



Delaware Electric Cooperative



Making Smart Choices When Going Solar:

With so much information available on solar generation systems, people need to be aware of the potential obstacles associated with solar installation and what to know when dealing with a solar contractor.

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Solar Energy

Please note that the following summary is not comprehensive, and members should contact DEC before proceeding with the purchase and installation of solar, as well as refer to the Technical Considerations document to consider the minimum interconnection requirements.



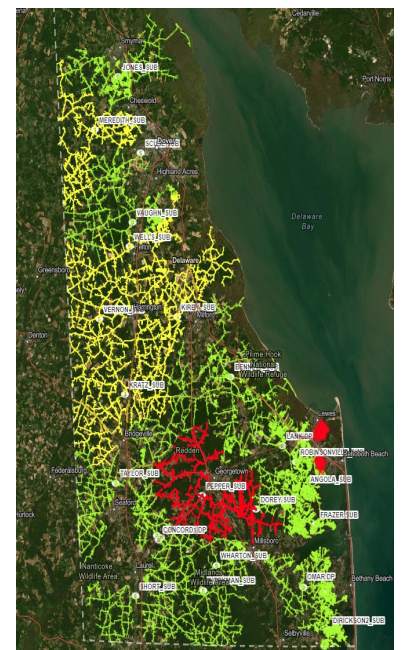
Frequently Asked Questions:

Whether you are trying to learn more about solar or learn more information about the installation process, we encourage members to reach out and ask us before taking the next step. We have compiled responses to a few frequently asked questions to make the process easier.

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Check With Us Before Installing Solar!

Members need to make sure they can connect to our grid for their solar panels before purchasing them. We may be growing in the solar industry, but some areas are closed, and some are open. Scan to see where you fall on our interconnection map.




A photograph of a two-story house with a grey shingled roof. Several black solar panels are mounted on the roof. The house has light-colored siding and a white arched window. A white van is parked in the driveway in front of a garage. The sky is blue with some clouds.

Decisions, Decisions

How To Know When You Made The Right Choice To Go Solar

The saying “it’s too good to be true” is actually true. Unfortunately, some solar contractors try to persuade members into purchasing solar panels from them by proposing unrealistic deals and using an aggressive sales tactic. Not only are there many misleading ads online, but there are also many aggressive door-to-door salespeople that pressure homeowners to purchase solar without fully understanding what they are signing up for. These salespeople try to incentivize deals that are available for a short period to get people to sign up right away. Along with these deals they exaggerate the value of energy efficiency upgrades to inflate the return on investment. Instead of getting trapped with these aggressive salespeople and outrageous deals, make sure to always do your research before signing. It is better to ask more questions than none when approached by a salesperson, and if you are not sure what the information means, make sure to lean on us – DEC – with any concerns you may have.





“How Does Solar Work? How Do I Know If I Qualify to Install Solar?”

We have compiled a list of some frequently asked questions for people who want to learn more about solar before installing it on their home. We want to make sure our members have all the necessary information before they start the process of installing solar. To answer some of these questions we had our team go through and pull out all the important information that will allow members to have a basic understanding of solar. It is our hope to persuade members to call us before installing and to check out our website for all the applications and documents that will go into further detail about the installation process.

How large of a system is allowed to be installed?

The size of your system will depend on your consumption history within the last 24 months. If your monthly average kWh produced per month is less than the maximum output permitted by Delaware law, then the system will be approved by DEC provided that there is sufficient grid capacity for the added generation. Properties with less than 24 months of consumption history, please refer to the interconnection application found on our website.

How Does Net Metering Work?

Net metering is a process that records when your solar is exporting energy to the grid – and records when the grid is powering your home. Over the duration of your billing period, DEC’s meter records how much energy you take from the grid as well as how much energy you send back to the grid. The difference between the two values is what is shown on the bill.

Why are all substations not open to solar interconnections?

In some locations across DEC’s territory, members are no longer able to install solar generation systems that feed energy back to Co-op powerlines because they are full. Because there are already solar generation systems in these areas, it is not safe to add additional systems because it could lead to a variety of issues including possible damage or failure of electrical equipment, leading to power outages.

What Happens When the Solar Panels Produce More Energy Than Consumed?

Any excess energy that is not used by your home will be exported to the DEC grid. This excess energy is called “banked kilowatt-hours.” The excess energy that is produced and not used can be credited to future bills.

How Much Extra Energy am I allowed to Store (Bank)?

Members are allowed to store as much energy as they want, but it will expire after the March billing period of each year. Currently, banked kilowatt-hours not consumed by the member are lost. However, most members with solar interconnections will have empty or nearly empty banks by this time; so, this will not affect most members.

What is Account Aggregation for Net Metering and How Does It Work?

Account aggregation for net metering means multiple accounts can benefit from the production of a solar installation. Kilowatt-hours produced by the solar array through net metering are credited to your various accounts on a priority basis. This means that any energy produced by your solar array will first be used to credit the bill for account one. If account one has its usage covered, then any remaining energy is credited towards account two — and so on.

If I am Eligible for a Solar Grant, How Much Money Will It Be?

When it comes to solar grants, the amount members receive can change from year to year. We encourage members to contact Energize Delaware to inquire about solar grant details.

Am I eligible for a Solar Grant?

Grant eligibility is at the discretion of Energize Delaware. Grants will only be provided for member-owned PV systems. Grants will NOT be provided for renewable energy systems designed and utilized as an independent power producer or third-party ownership. If not all the required documentation is provided, the grant request may be delayed or denied. Funds for solar grants can change yearly. Members may be required to sign over their SRECs to Energize Delaware in order to receive a grant.

Once Approved, When Can I Get My Solar Grant?

If you are approved for a solar grant, the time that it takes to receive payment can vary. Please inquire with Energize Delaware for specific details.

What is the Difference Between Class A and Class B?

Class A – members with an average monthly peak demand of less than 50 kW. This will include residential, lighting, small commercial, irrigation, and poultry accounts.

Class B – members with an average monthly peak demand of 50 kW or greater. This will include large-commercial, primarily metered accounts and some poultry accounts.

What Will My Electric Bill Look Like?

Please understand that there will be a \$16 customer charge regardless of how much solar you produce – unless there is a cash credit in your account. Your bill will include the value for banked kilowatt-hours during the billing period. The difference between how much energy you take and send to the grid will determine your usage.

For example, if the value of your usage is positive it means you consumed more energy during the billing period than your solar array was able to produce. Your accumulated banked kilowatt-hours will be applied to your bill if you have produced more energy than you needed in the past. You will be billed for the difference between your usage and your banked kilowatt-hours. If your banked kilowatt-hours are greater than your usage, then you will not be billed for usage, just the mandatory customer charge.

If the value of your usage is negative it means you produced more energy during the billing period than you were able to consume. You will not be billed for any usage, just the mandatory customer charge. If you generated excess energy in the past, the excess energy you produced is put into your banked kilowatt-hours. This excess energy may be credited towards future bills.

What Do I Do with My SRECs?

After you purchase a solar system, you are eligible to sell your solar renewable energy credits (SREC). An SREC is a credit that can be sold at SREC procurement auctions or exchanged for an upfront rebate via the sustainable energy utility's SREC purchase program. One SREC is generated for every 1,000 kWh your system produces. DEC is not involved with a member's SRECs – it is under the members discretion of what they do with their SRECs. Members may be required to sign over their SRECs to Energize Delaware in order to receive a grant.

