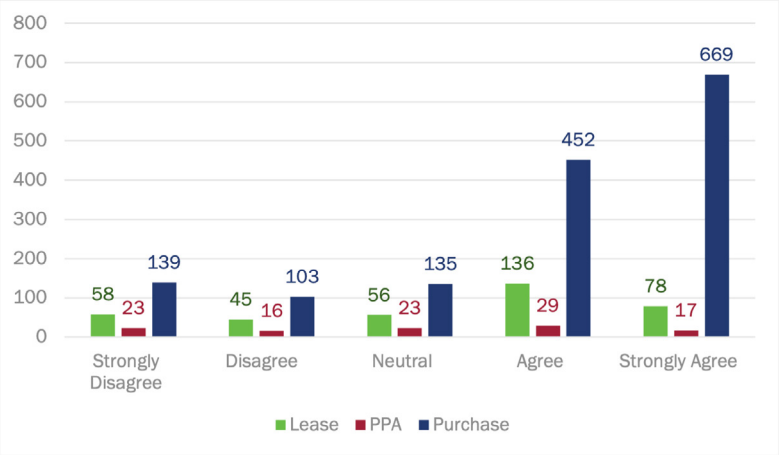


Overall CSAT Score for Statement 7

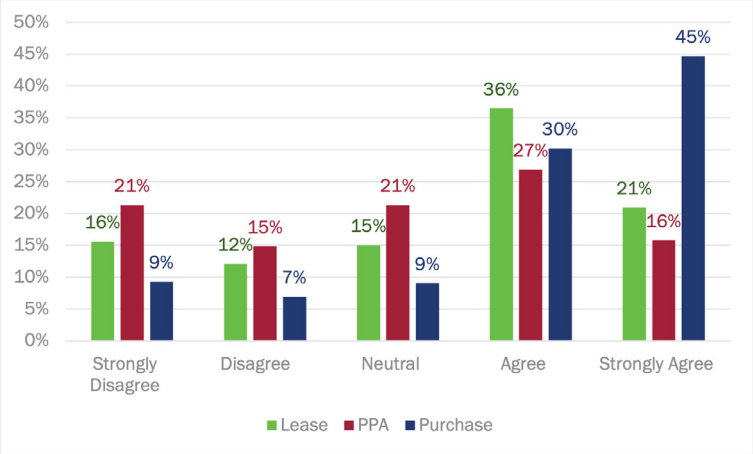
(My solar company was responsive to my questions and concerns during and after the installation and energization process.)



Lease, PPA, and Purchase number of responses for Statement 7

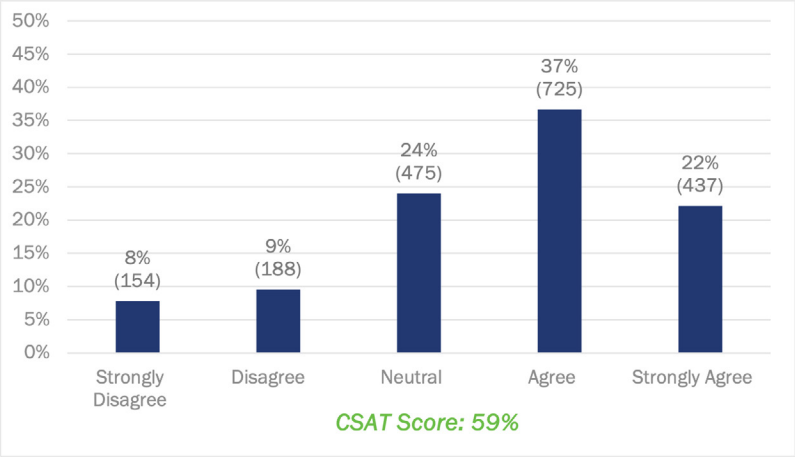


Percentage of responses for Lease, PPA, and Purchase customers for Statement 7

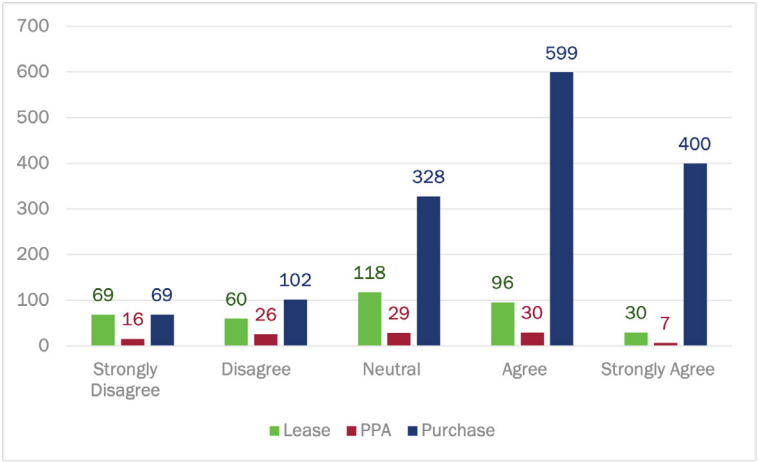


Overall CSAT Score for Statement 8

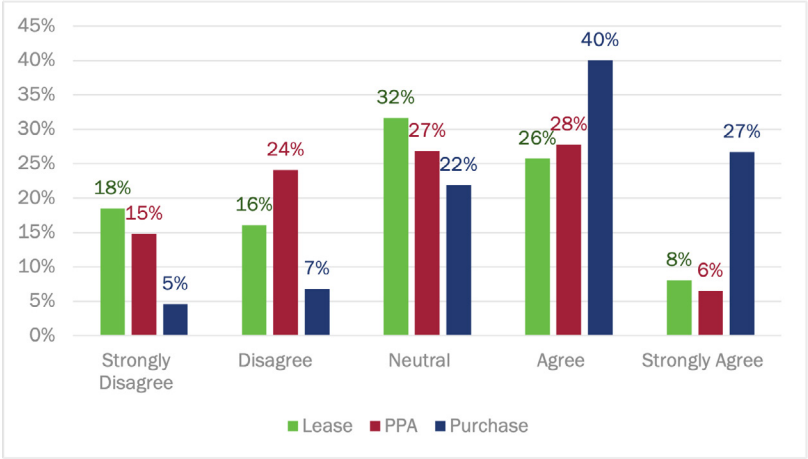
(The Illinois Shines Disclosure Form helped me understand Illinois Shines and key information about my solar project before I signed my installation contract.)



