

**Sawnee EMC's  
Photovoltaic Systems (PV)  
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)**

**Q1. What is a Photovoltaic (PV) System?**

A PV system captures the sun's energy and converts it to electricity. The system consists of solar cells joined together to form solar panels; it also includes an "inverter" which is a device used to convert the output of the solar cell to a form of electricity that is traditionally used in a home, necessary mounting hardware, and the electrical components needed to connect the PV system to a home or business' electrical panel.

**Q2. Where does a PV system work best?**

In Georgia, a PV system performs best when installed facing in a southerly direction, and so to receive as much "direct sun" exposure as possible. Solar panels for the PV system are typically located on a roof, but can be ground mounted or pole mounted as well.

**Q3. How much electricity will a PV system produce?**

The output of a PV system depends on many factors: The direction the panels face, the shading, the tilt, the efficiency of the panels, and several other factors. It is recommended that you thoroughly review the components of any system you are considering. The following online calculator (see hyperlink) can provide you with an estimate of what you "might" expect a PV system to produce in our area: [PV Watts](#) (National Renewable Energy Laboratory)

**Q4. Will Sawnee EMC buy back any excess energy I produce?**

Sawnee EMC offers a Net Energy Metering ("NEM") rate to Sawnee members who meet certain program requirements and qualifications, under certain limitations. Participating in Sawnee's NEM program allows a member to directly offset some of the energy their home uses and receive instant credit for any kilowatt hours (kWh) pushed to the grid based on the current NEM rate in effect at the time.

**Q5. What information does Sawnee EMC require if I have a PV system installed?**

Sawnee EMC will require certain specific information and certifications from you as well as the PV system installer, if one is used at your location. This information includes, but is not limited to, the size of the system, the Underwriters Laboratory (UL) listings/certifications, National Electrical Code compliance and other information. See our applicable interconnection procedure for the size system you plan to install for the specific required information disclosure.

**Q6. Why Does Sawnee EMC want to know about my PV System?**

PV systems that are interconnected to Sawnee EMC's distribution system have the potential to back feed, or push, electricity back onto our distribution system. So that we can insure the safety of our staff, other members, and the general public, as well not to impede the quality of service we provide to others, we need to know key attributes of the interconnected PV system. Also, the amount of electricity a PV system produces can affect the physical aspects of providing electric service in a particular portion of our service area. Finally, should a weather event come through and blocks the sun's rays for some period of time, the PV system in that area could see a decrease in their output, which can potentially increase the electrical demand placed on our distribution system. Given these potential events when a PV system is in operation, we have to be

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ready to address and plan for these changes in the demand for electricity. Knowing the PV system locations are critical to us maintaining reliable and dependable electric service to all of our members.

**Q7. Does my PV system provide me with some electricity during a power outage?**

With a standard PV system configured in what would be normal operation, the answer is No. This assumes a properly installed PV system which is designed to shut off in the event of a loss of utility power. However, a system can be installed with a battery backup option which could potentially provide some electricity during an outage, if the battery and PV system has the proper inverter and protection scheme.

**Q8. Is there an agreement that I have to sign to be on Sawnee EMC's Net Energy Metering Rider?**

You will have to complete the appropriate interconnection requirements, including certain notification forms, and submit these items to SEMC for our review and consideration. There may also be a net metering agreement required, dependent upon the size of system you are installing. The interconnection requirements are located on our web site at ([www.sawnee.coop/interconnection](http://www.sawnee.coop/interconnection)). Certain limitations exist for the amount of energy Sawnee EMC will purchase under its Net energy Metering Rider program and request will be considered on a "first come, first served" basis. Acceptance into and or rejection of a request to participation in this program will be provided to all requesting parties after a review of their request has occurred.

**Q9. What rate will I be billed under if I am a Net Energy Metering Rider account?**

Qualifying net metering accounts, accepted into the program, can access the NEM rider under certain circumstances. NEM rider participants, will continue to be billed for energy purchases at their normal applicable SEMC rate schedule, while at the same time receiving instant credit for any kWh pushed to grid. See the rider for limitations and qualifications.

**Q10. Would you have to change out my Sawnee EMC meter to participate in Net Energy Metering Rider Program?**

Typically, No. In most cases, Sawnee can program the existing Sawnee EMC meter, located at your home or business, remotely to accommodate and consider the net energy metering rider program arrangement.

**Q11. Is there a limit on the size of the PV system I can install?**

Yes, for residential the PV system can be no more than 10 kilowatts alternating current (10 kW AC) and for commercial locations generally no more than 100 kW AC. Remember that commercial accounts that are leasing the PV system, the peak demand may be a factor in the sizing. Ask for the staff of Sawnee EMC to advise you as to the maximum size your business qualifies.

**Q12. My roof may need to be replaced soon, should I replace it before installing a PV system?**

That is up to you. We would suggest that you consider the additional expense you may incur to remove a PV system and then have it re-installed after replacing your roof. So, yes, some planning in this area is advisable prior to making a PV system investment.

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**Q13. Will my neighborhood HOA allow a PV system at my home?**

Each HOA is different, so you will need to check with your home owner's association or your subdivision covenants to be sure what restriction may apply.

**Q14. How can I learn more about solar resources that are available to Sawnee EMC members?**

Keep checking our web site for up to date postings of additional resources that we will offer. Also, feel free to call our Marketing Department at 770-887-2363 ext. 7133 or email us at [marketing@sawnee.coop](mailto:marketing@sawnee.coop) and one of our knowledgeable and friendly Marketing Representatives will be glad to assist you and share the information we have on this emerging technology.