BILL'S HOME TECH

Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

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Door-to-Door Solar Scams and High-Pressure Sales — Red Flags

How to spot a bad solar pitch the moment it starts — and why you never have to decide at the door

Plain-English solar help from:
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Tech Made Simple. Service Made Personal.

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SUMMARY

The 60-Second Version

Solar is a real product, but it is also a magnet for high-pressure and scam sales, especially door-to-door, and older homeowners are a favorite target. The biggest red flag is pressure to sign today — real solar quotes are good for days or weeks, so any "today only" deadline is a reason to say no. Be just as wary of "free solar" or "no cost" (usually a long lease), "you've been selected or pre-approved" (flattery, not a real program), and anyone claiming to be from the utility or a government program at your door (verify with the number on your own bill).

Never sign, initial, or tap "agree" on anything you have not read, and never give your Social Security number or a credit check to a door-knocker. If you already signed, you may have a three-business-day right to cancel — act fast, and call Bill, who has nothing to sell you.

1 The Short Version

Solar is a legitimate product sold by many honest companies — and also a magnet for high-pressure sales and outright scams, especially door-to-door. Older homeowners are a favorite target, not because of anything you did, but because scammers assume you will be polite, trusting, and reluctant to be rude. Knowing the red flags turns that around and puts you back in control.

This guide lists the warning signs calmly, so you can spot a bad pitch the moment it starts. None of them require you to be an expert — they are about how someone sells, not the technical details. Bill does not sell solar and has no stake in your decision; this is simply the protection he would want his own family to have.

- High pressure to sign TODAY is the number-one red flag — real solar deals do not vanish overnight.
- "Free solar," "no cost," or "you've been selected/pre-approved" are classic hooks.

- Anyone claiming to be from "the utility" or "a government program" at your door deserves deep suspicion.
- You never have to decide at the door — "I never sign the same day" ends any honest pitch politely.

> **WATCH OUT**
> You do not owe a salesperson at your door your time, your signature, or even a conversation. "No thank you" and closing the door is a complete and perfectly polite response. Nothing good is ever lost by declining to decide on the spot.

2 Why Solar Attracts So Many Bad Actors

It helps to understand why this product, in particular, draws pressure sellers. Solar involves large sums of money, confusing contracts, government incentives, and a genuinely good underlying product — a perfect mix for someone who wants to blur the honest parts with the dishonest ones. The complexity is the cover.

Door-to-door sales add another layer, because they catch you at home, off guard, with no chance to compare or research. A pushy seller is counting on surprise and politeness. Simply knowing that is the game makes you far harder to rush, and most of this guide is about recognizing the specific tactics.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
> None of this means every door-knocker is a crook or that solar itself is a scam. It means the sales channel rewards pressure, so you should apply extra caution to anything sold at your door — and move the decision to your own kitchen table, on your own schedule.

3 Red Flag 1: Pressure to Sign Today

The single most reliable warning sign is urgency. "This price is only good today," "the installer is in your neighborhood this week," "the incentive ends Friday" — all of these exist to stop you from thinking, comparing, or asking anyone's opinion. A real solar quote is good for days or weeks, and prices do not evaporate overnight.

Honest companies expect you to take time, get other quotes, and sleep on a decision this size. A seller who cannot bear to let you do that is telling you the deal cannot survive scrutiny. The more urgent the pitch, the more important it is to slow all the way down.

> **WATCH OUT**
> "Today only" pricing is almost never real. If a price is genuinely good, it will still be good next week after you have compared it. Treat any manufactured deadline as a reason to say no, not a reason to hurry.

4 Red Flag 2: "Free Solar" and "No Cost to You"

"Free solar" and "no cost to you" are among the most common hooks, and they are almost always misleading. Solar panels, installation, and permits cost real money; nobody gives them away. What these phrases usually hide is a long lease or PPA, a loan, or a deal where the savings are quietly smaller than promised.

- "Free" usually means a lease or PPA where a company owns the panels and you pay for years.
- "No money down" is not the same as free — you still pay, just on a schedule.
- "Government is paying for it" overstates incentives, and the big homeowner credit ended for 2026 buyers.
- If it sounds like something for nothing, there is a catch in the contract — find it before you sign.