Lease, PPA, and Purchase number of responses for Statement 8

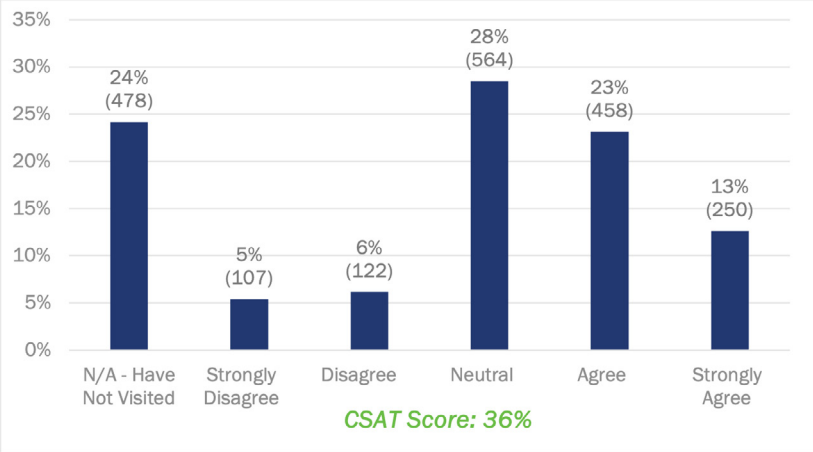


Percentage of responses for Lease, PPA, and Purchase customers for Statement 8

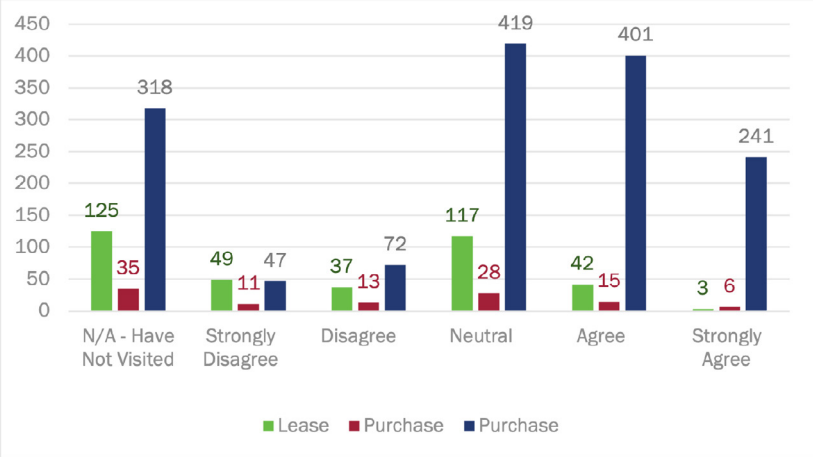


Overall CSAT Score for Statement 9

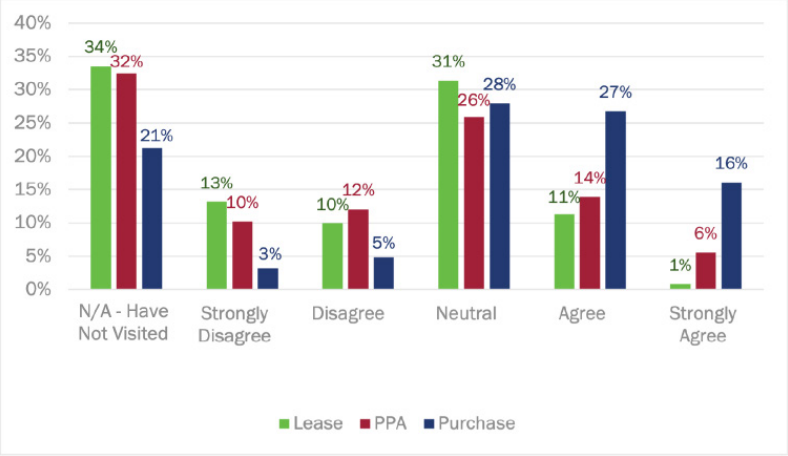
(The www.IllinoisShines.com website has been a useful resource to help me understand more about the Illinois Shines program and/or to get information about my project.)



