



People's Energy Cooperative (PEC) is in the final stages of developing a community solar garden for members who are interested in renewable energy.

The community solar garden will give PEC members an opportunity to benefit from this clean energy source in an affordable way. Participants will have peace of mind that it is being built and maintained by electrical experts.

Community solar gardens enable members to overcome common barriers to installing a personal renewable energy system such as:

- Having a suitable site for a solar array;
- Lacking the knowledge and resources to identify a reputable supplier and contractor;
- Possessing the significant funds associated with building and insuring an array of their own; and
- Lacking the expertise, skills, and time to maintain the system.

How the program works

Interested PEC members participate by subscribing to the energy generated by the solar panels. Similar projects have ranged from \$1,000 to \$1,500 per panel. PEC's price for a 305 watt solar panel will be under \$800.

Energy generated by the garden will be divided equally across the participating members based on the number of panels they subscribe to and then credited to their monthly electric bills.

Insurance and maintenance fees are covered in the subscription price. There are no additional costs or fees after the initial subscription.

Interested in participating or learning more?

If you are interested in participating or want to learn more about the PEC Community Solar Garden, please contact the Cooperative at memberservices@peoplesrec.com or call (507) 367-7000 or (800) 214-2694.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a community solar garden?

A community solar garden is a solar array with multiple subscribers that are connected to their electric utility's grid. Subscribers receive a credit on their electric bill for their share of the energy produced by the array.

Who owns the community solar garden?

PEC owns, operates and maintains the community solar garden. Subscribing members own the energy generated by the panels for the term of the agreement.

Who maintains the community solar garden?

As the owner, PEC will maintain the array.

Do I have to live near the community solar garden to participate?

No. The energy generated is distributed onto the electric grid like any other generation source and not connected directly to the participating members' homes or businesses. You must be an active member of PEC to participate.

If I invest in the community solar garden, how long will I receive energy credit on my electric bill?

For 20 years. After the agreement period ends all energy production becomes the Cooperative's.

What happens if I move outside the PEC service territory and no longer am a PEC member?

Subscriptions can be sold or given to another PEC member.

Where is PEC in the planning process?

PEC has selected a solar vendor and is working to finalize a location for the project. We hope to begin construction this year.

Where will the solar garden be located?

Currently, we are seeking zoning approval from the City of Elgin to place the solar garden in the Elgin Industrial Park along Highway 42.