WATCH OUT

Nobody installs thousands of dollars of equipment on your roof for free. When you hear "free" or "no cost," mentally translate it to "there is a long contract I need to read carefully," and slow down accordingly.

5 Red Flag 3: "You've Been Selected / Pre-Approved"

Another classic hook is making you feel specially chosen: "your neighborhood was selected," "you've been pre-approved for a program," "only a few homes qualify." This is flattery engineered to create urgency and a fear of missing out. There is no exclusive solar program choosing lucky homes on your street.

The goal is to make you feel like declining means losing a rare opportunity. In reality, solar is available to anyone who wants to buy it, any time, from many companies. Being "selected" is a sales script, not a fact, and recognizing it drains all its power.

GOOD TO KNOW

Real incentive programs do not work by having a salesperson appear at your door to tell you that you have been chosen. They are public, you apply through official channels, and you can confirm them in writing from the source. A "you've been selected" pitch is a sales tactic, full stop.

Rather not do this yourself? I'll come to your home and set it up for you — a flat $99 first visit across Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities. Outside the area? I also help remotely by phone or screen-share. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042.

6 Red Flag 4: Impersonating the Utility or Government

Some of the most troubling pitches involve someone implying — or flatly claiming — that they are from your electric company or a government energy program. They may wear a vaguely official vest, carry a clipboard, or reference "the new state mandate." This is designed to borrow trust they have not earned, and it should raise your guard immediately.

Your utility does not send salespeople door-to-door to sign you up for solar, and government programs do not either. If someone claims an official connection, do not take their word and do not let them in. You can always hang up or close the door, then call your utility directly using the number on your actual bill to check.

WATCH OUT

Never let someone into your home or share account details because they claim to be from the utility or the government. Verify independently, using the phone number on your own bill — not a number or website the person gives you. Impersonation is a serious red flag for a scam, not just a pushy sale.

7 Red Flag 5: Vague Terms and Rushed Paperwork

Watch how a seller handles the contract itself. Scams and bad deals thrive on vagueness — a salesperson who will not give you a plain written total, who glosses over the lease escalator, or who flips quickly to the signature page is managing you, not informing you. Honest terms survive daylight; bad ones depend on haste.

- They cannot or will not give you the total price and system size in writing.
- They skim past the parts about yearly payment increases or what happens if you sell.

- They want you to sign on a tablet quickly, "just to hold your spot."
- They discourage you from reading it fully or showing it to someone you trust.

WATCH OUT

"Just to hold your spot" or "just to start the paperwork" can be a real, binding contract. Never sign, initial, or tap "agree" on anything you have not read in full and taken time with. If they will not leave the paperwork for you to review, that is your answer.

8 Red Flag 6: Credit Checks and Personal Info Up Front

Be very cautious if a door-to-door seller wants to run a credit check or collect sensitive personal and financial information before they have even looked at your roof or given you a real written quote. A legitimate process starts with assessing whether your home is even suitable, not with harvesting your data.

Your Social Security number, financial account details, and a credit check are things to share only when you have decided to work with a company you have vetted — never to "see if you qualify" during a first doorstep conversation. Protecting that information is one of the most important things you can do.

WATCH OUT

Never hand over your Social Security number, bank details, or agree to a credit check for a salesperson who just appeared at your door. If you are unsure whether a request is legitimate, stop and ask someone you trust — or call Bill — before sharing anything.

9 Red Flag 7: Rolling Your Roof Into the Deal

A subtler trap is a pitch that bundles a new roof into the solar financing, often presented as a convenient package. Sometimes a reroof genuinely is needed before solar, but folding it into a long solar loan or lease can bury the cost, inflate the financing, and tangle two big decisions into one you cannot easily separate.

If your roof needs work, it is usually cleaner to handle the roof as its own project, with its own quotes, and then consider solar on a sound roof. A seller who insists on packaging them together, especially under time pressure, may be hiding how much you are really paying for each.

> **WATCH OUT**
> Your roof and your solar are two separate decisions, each worth its own quotes and its own thought. If someone is rushing you to bundle them, that is a good moment to step back and get an independent look — which is exactly what I can give you.