Lease, PPA, and Purchase number of responses for Statement 9

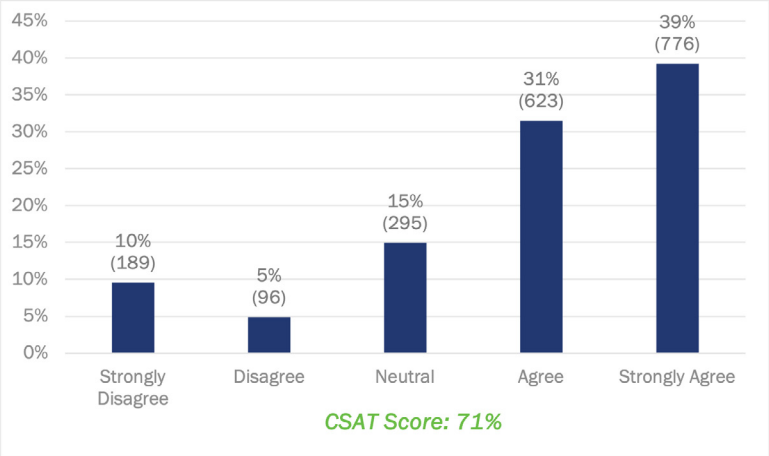


Percentage of responses for Lease, PPA, and Purchase customers for Statement 9

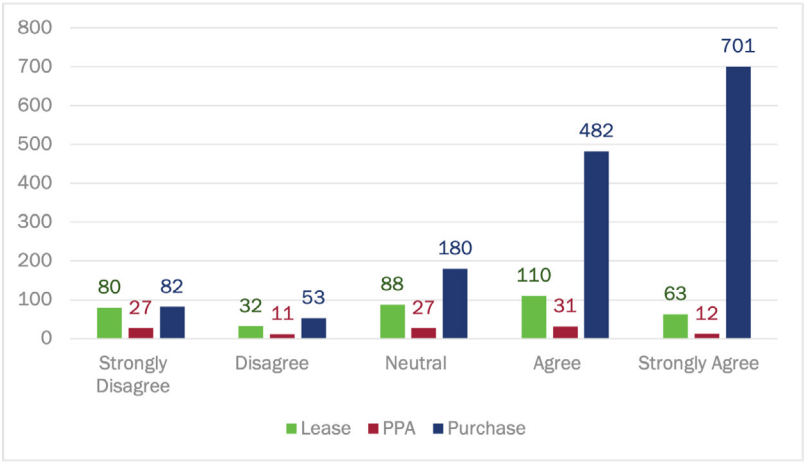


Overall CSAT Score for Statement 10

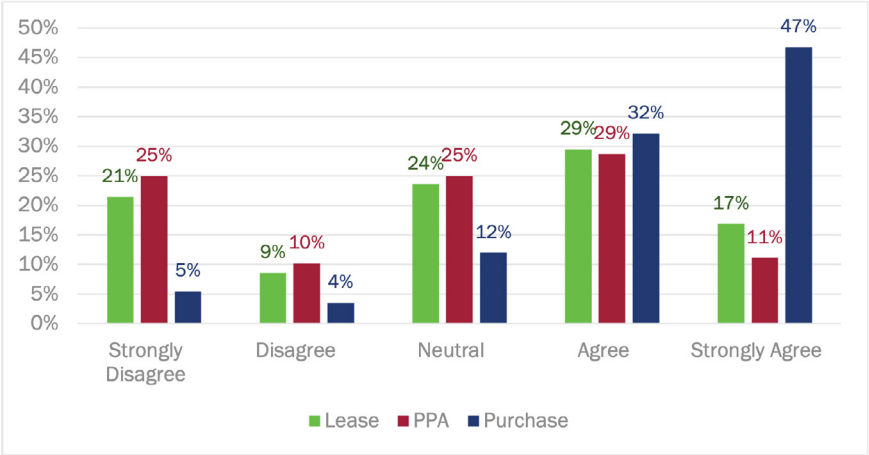
(Based on my experiences, I would recommend residential solar and the Illinois Shines program to friends and family.)



Lease, PPA, and Purchase number of responses for Statement 10

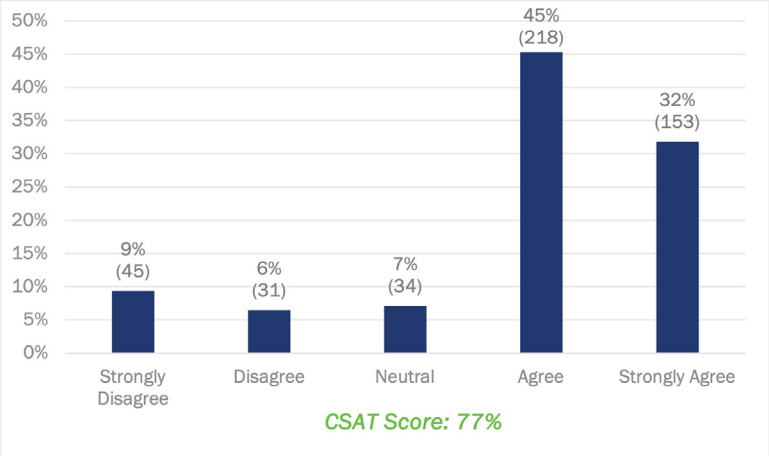


Percentage of responses for Lease, PPA, and Purchase customers for Statement 10

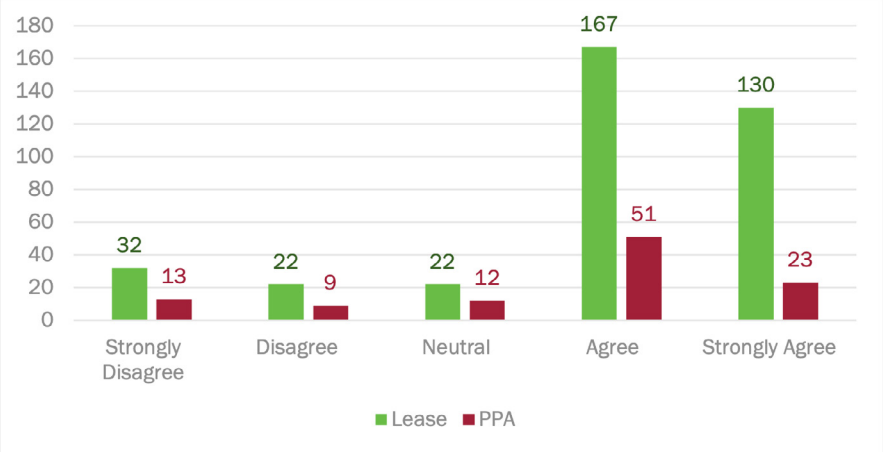


Overall CSAT Score for Statement 11

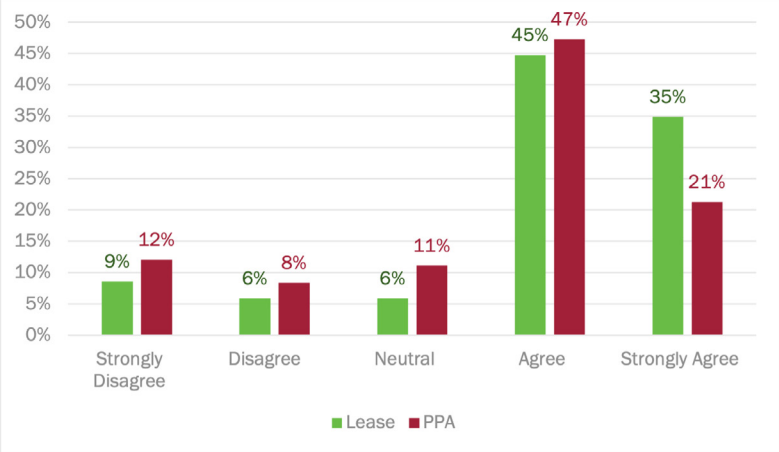
(Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company clearly explained that I would not own the solar project.)[3]



