

# Electric-car maker Tesla now in the

Sales, installation begin this summer in the U.S.

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In what could be a breakthrough in the solar-energy industry, Tesla will begin selling and installing solar roof tiles for U.S. customers this summer, CEO Elon Musk said Wednesday.

The company, best known for

its electric cars, said it was set to begin accepting orders for glass roof tiles with embedded solar collectors that Musk pledged would be more durable than a typical roof, a third lighter and cheaper when electricity savings and tax credits are included. The tiles are being offered through SolarCity, the solar company that became a Tesla unit last year.

Musk told reporters the business would "start off initially very slowly but then gather speed and grow exponentially." He declined to offer sales estimates. Solar roofs have been talked about and



TESLA MOTORS

Tesla CEO Elon Musk displays a solar roof cell.

attempted for years but never have been priced right or worked well enough to become popular.

The tiles will convert sunlight

## solar roof tile business

into electricity and be offered in several styles, but it's yet to be seen if the photovoltaic shingles are as efficient or cost effective as current panel installations. The "black glass smooth" and "textured" tiles will be available first, and the company will begin selling the "Tuscan" and "French slate" tiles in six months, he said.

"When you have this installed on your house you will have the best-looking roof in the neighborhood," Musk said. "I think the aesthetics are that good."

Unlike typical roofs that must be replaced about once every 20

years, the warranty on Tesla shingles lasts "as long as the house lasts," Musk said.

In a flourish typical of Musk's style as a disruptive innovator, he said that he had wanted to extend the warranty into "infinity." But "infinity apparently is challenging with accounting," he said.

Price will vary significantly depending on the house and the percentage of roof tiles that contain active solar cells. Musk said Tesla recommends up to 70% of roof tiles to have solar generating capacity and the others to be dormant.