



People's Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Immediate NEWS RELEASE

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Announcing Collaborative Energy Education Partnership

ORONOCO, MN, October 25, 2025 — People's Energy Cooperative (PEC) is proud to announce a new collaborative partnership with Southeast Service Cooperative in support of their *STEM Forward Solar Suitcase Initiative*. This partnership presents a unique opportunity for the Cooperative to expand its STEM education programming and help foster a talent pipeline to the energy industry.

The *STEM Forward Solar Suitcase Initiative* is a comprehensive, year-long program designed to equip educators and students with the knowledge and tools needed for the energy transition. With implementation from Southeast Service Cooperative, this model has a proven track record of bringing significant impact to local schools and their communities by integrating project-based learning with direct industry engagement.

"One of the core principles of PEC is education and training," shared Gwen Stevens, vice president of cooperative relations at PEC. "We recognize the importance of investing in the next generation of members and energy industry professionals so that together we can effectively contribute to the future of reliable, affordable, and sustainable electricity. By expanding our multi-faceted approach to education outreach, we can meet our youngest members where they are in their educational journey."

To support the work of this program, the Cooperative has made a generous contribution of \$5,000 to Southeast Service Cooperative and facilitated a \$5,000 matching grant from CoBank's Sharing Success program. This funding will fully cover the participation fees for up to three new schools from People's Energy service territory to join the STEM Forward network, provide transportation grants for schools to apply for site visits and field trips to PEC's facilities, and help establish a peer-to-peer support network for educators.

"The partnership between STEM Forward and People's Energy Cooperative is a powerful example of how industry and education can collaborate to create meaningful, multi-touch STEM experiences," explains Vic Dreier, Regional STEM Specialist at Southeast Service

Cooperative. “By connecting students with real-world applications from early learning through high school, we’re not only building STEM confidence – we’re opening doors to future careers and empowering students to see themselves as problem-solvers and innovators. People’s Energy Cooperative’s investment in this initiative reflects their deep commitment to the communities they serve and their belief in the power of education to shape a brighter future.”

For more information about how your school can capitalize on this exciting new partnership, visit www.ssc.coop/stemforward.solar.

About People’s Energy Cooperative

People's Energy Cooperative is a member-owned electric cooperative celebrating nearly 90 years of delivering retail electric power to its 20,000 consumer-members in Olmsted, Dodge, Fillmore, Mower, Wabasha, and Winona Counties. People's Energy Cooperative is a Touchstone Energy® cooperative and a member-owner in the Dairyland Power system of electric cooperatives that generates and transmits reliable electric power in 62 counties of four states (Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois). People’s is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

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