Lease and PPA number of responses for Statement 11



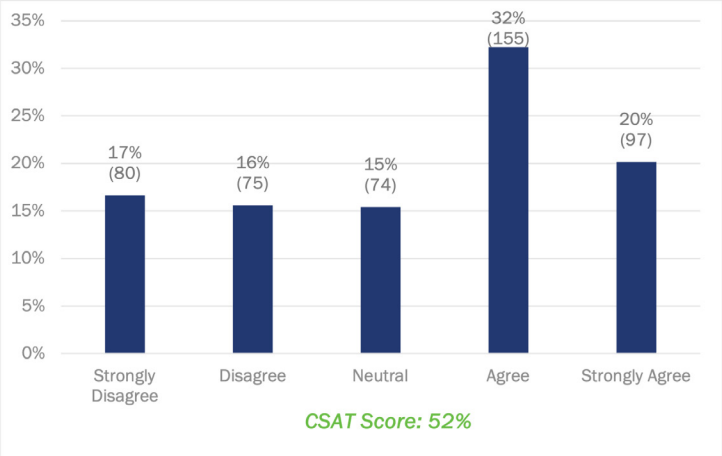
Percentage of responses for Lease and PPA customers for Statement 11



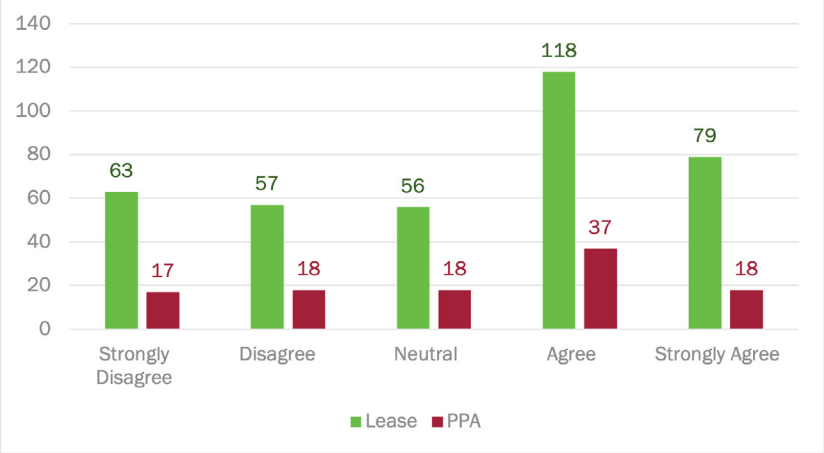
3 Statement 11 was only used for Lease and PPA customers.

Overall CSAT Score for Statement 12

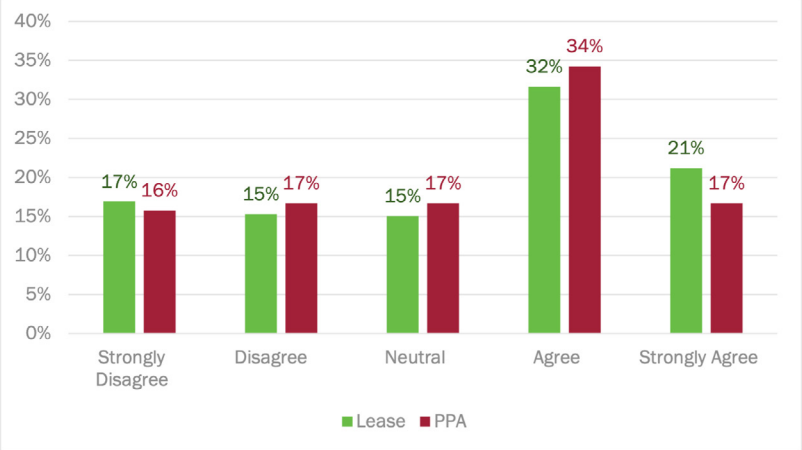
(Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company clearly explained that, with my Lease or Power Purchase Agreement, I will not be eligible to receive federal tax credits for the solar project, nor would the Illinois Shines incentive be paid to me.)[4]



Lease and PPA number of responses for Statement 12



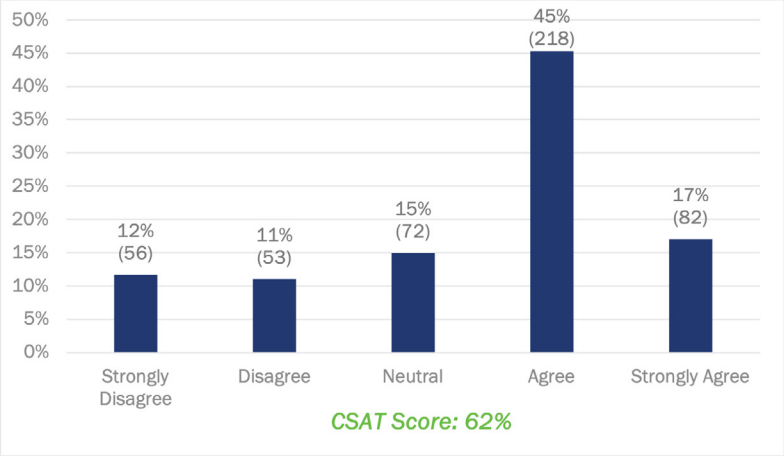
Percentage of responses for Lease and PPA customers for Statement 12



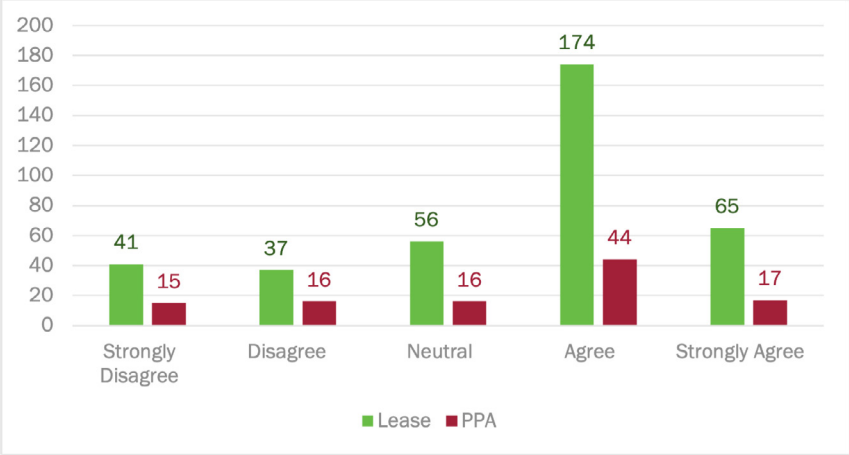
4 Statement 12 was only used for Lease and PPA customers.