10 What To Do When Someone Knocks

Here is a simple, calm plan for the moment a solar salesperson is at your door. You do not need to be rude, and you do not need to engage. Having a plan means you never get caught off guard.

1. You do not have to open the door or engage at all — "No thank you" is enough.
2. If you do talk, ask for everything in writing and say you never decide the same day.
3. Do not sign, initial, or tap anything, and do not share personal or financial details.
4. Take their written materials, close the door, and research on your own time.
5. If they claim to be from the utility or government, verify with the number on your bill.
6. If they will not leave or keep pressuring you, it is fine to firmly end the conversation.

WATCH OUT

A good line to keep ready: "I don't make decisions at the door. Leave me your written information and I'll be in touch if I'm interested." It is polite, firm, and ends any honest pitch — and flushes out a dishonest one.

11 If You Already Signed Something

If a salesperson has already gotten you to sign, do not panic, and do not feel foolish — these pitches are professionally designed to get signatures, and lots of careful people have signed something they later questioned. You may have more protection than you think, especially for a sale made in your home.

Federal law gives you a three-business-day right to cancel many sales made at your home, and Ohio has a similar rule. That means you may be able to back out in writing within a few days, no reason required. We cover exactly how in our "3-Day Right to Cancel" guide — and the sooner you act, the better.

WATCH OUT

If you signed something at your door and have second thoughts, act quickly — the cancellation window is only a few business days. Call me at (330) 200-8042 and I will help you understand your cancel rights and the steps to use them before the clock runs out.

Rather not do this yourself? I'll come to your home and set it up for you — a flat $99 first visit across Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities. Outside the area? I also help remotely by phone or screen-share. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042.

12 What to Say at the Door — Word for Word

You do not owe a doorstep salesperson a conversation, a decision, or your personal information. A few calm, ready-made lines let you end any high-pressure pitch politely and completely. Practice one so it comes easily when someone is standing on your porch.

- "I don't make decisions at the door. Leave me something in writing and I'll call you if I'm interested."
- "I never sign anything the same day, so there's no point in a 'today only' price."
- "I'm not giving out my utility account or Social Security number at the door."
- "If this is a real deal, it'll still be a real deal next week after I compare it."
- "No thank you" — and then simply close the door. You do not have to explain yourself.

> **WATCH OUT**
> You are never obligated to be talked out of "no." A legitimate company accepts it and leaves a brochure; a scammer keeps pushing. The pushing itself is the warning you were looking for.

13 How to Check If a Company Is Real

Before you let any solar company near your roof or your finances, spend ten minutes confirming it actually exists and stands behind its work. Scammers count on you skipping this step in the excitement of a pitch.

1. Get the full legal company name and a local address in writing — not just a first name and a cell number.
2. Search the Ohio Secretary of State's business records online to confirm the company is registered.
3. Look the company up with the Better Business Bureau and read recent reviews, watching for complaints about pressure or no-shows.

4. Confirm the electrical work will be done by a licensed electrician and that permits will be pulled with your city or county.
5. Call the phone number on their paperwork a day later and make sure a real business answers.

> **WATCH OUT**
> A company that cannot give you a legal name, a fixed local address, and a license is not a company you should hand tens of thousands of dollars or your personal information to. Be especially wary of crews that are only in town "this week."

14 Paperwork Tricks to Watch For

Much of the danger in a doorstep solar deal is in how the paperwork is handled, not just what it says. Scammers rush the signing, often on a tablet you cannot easily read, so you approve things you never saw. Slow the paperwork down and these tricks fall apart.

- Blank spaces left to be "filled in later" — never sign a document with empty fields.
- A tablet screen held at arm's length while someone taps "agree" for you — insist on reading every screen yourself.
- Pre-checked boxes authorizing credit pulls, utility access, or marketing calls.
- A separate loan or lease document slipped in with the "agreement" — these are legally binding contracts.
- Being told to sign first and that corrections can happen afterward — corrections rarely do.

> **WATCH OUT**
> If anyone rushes you through signing, hands you a tablet and taps for you, or will not let you keep a full copy of everything you signed, stop. That is the moment to set the pen down and call someone you trust before going further.

