



U.S. EPA: Consumers, Solar and the Environment

**FTC Workshop: Something New Under the Sun
Session: Laying the Groundwork
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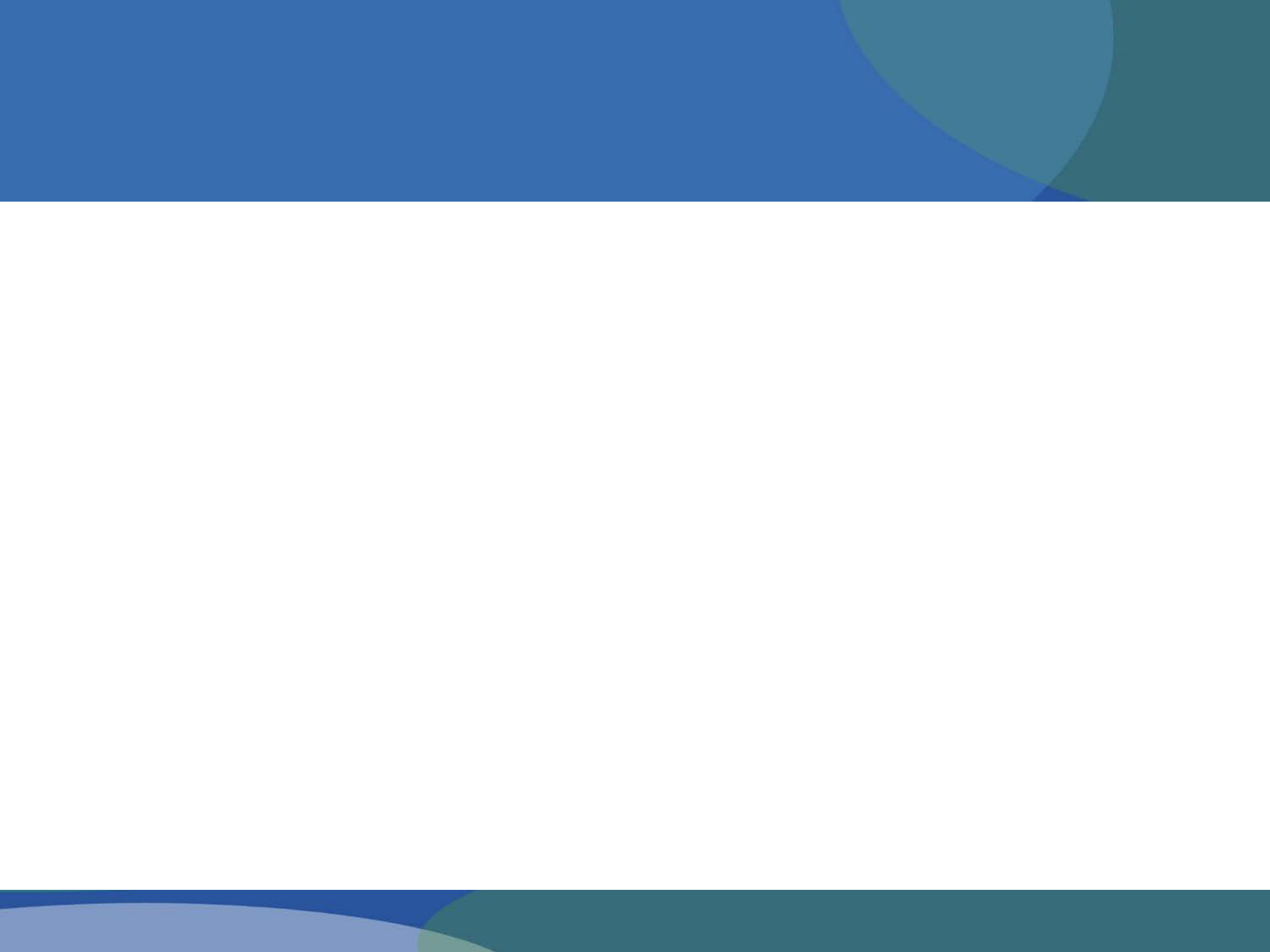
Environmental Overview of the U.S. Electricity Sector

The U.S. electricity sector is a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution

Air pollution generated from the electricity sector impacts human health

Greenhouse gas emissions emitted from fossil-fuel resources





Role of Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs)

Renewable energy certificates (RECs) are tradeable instruments that represent the environmental and energy attributes of 1 MWh of renewable energy delivered to the grid

Because the flow of electricity cannot be traced on the grid, RECs serve as an essential ownership and accounting tool to track the attributes of renewable

RECs are the instrument used for claims of renewable energy use. If you don't own a REC to substantiate your renewable electricity use claim, you aren't using renewable electricity



EPA's Green Power Partnership and the Scale of the Voluntary Market

The Green Power Partnership works with 1,400 organizations using more than 34 billion



Consumer motivations for using solar energy

To make an environmental difference

To realize cost stability and energy savings

To meet renewable energy and sustainability goals

To manage climate risks and GHG emissions

Consumer Issues

REC Tensions

- Making claims and taking incentives
- Compliance and voluntary markets

Lack of consumer understanding and available information

- What is a REC and why should I care?
- Clarity in contract language

REC ownership (e.g., third-party development structures)

Substantiation of carbon footprint reduction claims in corporate greenhouse gas reporting requirements

Marketing claims

- Developer vs Consumer (i.e., Community Solar)