Overall CSAT Score for Statement 13

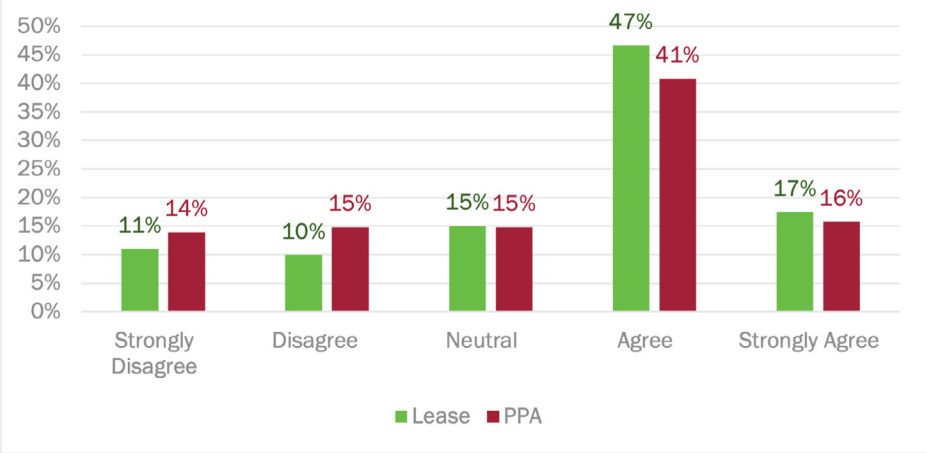
(Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company clearly explained any savings on utility bill costs I should expect from generation from the solar project.)[5]



Lease and PPA number of responses for Statement 13



Percentage of responses for Lease and PPA customers for Statement 13



5 Statement 13 was only used for Lease and PPA customers.

Section Three: Cross-Tabulation Heatmaps

Cross-Tabulation compares the results for one or more variables with the results of another. A heatmap utilizes color coding to enhance comprehension of these results. Visualizing the results using cross-tabulation heatmaps allows us to identify relationships between one or more categorical variables. For this survey, the cross-tabulation results examine the relationship between whether a customer's solar company helped develop a clear understanding of the Program and how satisfied a customer was with their experience in the Illinois Shines program. Warmer colors (yellow and orange) indicate a strong relationship between responses and cooler colors (blue and green) indicate a weaker relationship.

Figure 1: Cross-tabulation heatmap comparing solar company explanation of economic benefits to overall experience with the Program.

		Based on my experiences, I would recommend residential solar and the Illinois Shines program to friends and family.				
		Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company helped me understand any economic benefits I would receive from participating in Illinois Shines.	Strongly Agree (5)	565	146	24	5	11
	Agree (4)	156	367	116	25	27
	Neutral (3)	28	69	73	31	32
	Disagree (2)	9	21	45	23	33
	Strongly Disagree (1)	18	20	37	12	86

Figure 2: Cross-tabulation heatmap comparing solar company responsiveness during and after the installation process to overall experience with the Program.

		Based on my experiences, I would recommend residential solar and the Illinois Shines program to friends and family.				
		Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
My solar company was responsive to my questions and concerns during and after the installation and energization process.	Strongly Agree (5)	595	185	45	17	17
	Agree (4)	137	350	130	30	42
	Neutral (3)	28	62	78	31	44
	Disagree (2)	7	18	23	13	29
	Strongly Disagree (1)	9	8	19	5	57

Figure 3: Cross-tabulation heatmap comparing perception of the Disclosure Form and overall experience with the Program.

		Based on my experiences, I would recommend residential solar and the Illinois Shines program to friends and family.				
		Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
The Illinois Shines Disclosure Form helped me understand Illinois Shines and key information about my solar project before I signed an installation contract.	Strongly Agree (5)	368	50	11	1	7
	Agree (4)	279	342	74	16	14
	Neutral (3)	105	179	108	37	46
	Disagree (2)	17	38	63	28	42
	Strongly Disagree (1)	7	14	39	14	80

Figure 4: Cross-tabulation heatmap comparing website usage and overall experience with the Program.

		Based on my experiences, I would recommend residential solar and the Illinois Shines program to friends and family.				
		Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
The www.IllinoisShines.com website has been a useful resource to help me understand more about the Illinois Shines program and/or to get information about my project.	Strongly Agree (5)	201	38	7	0	4
	Agree (4)	187	193	45	13	20
	Neutral (3)	168	215	101	34	46
	Disagree (2)	16	29	41	12	24
	Strongly Disagree (1)	10	5	25	8	59
	N/A - have not visited Program website	194	143	76	29	36

Section Four: Analysis of Results

The Customer Satisfaction survey had six goals: (1) to understand customers' overall experiences and satisfaction levels with their project and entities that participate in Illinois Shines, (2) to gain insight into the level of awareness and understanding customers have about the Illinois Shines program, (3) to provide customers with an additional avenue to provide written feedback to the Program Administrator about their experiences with Program participants, (4) to identify customers willing to more fully discuss their program experiences with the Program Administrator, individually or as a part of a small group, and (5) to provide the Program Administrator with customer experience data that may be used to inform Program updates and improvements

A summary of findings and related takeaways are as follows:

Overall CSAT Score: 65%

The overall CSAT score for the survey was 65%. There were varying levels of satisfaction for each contract type.

Purchase customers reported the highest satisfaction for each statement throughout the survey, with an overall CSAT score of 72%. Survey participants with Purchased systems scored above the overall CSAT score for all statements. Purchase customers were more likely to shop around before signing an installation agreement (57% CSAT score compared to 27% for Lease customers and 20% for PPA customers), have their solar company help them develop a clear understanding of their project before signing an installation agreement (76% CSAT score compared to 48% for Lease and 38% for PPA), and recommend solar and the Illinois Shines program to friends and family (79% CSAT score compared to 46% for lease and 40% for PPA).

Lease customers had an overall CSAT score of 51%. Lease customers scored below the overall CSAT score for each statement, with the exception of statements 11, 12, and 13 (questions pertaining directly to Lease and PPA agreements).