15 Words You'll Hear

Scam pitches lean on a handful of phrases engineered to rush you. Knowing what they really mean takes away their power.

What they say	What it really means
"Today only" / "this price expires"	A pressure tactic. Real prices hold long enough to compare.
"You've been pre-approved / selected"	A hook to make you feel special. You applied for nothing.
"Free solar" / "no cost to you"	There is a cost; it is a lease, a loan, or a catch in the fine print.
"We're with the utility / the government"	Utilities and agencies do not sell solar door to door. Likely an impersonation.
"Just sign to hold your spot"	You are signing a binding contract, not a reservation.
"The rebate covers it"	Confirm any rebate or credit exists and that you can actually claim it.

GOOD TO KNOW

None of these phrases appears in an honest, unhurried sale. If you hear two or three in one conversation, that pattern itself is the red flag — you do not need to figure out exactly how the scam works to walk away from it.

16 Questions People Ask Us

The questions Bill hears most after a knock at the door, answered plainly.

They seemed so nice and professional. Could it still be a scam?

Yes. A polished, friendly manner is the tool, not proof of honesty. Judge the deal by its paperwork and the company's verifiable record, not by how pleasant the person was.

They already have my address and utility — did I lose anything?

Your address is usually public, and simply having your utility name is not a disaster. The things to protect are your Social Security number, bank details, and any signature. If you gave none of those, you are almost certainly fine.

Is door-to-door solar always a scam?

No, some legitimate companies do knock. But the door is the worst place to decide. Take their written materials, and judge them the same careful way you would any company you sought out yourself.

I think I already signed something. What now?

Do not panic — you often have a three-day right to cancel an in-home sale. See the earlier chapter and the dedicated cancellation guide, and act quickly, because the window is short.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> If someone is pressuring you right now, you can simply end the conversation and call for a calm second opinion before doing anything. There is never harm in waiting, and real deals survive the wait.

17 When to Call Bill

You do not have to figure out on your own whether a pitch is honest or a trap. That is precisely the kind of thing Bill helps Portage County neighbors with, and because he has nothing to sell you, you get a straight answer. There is no such thing as a silly question when thousands of dollars and your home are involved.

- Someone is pressuring you to sign a solar deal today.

- A pitch sounds too good — "free," "no cost," "you've been selected."
- Someone claims to be from the utility or a government program at your door.
- You are being asked for a credit check or personal details up front.
- You already signed something and want to understand your cancel rights fast.

Call Bill at (330) 200-8042. He will tell you plainly whether a deal smells wrong, help you check anyone's claims, and — if you have already signed — help you understand how to cancel before the window closes.

CHEAT SHEET

Everyday Cheat Sheet

Keep this by the door. You never have to decide on the spot — that alone defeats most bad pitches.

I want to...	Do this...
Shut down pressure	Say "I never sign the same day" — real deals don't expire overnight
See through "free solar"	Translate "free/no cost" to "a long contract I must read carefully"
Ignore "you've been selected"	It's flattery, not a real program — solar is available to anyone, anytime
Handle a "utility/government" claim	Don't trust it; verify with the number on your own bill
Protect your info	Never give SSN, bank details, or a credit check to a door-knocker
Undo a signature	Act fast — you may have a 3-business-day right to cancel (see that guide)
Get help	Call Bill: (330) 200-8042

BEFORE YOU GO

A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill. I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results.

HOW I CAN HELP

Your Visit — and My Promise

You don't have to remember all of it — just that a friendly, patient person is one call away, whenever you'd rather have a hand.

KEY SPECS

In your home — $99 flat for the first visit, no contracts and no surprises, with a 30-day come-back-free follow-up. In-home visits cover Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities.
Outside the area? Remotely — $49 for a screen-share session (free for Support Plan members, $39/mo), refundable if I can't fix it — and credited toward a visit if you'd rather have me in person. Book either at billshometech.com/book.

GOOD TO KNOW

My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full $99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated.

Whenever you're ready, I'll come to your home anywhere in Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities, at your pace. Too far for a house call? I also help remotely. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042. — Bill

Call or text (330) 200-8042 · bill@billshometech.com

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