

REC's Support of Solar Power Shines Bright



HOW IT WORKS

- Every kilowatt-hour of power that a net-metering participant generates is a kilowatt-hour they do not have to purchase from REC.
- Solar panels utilize a two-way flow meter that measures the electricity you consume through REC and the excess electricity your solar panels produce.
- As your solar panels produce electricity, that energy is first used to supply your own energy needs.
- If the solar panels produce more than you need, the excess is measured at the meter and sent back onto the power grid to be used by other members.
- Conversely, if at any time your solar panels will not cover your energy needs, then REC provides the remainder.
- Your net energy use is what you can expect to be billed for, which represents the power REC delivered to you less the power you put back on the grid from your solar panels.

A licensed engineer, Joe Gilpin is trained to look for efficiencies.

“I spend a lot of time optimizing everything in life from projects at work or at home to our electric bill,” Gilpin said.

When his family moved to 10 acres in the Milford community of Caroline County, he wasn't sure Virginia's climate — or its abundant trees — would make solar a feasible option.

“But spending some time over COVID on the computer at home,” Gilpin said, “I figured I'd give it a shot and take a look at what's available.”

The result: A crew from Nova Solar Inc. installed a 45-panel, ground-mounted solar array on a portion of Gilpin's bucolic property. The solar panels sit between a scenic pond and a storybook barn, where the Gilpins homeschool their young children.

By installing solar panels, the Gilpins joined more than 1,300 REC member-owners who are also generating their own electricity, technically known as “net metering.” That's a fancy way of saying that these members and their solar contractors have worked with REC to interconnect their electricity generating systems to the electric grid.

“REC has been awesome throughout the process,” Gilpin said. “The policies that Rappahannock Electric has just made it very easy.”

Barklie Estes has seen the benefits of going solar from both sides. As the president of Nova Solar, Estes



Member-owner Joe Gilpin is now generating his own electricity.

has not only installed panels for REC members from Warren County to Caroline, he also uses them himself at his home in the Bumpass community of Louisa County. That means he's familiar with REC from both a member and business perspective.

“A lot of what I do is work with project managers at different utilities,” Estes said. “And Rappahannock Electric has always been very consistent and reliable. We always try to expedite our projects and REC is always fast. They just make it easy.”

As Nova Solar installers placed the final panels on his array, Gilpin said the process was painless from start to finish and has the added benefit of helping the environment.

“Going green is always something that can't be bad,” he said.

“Generating power from the sun, which is there anyway, just kind of makes sense.”

Want to Support Solar Power without Installing Panels?

With Cooperative Sunshare, REC members can harness the power of the sun without making any kind of upfront investment. There's no equipment to buy, no permits and no hassle. We are making it easy to participate and support renewable energy. myrec.coop/sunshare



IS SOLAR RIGHT FOR YOU?

Students: Scholarship Applications Now Open!

- ▶ The deadline to apply is Jan. 25, 2022
- ▶ Two \$2,500 and 15 \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded

Each year, REC offers the Community Scholarship program to students who are seeking to advance their career goals by attending a college or a career and technical school.

To apply for each scholarship, the applicant's parent or guardian must be a member-owner of REC, and the applicant must be planning to enroll in an accredited educational or training institution.

THOSE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY:

Seniors in high school planning to attend a college or university in 2022.

Students planning to attend a career and technical school in 2022.

Students currently enrolled in a college or university.

APPLY AT: myrec.coop/scholarships

Scholarship recipients in each category will be selected based upon their scholastic achievements, community involvement, recommendations and extracurricular activities. Recipients will be notified by March 2021 of their award with scholarships being presented before the end of the school year for the student.