PPA customers reported being the least satisfied with an overall CSAT score of 45% and having CSAT scores below the overall CSAT score for each statement. PPA CSAT scores were lower than Lease CSAT scores for 10 of the 13 statements[6] included in the survey. Comments from Lease and PPA customers show a pattern of similar concerns.

6 Statements 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, and 13.

Satisfaction scores and comments related to the Illinois Shines Disclosure Form illustrate differences in experiences for Purchase, Lease, and PPA customers.

- **Purchase customers were more likely to remember signing a Disclosure Form and had a higher level of satisfaction with the effectiveness of the Disclosure Form compared to Lease and PPA customers.** The Disclosure Form provides clear and consistent information about the details of a project to customers who are considering a solar offer. An Approved Vendor or Designee must have a customer sign the Disclosure Form before the installation agreement is executed and must provide the customer with the opportunity to ask questions related to the information included on the Disclosure Form before signing. The CSAT scores for statement 8 related to the Disclosure Form's effectiveness in conveying information about a customer's solar project prior to an installation agreement being signed for Purchase, Lease and PPA customers were 67%, 34%, and 34%, respectively. In a review of comments submitted by Purchase, Lease, and PPA customers, some customers reported that they never received a Disclosure Form or could not remember the Disclosure Form.
  - Lease and PPA customers not remembering the Disclosure Form could be the result of a fast-paced sales process and/or the Disclosure Form not being fully explained by the sales representative. A Lease customer shared that they "felt rushed to sign the paperwork and therefore did not focus on the Disclosure Form," and another Lease customer shared that "Everything felt rushed through with little time to read or review documents."
  - Lease and PPA customers do not directly receive a pass-through incentive payment through their participation in Illinois Shines, which may lead to sales representatives not thoroughly explaining the Illinois Shines program or the Disclosure Form.[7]

The Program Administrator conducts audits of Disclosure Forms to ensure they are signed by customers before an installation agreement is signed and to investigate whether Approved Vendors and Designees provide complete and accurate information within Disclosure Forms. The Program Administrator is considering options to address customers' concern that some sales representatives are not taking adequate time to review Disclosure Forms with their customers.

7 While not required by the Program, many Approved Vendors use a model where they pass through a portion of the Illinois Shines incentive payment to customers who purchase their solar projects. Information about the total incentive payment and pass-through amount is included on the Disclosure Form for purchased projects.

Table 1: CSAT comparisons of Purchase, Lease, and PPA customers for statements 1, 2,3, 8, and 9

Statement	Overall CSAT Score	Purchase	Lease	PPA
Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company provided an explanation which helped me to gain a clear understanding of my project and how the Illinois Shines program works.	69%	76%	48%	38%
Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company provided an explanation which helped me to gain a clear understanding of the economic benefits I would receive from participating in Illinois Shines.	73%	80%	52%	45%
Before I signed my installation contract, I "shopped around" and compared proposals from multiple solar companies for my project.	49%	57%	27%	20%
The Illinois Shines Disclosure Form helped me understand Illinois Shines and key information about my solar project before I signed an installation contract.	59%	67%	34%	34%
The www.IllinoisShines.com website has been a useful resource to help me understand more about the Illinois Shines program and/or to get information about my project.	36%	43%	12%	19%

- **Purchase customers reported generally having a better understanding of their project, how the Illinois Shines program works, and the economic benefit they would receive from participating in Illinois Shines prior to signing an installation agreement than Lease and PPA customers.** Figure 18 compares CSAT scores for statements that are related to a customer's education about their project and solar more generally before committing to a project.

- **Purchase customers are much more likely to use the Illinois Shines website as an educational resource (43% CSAT score compared to 12% for Lease and 19% for PPA) and are about twice as likely to compare offers from multiple solar companies before signing an installation agreement (57% CSAT score compared to 27% for Lease and 20% for PPA)**. Similar to the findings of the 2025 customer satisfaction survey, Purchase customers appear to take more time to fully understand their project, as purchasing a system through a loan or upfront payment may feel like a more significant commitment compared to leasing a system or entering into a PPA.
  - The majority of comments from Lease customers on statement 9 (*related to the Illinois Shines website being used as an educational resource*) note they were not aware of the Illinois Shines website or the Program generally. This may further suggest that the Illinois Shines program is not a primary focus of the sales process for Lease and PPA customers.

- Customers are more likely to recommend solar to friends and family if their solar company helped them understand the economic benefits of participating in the Illinois Shines program and if their solar company remained responsive during the installation and energization process.
  - Cross-Tabulation Heatmaps (Figures 1-4) shows that the expectations set by the solar company and the service that customers receive from their solar company are major factors in customers' satisfaction with their project and the Program.

Other themes seen throughout the survey responses include:

- Nonresponsiveness from solar companies, especially after the system was installed, with Lease and PPA CSAT scores for statement 7 being 57% and 43% respectively;
- Misrepresentation of eligibility for incentives, with one customer noting: "The solar company implied that I would get the full tax savings however this was not true and based on income";
- Monthly solar bills being higher than the amount customers were marketed during the sales process; and
- Customers being incorrectly told their system would be free, with one customer noting that their solar company represented that the entire cost would be covered by "special programs" since they were retired, which was not true.

Section Five: Survey Comparison for Pilot, 2025, and Spring 2026 Surveys

Table 2: Year-over-Year overall CSAT score comparison for each survey statement.

Statement	Pilot CSAT Score	2025 CSAT Score	Spring 2026 CSAT Score
1. Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company helped me develop a clear understanding of my project and how the Illinois Shines Program works.	70%	67%	69%
2. Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company helped me understand any economic benefits I would receive by participating in Illinois Shines.	79%	74%	73%
3. Before I signed my installation contract, I "shopped around" and compared proposals from multiple solar companies for my project.	51%	52%	49%
4. My decision to go forward with my project was driven by the economic benefits from participating in Illinois Shines.	81%	74%	78%
5. My solar company was responsive to my questions and concerns before I signed the installation contract.	78%	79%	78%
6. The timeline provided by my solar company for the installation and energization of my system ended up being accurate.	60%	64%	70%
7. My solar company was responsive to my questions and concerns during and after the installation and energization process.	76%	70%	70%
8. The Illinois Shines Disclosure Form helped me understand Illinois Shines and key information about my solar project before I signed my installation contract.	50%	55%	59%
9. The www.IllinoisShines.com website has been a useful resource to help me understand more about the Illinois Shines program and/or to get information about my project.	37%	32%	36%
10. Based on my experiences, I would recommend residential solar and the Illinois Shines program to friends and family.	71%	70%	71%
11. Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company clearly explained that I would not own the solar project.	N/A	77%	77%

