



# Solar photovoltaic panels hit people

What happened to solar panels in 2021?

In 2021, Storm Arwen wreaked havoc at a solar farm near Wolviston, smashing hundreds of glass solar panels and damaging rows and rows of photovoltaics. In extreme weather, solar panels can operate as lifting surfaces making the panels vulnerable to being blown away, so it's important that these are securely tethered.

Did solar panels get hit by hail?

The panels were stowed at a 60-degree angle, which was the steepest setting at that time. In the end, the panels had almost no damage in areas of the solar farms that got hit with 2-inch hail. About one-third of the panels had damage in areas with 3-inch hail.

Are solar panels a problem?

The vast quantity of waste from all of those sources is a concern and we need to find ways to reduce waste, but solar panels are not a major issue in that larger conversation. Solar panels do not contain harmful levels of the toxic materials that often get discussed at public hearings about development.

Are solar panels causing a surge in photovoltaic panel waste?

The coming surge in photovoltaic panel waste is tiny compared to other categories, and most health concerns about solar equipment are unfounded. The Amazon Fort Powhatan Solar Farm in Disputanta, Virginia on August 19, 2022. Credit: Drew Angerer/Getty Images

Are solar panels toxic?

Solar panels do not contain harmful levels of the toxic materials that often get discussed at public hearings about development. The authors found no examples of solar panels for utility-scale development that contain arsenic, gallium, germanium or hexavalent chromium.

How can solar panels reduce hail risk?

A recent pv magazine webinar with VDE looked at the various strategies to reduce hail risk, including choosing the right solar panel for projects, using software-controlled stowing mechanisms that tilt the panels away from direct hail impacts, as well as other strategies.

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