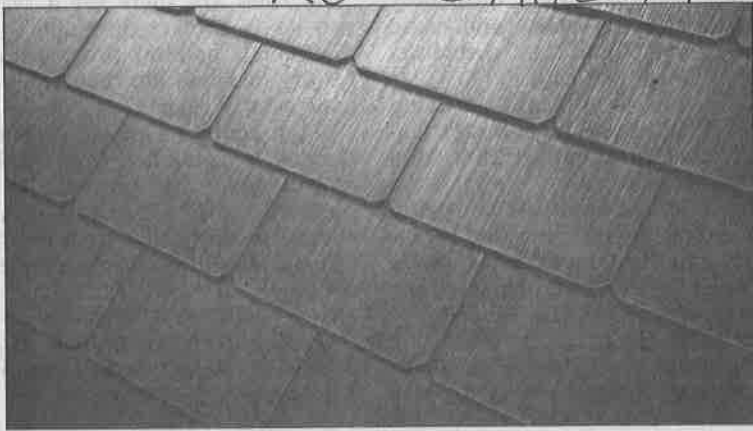


RG 5/11/2017



Tesla

Tesla's solar tiles are designed to look like a traditional roof and contain photovoltaic cells that are invisible from the street.

Tesla starts selling roof tiles that incorporate solar tech

BY DEE-ANN DURBIN
The Associated Press

DETROIT — Electric car maker Tesla has added another product to its lineup: solar roof tiles.

As of Wednesday, customers worldwide could order a solar roof on Tesla's web site. Installations will begin next month in the United States, starting with California. Installations outside the country will begin next year,

the company said.

The glass tiles were unveiled by Tesla last fall just before the company merged with solar panel maker SolarCity Corp. They're designed to look like a traditional roof, with options that replicate slate or terracotta tiles. The solar tiles contain photovoltaic cells that are invisible from the street.

Tesla CEO Elon Musk said

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Tesla: Tiles guaranteed for the life of the home

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one of the drawbacks to home solar installations has been the solar panels themselves: They're often awkward, shiny and ugly. Buyers will want Tesla's roof, he said, because it looks as good or better than a normal roof.

"When you have this installed on your house, you'll have the best roof in the neighborhood. The aesthetics are that good," Musk said in a conference call with media.

The roof is guaranteed for the life of the home, which is longer than the 20-year lifespan for a typical, non-solar roof, Musk said. It has gone through the same hail, fire and wind testing that normal roofs endure.

Tesla said the solar tiles cost \$42 per square foot to install, making them far more costly than slate, which costs

around \$17 per square foot, or asphalt, which costs around \$5. But homes would only need between 30 and 40 percent of their roof tiles to be solar; the rest would be Tesla's cheaper non-solar tiles which would blend in with the solar ones.

It would cost \$69,100 to install a solar roof with 40-percent solar tiles on a 2,600-square-foot roof in suburban Detroit, according to Tesla's web site. That includes a \$7,000 Tesla Powerwall, a battery unit that stores the energy from the solar panels and powers the home.

The roof would be eligible for a \$15,500 federal tax credit and would generate an estimated \$62,100 in electricity over 30 years.

Over that time period, Tesla estimates, the homeowner would save \$8,500.