Statement	Pilot CSAT Score	2025 CSAT Score	Spring 2026 CSAT Score
12. Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company clearly explained that, with my Lease or Power Purchase Agreement, I will not be eligible to receive federal tax credits for the solar project, nor would the Illinois Shines incentive be paid to me.	N/A	55%	52%
13. Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company clearly explained any savings on utility bill costs I should expect from generation from the solar project.	N/A	66%	62%

Table 2 lists the overall CSAT scores for statements 1-10 for the pilot survey issued in late 2023, and statements 1-13 for the 2025 and spring 2026 survey. Comparing customer satisfaction scores across surveys allows the Program Administrator to analyze how Program updates and changes in the market may affect customer satisfaction. Below is an analysis of customer satisfaction scores between surveys. The Appendix includes a further breakdown of customer satisfaction scores between surveys by contract type:

Low survey response numbers may provide data that is not representative of overall experiences.

- The pilot survey received 193 responses, compared to the 2,163 responses received for the 2025 survey and the 1,979 responses received for this survey. This section will focus on comparing CSAT scores between the 2025 survey and this survey given a much higher number of responses to these surveys.
- Only seven PPA customers responded to the 2025 survey, while 108 PPA customers responded to this survey. This survey likely provides a more accurate depiction of satisfaction for PPA customers given the higher number of responses received. PPA CSAT scores saw a great amount of variance between the 2025 survey and this survey, which is likely due to the small 2025 PPA sample size rather than a significant change in customer satisfaction. This section will focus on comparing overall CSAT scores, as well as CSAT scores for Purchase and Lease customers combined, as these sample sizes are greater and therefore more likely to provide accurate data.

The variance in overall CSAT score between surveys was relatively minor. The overall CSAT score for all statements except for one[8] varied by less than 5% between the 2025 survey and this survey. The overall satisfaction score decreased for five statements,[9] increased for six statements,[10] and stayed the same for two statements[11] in spring 2026 compared to the 2025 survey.

8 The CSAT score for statement 6 related to the installation and energization timeline provided by the solar company being accurate was 64% in the 2025 survey and 70% in this survey

9 Statements 2, 3, 5, 12, and 13.

10 Statements 1, 4, 6, 8, 9, and 10.

11 Statements 7 and 11.

- The 2025 survey was sent to customers whose projects were invoiced between December 1, 2023, and November 27, 2024. Most customers who responded to the 2025 survey received the 2021 version of the Disclosure Form prior to signing an installation agreement. Many respondents to the spring 2026 survey received an updated version of the Disclosure Form, which included a significant presentation overhaul for better readability and many content updates to better inform potential customers of key information regarding their projects.[12] Although Purchase and Lease customers saw an increase in CSAT scores related to the effectiveness of the Disclosure Form of 8% and 4%, respectively, there was a decrease of 9% in the CSAT score for PPA customers for statement 8 between the 2025 survey and this survey. The variance in CSAT scores regarding Disclosure Forms for the different contract types could signal that additional improvements to the Disclosure Form may be useful, although the scores could also be affected by vendors' presentation of the Disclosure Form. The Program Administrator will continue to monitor feedback related to Disclosure Forms and consider future improvements.
- The greatest overall CSAT variance for a single statement between the 2025 and spring 2026 surveys came from statement 6 related to the installation and energization timeline provided by the solar company being accurate, which had a CSAT score of 64% in the 2025 survey and 70% in this survey. Approved Vendors and Designees could be communicating more realistic timelines to customers or could be giving customers longer estimated installation timelines in order to avoid overpromising. An additional factor could be related to solar companies installing systems more quickly towards the end of the 2024 and 2025 calendar years. Full retail rate net metering was no longer available to customers interconnecting renewable energy systems after December 31, 2024. The Federal Investment Tax Credit became unavailable to Small DG customer-owned projects placed in service after December 31, 2025. Many solar companies were focused on installing systems very quickly in the 2024 and 2025 calendar years in order for customers to qualify for these benefits. Some solar companies were hiring more subcontractors during this period, which could have also helped to improve the efficiency of installation and energization timelines for customers.

Purchase CSAT Score: 72%

The overall CSAT score for Purchase customers increased from 68% in the 2025 survey to 72% in this survey.

- The Purchase CSAT score for seven of the 10 statements[13] increased between the 2025 survey and this survey.
- Notably, the Purchase CSAT score for statement 6 related to the installation and energization timeline provided by the solar company being accurate increased by 10%. Further, the CSAT score for statement 8 related to the Disclosure Form's effectiveness in conveying information about a customer's solar project prior to an installation agreement being signed increased by 8% between these surveys.

12 The Disclosure Forms linked in this report are the versions for Purchase projects. Lease and PPA Disclosure Forms can be found in the Disclosure Forms section of the Program Documents page at llinoisshines.com/program-documents.

13 Statements 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, and 10.



The overall CSAT score for Lease customers stayed the same between these surveys at 51%, while the overall CSAT score for PPA customers decreased from 64% in 2025 to 45% in 2026. The CSAT score for eight of thirteen statements[14] responded to by Lease customers decreased between the 2025 survey and this survey. Notably, the CSAT scores for statement 1 (*"Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company provided an explanation which helped me to gain a clear understanding of my project and how the Illinois Shines program works"*) and statement 7 ("My solar company was responsive to my questions and concerns during and after the installation and energization process") decreased by 7% each for Lease customers between surveys.

