

New Kent County Solar Farm Powering Co-op Homes

A new utility-scale solar farm near Hartly is now powering hundreds of homes served by Delaware Electric Cooperative. The solar farm was energized in late May and is generating enough clean energy to power 260 homes in Kent County. The project was built by Tangent Energy Solutions based in Kennett Square, PA and financed by Madison Energy Investments based in Vienna, VA. Delaware Electric Cooperative is purchasing the carbon-free energy produced at the facility at a competitive cost and delivering it to member homes, farms, and businesses.

According to Co-op President and CEO Greg Starheim, “Delaware Electric Cooperative is committed to providing more clean energy to our members. This project will reduce our carbon footprint and will provide members with a sustainable and affordable source of power for decades. Local solar will continue to play a larger role in powering Delaware communities.”

The solar farm features 10 acres of solar panels and was built along Lockwood Chapel Road. The facility is capable of producing 1.5 megawatts of electricity and was built in DEC’s service territory. The energy it is producing is flowing directly onto the Co-op’s distribution system.

“Decentralized energy resources including solar, battery storage and natural gas generation provide long-term benefits for electricity customers, including increased reliability, sustainability and affordability. The initial capital investment in equipment can be a significant hurdle to developing these types of projects,” said Dean Musser, Director, Tangent Energy Solutions. “By working with Tangent to bring in a third-party investor through our Energy as a Service offering, Delaware Electric Co-op was able to provide its customers with the benefits of a solar DER solution, without the upfront capital investment.”

The project is the first of seven new large solar farms in DEC’s service area to become operational. Over the next two years, six additional solar projects will begin delivering clean energy to members. The combined projects being built across Kent and Sussex Counties will power thousands of homes.

Currently, 12 percent of DEC's energy comes from renewable sources including solar, wind and landfill gas. The Co-op is the only utility in the state to own a solar farm. DEC owns the nearly 40-acre Bruce A. Henry Solar Farm near Georgetown that has been providing members with renewable energy since 2012. Through investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency programs, the Co-op has reduced its carbon footprint by 46 percent since 2005.

Delaware Electric Cooperative is a member-owned not-for-profit utility powering more than 110,000 homes, farms and businesses in Kent and Sussex Counties. For more information, visit DEC on the web at www.delaware.coop or follow them on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube.