MCPA COMMUNITY SOLAR ARRAY Q & A

Q: Why is MCPA building a Community Solar Array?

1) To provide a simple and convenient way for our members to participate in solar generation.
2) To help members install renewable energy cheaper than they can install it on their own.
3) To help MCPA employees gain knowledge about solar products.

Q: How large is the MCPA Community Solar Project?

The Cooperative has available 100 solar panels, which is equal to 41 kWdc. Each 410 Watt panel is approximately 6.5' x 4.5'.

Q: What kind of solar system is it?

It is manufactured by tenKsolar, which is a Minnesota based company.

Q: Where is the Array located?

It will be at 591 Lindbergh Trail in Glencoe Township, on the Cooperative's pole yard property near Hwy. 212.

Q: Who is eligible to participate?

Only McLeod Co-op Power members may participate. Metered residential and commercial accounts will be permitted to participate. Non-metered, DG net-metered, and lighting accounts are not eligible to participate. A license agreement with a member will be required for each location.

Q: What is the cost?

To purchase the 20 year output from one panel is $1,550. Two panels would be $3,100. This lease/contract with MCPA is good for 20 years, beginning when the array is completed (estimated to be spring of 2015).

Q: How can I participate in MCPA's Community Solar Project?

Complete the Customer License Agreement Form and return it to McLeod Co-op Power with payment. Phone payments are accepted. You can call us at 320-864-3148 or 1-800-494-6272 or stop by the office and we can assist you with your questions and provide you with a copy of the agreement. Agreements are also available on the Co-op's website www.mcleodcoop.com.

Q: How can I pay?

Cash, Check, or Credit Card are accepted.

Q: Is there a limit on how many I can purchase?

A member may license the output of multiple solar panels, provided that the annual estimated output of the panels does not exceed the annual average kwh used at the location/account to where they are to be applied.

Q: How many panels would it take to offset my entire bill?

The average MCPA residential account uses more than 1,400 kWh per month. The estimated annual output is 511 kWh per panel. So it would take the output of about 32 panels to offset most of the energy use for an account averaging 16,800 kWh per year. The Co-op staff will assist members in determining their average annual kWh use and the maximum number of panels they would be eligible to sign up for.

Q: Does the weather and change in seasons affect the solar production?

Both the weather and seasonal changes will affect the amount of sun reaching the panels. During the summer, the panels will produce more energy because the days are longer and the sun is higher. If it's a cloudy day, the panels will produce less. During the winter, there will be less production because of limited hours of sunlight and, at times potential snow coverage.

Q & A Continued;

Q: What if I move?

If you move to another location on MCPA Co-op lines you may transfer the credits to your new account. If you will no longer be an MCPA member, you can transfer/assign or donate the panel output to a friend, family member or organization that is a member of MCPA. The Co-op can assist you with identifying an interested member/organization. If you are unable to find someone to transfer the credits to, a discounted buyout option is available.

Q: How much would my credit be worth each month?

If you purchased the output from one panel, it is estimated to produce an average of 42.6 kWh per month. At 2013 rates, this would be equivalent to reducing your electric bill about $4.90 a month. It is assumed that if the cost of electricity continues to increase over the next 20 years, the value of your kWh would increase incrementally as well.

Q: If I do not purchase now, can I buy later?

Yes you can, provided we have panels available. Subscriptions are on a first come, first serve basis, while panels are available. Payment and a signed contract must be received by the Co-op to subscribe.

Q: Where does the electricity go when the system is producing energy?

This system is interconnected with the electric grid, so the output goes directly onto our distribution wires.

Q: Does the system have a battery backup system?

No. The cost for a battery backup system is currently too expensive to warrant the cost.

Q: Does the system work in the event of a power outage?

No. All renewable systems with an inverter and no battery backup require line voltage to function and will not generate during an outage.

Q: How do you meter the solar array?

A meter will record how many kWh the array produces and sells back into the grid. The total power production of the array each month will be divided by the number of panels in the array. Each participating member will be credited with their share of the array's output based upon how many panels they signed up for in their agreement.

Q: How is the credit given?

Actual electric production for the entire MCPA Community Solar Array will be recorded on a calendar month basis. Total kWh output of the project will be divided by the number of solar panels in the array and be rounded down to the nearest kWh. Appropriate credits will be applied to member's bill the following month after production (September generation would be credited to member on the bill they receive in October). Solar credits will be calculated using the same general service energy rate and power cost adjustment, as is used to bill the account to which the solar credits are applied.

Q: What does the cost cover?

MCPA will provide all necessary maintenance and insurance for the life of the project. MCPA will make certain that it meets all applicable codes, standards, and regulatory requirements at the time of installation and throughout the term of the agreement. In the event of equipment failure, MCPA will bring the equipment back to working order as quickly as is reasonably possible.

Q: Who uses the Renewable Energy Credits (RECs)?

All environmental attributes and RECs are retained by MCPA.

Q: What if the facility is not completed?

If the project is not completed, members will be refunded the subscription amount they paid.

Q: What happens at the end of the project's 20-year life?

We are not certain at this time. The panels could be replaced, re-commissioned for more years of service, or decommissioned/removed and site returned to previous use. In 20 years we will be able to better assess the long-term performance of the tenKsolar panels, as well as new technologies available in 2035.