- The greatest variance in CSAT for a single statement for Lease customers came from statement 4 (*"My decision to move forward with my project was driven by the economic benefits I would receive from participating in Illinois Shines"*), which had a CSAT score of 52% in the 2025 survey and a CSAT score of 61% in this survey. It is a positive sign that the economic benefit of participating in Illinois Shines has become a greater driving factor for Lease customers. However, a decrease in the CSAT score of 7% for Lease customers for statement 1 (*"Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company provided an explanation which helped me to gain a clear understanding of my project and how the Illinois Shines program works"*) between surveys indicates that Approved Vendor and Designees may not be providing a clear understanding of how the Illinois Shines program works.
- The CSAT score for PPA customers also showed a decrease in many statements between surveys, with 11 out of 13 questions showing a decrease in CSAT scores. The largest reduction of CSAT scores for PPA customers from the 2025 survey to this survey were for statement 12 (*"Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company clearly explained that, with my Lease or Power Purchase Agreement, I will not be eligible to receive federal tax credits for the solar project, nor would I receive the Illinois Shines incentive payment"*) with a 2025 CSAT score of 100% and a 2026 CSAT score of 51%; and statement 13 (*"Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company clearly explained the amount of savings I should expect on the utility bill, from generation of the solar project"*) with a 2025 CSAT score of 100% and a 2026 CSAT score of 56%.

14 Statements 1, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, & 13.

Purchase Scores ≥ Lease Scores

Purchase customers displayed much higher CSAT scores compared to Lease customers in the 2025 and 2026 surveys.

- The overall CSAT score for Purchase customers was 17% higher than Lease customers for the 2025 survey and was 21% higher than Lease customers for this survey. Purchase CSAT scores were higher than the overall CSAT score for all but one statement in 2025[15] and were higher than the overall CSAT score for all statements in this survey. Lease CSAT scores were lower than the overall CSAT scores for statements 1-10 for the 2025 and 2026 surveys. As previously mentioned, Purchase customers appear to take more time to fully understand their project, as purchasing a system through a loan or upfront payment may feel like a more significant commitment compared to leasing a system or entering into a PPA. This may help explain some of these results. There may also be differences in how vendors typically market Purchase projects versus Leases and PPAs.

Section Six: Next Steps

Survey participants were invited to indicate interest in providing a testimonial and/or to participate in a focus group. The Program Administrator began hosting focus group sessions in 2025 and will host additional focus group sessions following this survey. Information from surveys, testimonials, and focus groups will be used to suggest potential changes to Program documents and Program requirements to the Illinois Power Agency. Eight hundred of 1,979 survey participants (40%) indicated interest in participating in a focus group to further discuss their experiences with the Program Administrator.

To prepare for future customer satisfaction surveys, with each subsequent release, the Program Administrator will review the survey, update it as needed, re-issue, and compare response data with the baselines established in prior surveys. Survey emails to customers included a hyperlink to the survey; however, multiple customers voiced concerns that they were unsure how to navigate to the survey. The Program Administrator plans to include a survey "button" in future emails instead of a text hyperlink to address this concern. The Program Administrator plans to issue Small DG customer satisfaction surveys twice a year moving forward to be able to more frequently evaluate customer satisfaction. The Program Administrator also plans to issue satisfaction surveys to Community Solar customers in the near future.

15 Statement 6 related to the installation and energization timeline provided by the solar company being accurate.

Appendix

Table 3: CSAT score comparison for each statement for the Pilot, 2025, and spring 2026 surveys.

Statement	Survey	Overall CSAT Score	Purchase	Lease	PPA
1. Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company provided an explanation which helped me to gain a clear understanding of my project and how the Illinois Shines program works.	Pilot	70%	NA	NA	NA
	2025	67%	71%	55%	57%
	Spring 2026	69%	76%	48%	38%
2. Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company provided an explanation which helped me to gain a clear understanding of the economic benefits I would receive from participating in Illinois Shines.	Pilot	79%	NA	NA	NA
	2025	74%	79%	50%	43%
	Spring 2026	73%	80%	52%	45%
3. Before I signed my installation contract, I "shopped around" and compared proposals from multiple solar companies for my project.	Pilot	51%	NA	NA	NA
	2025	52%	56%	28%	29%
	Spring 2026	49%	57%	27%	20%
4. My decision to move forward with my project was driven by the economic benefits I would receive from participating in Illinois Shines.	Pilot	81%	NA	NA	NA
	2025	74%	79%	52%	43%
	Spring 2026	78%	83%	61%	67%
5. My solar company was responsive to my questions and concerns before I signed the installation contract.	Pilot	78%	NA	NA	NA
	2025	79%	82%	64%	86%
	Spring 2026	78%	82%	69%	57%
6. The timeline provided by my solar company for the installation and energization of my system was accurate.	Pilot	60%	NA	NA	NA
	2025	64%	64%	62%	71%
	Spring 2026	70%	74%	61%	49%
7. My solar company was responsive to my questions and concerns during and after the installation and energization process.	Pilot	76%	NA	NA	NA
	2025	70%	82%	64%	86%
	Spring 2026	70%	75%	57%	43%
8. The Illinois Shines Disclosure Form helped me understand Illinois Shines and key information about my solar project before I signed an installation contract.	Pilot	50%	NA	NA	NA
	2025	55%	59%	30%	43%
	Spring 2026	59%	67%	34%	34%

Statement	Survey	Overall CSAT Score	Purchase	Lease	PPA
9. The www.IllinoisShines.com website has been a useful resource to help me understand more about the Illinois Shines program and/or to get information about my project. *(For this question, we will include a sixth answer option of "N/A - have not visited Program website.")*	Pilot	37%	NA	NA	NA
	2025	32%	47%	15%	40%
	Spring 2026	36%	43%	12%	19%
10. Based on my experiences, I would recommend residential solar and the Illinois Shines program to friends and family.	Pilot	71%	NA	NA	NA
	2025	70%	75%	47%	43%
	Spring 2026	71%	79%	46%	40%
11. Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company clearly explained that I would not own the solar project.	Pilot	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2025	77%	NA	77%	86%
	Spring 2026	77%	NA	80%	69%
12. Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company clearly explained that, with my Lease or Power Purchase Agreement, I will not be eligible to receive federal tax credits for the solar project, nor would I receive the Illinois Shines incentive payment.	Pilot	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2025	55%	NA	54%	100%
	Spring 2026	52%	NA	53%	51%
13. Before I signed my installation contract, my solar company clearly explained the amount of savings I should expect on the utility bill, from generation of the solar project.	Pilot	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2025	66%	NA	65%	100%
	Spring 2026	62%	NA	64%	56%
Overall CSAT Score	**Pilot**	**64%**	**NA**	**NA**	**NA**
	2025	**64%**	**68%**	**51%**	**64%**
	Spring 2026	**65%**	**72%**	**51%**	**45%**

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