

Sawnee EMC Virtual Solar Program

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Why should I participate in Sawnee's Virtual Solar program?

The goal of the program is to allow more members the ability to use energy that is generated from renewable sources. Many members are not able to purchase and install their own solar equipment, including those who rent, those who have strict HOA rules, and those whose rooftops which are shaded by trees.

A few other advantages of Sawnee EMC's Virtual Solar program are:

- The large size of a utility scale solar project brings the cost down compared to a installing an individual system
- You receive the benefits of solar energy, without having a system on your roof
- No maintenance and upkeep by the homeowner
- No long-term contract or financing
- Affordable choice for members who live in an apartment and want solar energy
- Homeowners under restrictive covenants in their subdivision can participate

Where will the solar energy come from?

The energy generated will come from solar panels allocated to Sawnee EMC at the SR Loving Solar Facility located in Jeff Davis County near Hazlehurst, Georgia. Sawnee EMC has designated a portion of the energy we receive from this project to be used for the Sawnee EMC Virtual Solar program. Information on the construction of this facility can be seen [here](#).

Who is eligible to participate in Sawnee's Virtual Solar program?

All accounts billed under the standard residential rate (Schedule "H") and those commercial accounts billed under Sawnee's small commercial rate (Schedule "SC"). Residential and small commercial accounts enrolled in our Prepaid Metering program or who are existing Net Energy Metering (NEM) program participants are **not** eligible.

How does Sawnee's Virtual Solar program work?

- The Virtual Solar program is designed to give participants many of the same benefits as if they installed solar panels on their own property; but without many of the common issues associated with installing, owning, and maintaining solar panels.
- Participating Sawnee EMC members can subscribe (purchase) blocks of solar energy each month. Each block includes ten (10) solar panels.
- The energy output from each block is estimated to be approximately 135 to 203 kilowatt-hours (kWh) each month and will vary based on the actual project output.
- The energy produced will fluctuate based on the time of the year, the number of cloudy days in the month, and other factors.

- The energy output from each block (in kWh) will offset an equivalent amount of traditional energy used, allowing members to enjoy the benefits of renewable energy at an affordable fixed monthly price.

What is the cost to participate in the program?

- Blocks of solar electricity will be billed, via the member’s Sawnee EMC billing statement, as follows:

Period	One (1) Block
April – Sept.	\$26.00 per month
Oct. – March	\$22.00 per month

Do participants sign a contract?

No. Members may cancel their participation in the program at any time. The cancellation will appear on the next month’s bill.

How am I going to be billed?

You will be billed, as stated above, for each subscribed block of virtual solar, on your regular Sawnee EMC electric bill. Then, the number of kWhs produced by your block(s) of virtual solar panels associated with that billing period will be deducted from the amount of traditional kWhs you used for the billing period. If your block(s) produces more energy than you use in a billing period, you will receive a credit for the excess energy, according to Sawnee’s Schedule NEM.

Will the program reduce my electric bills?

The Virtual Solar program is **not** designed to reduce electric bills; the program is meant to offer an easy, affordable way for participating members to meet a portion of their electric needs with renewable energy. The output of your subscribed solar panels is reduced from your total consumption in that billing period so by participating, you will reduce the amount of energy that you are billed... but traditionally, the overall cost to produce solar energy may not make your bill go down. However, there could very well be certain months of the year where your block(s) of solar panels produce enough energy such that you saved money compared to our standard rate, but one should not participate in Sawnee’s Virtual Solar program with the sole motive to save money.

How can I sign up for the program?

You can sign up online at www.sawnee.coop/virtual-solar or by calling our Call Center at 770-887-2363.

Is the energy from my solar panels really delivered directly to my home?

Not really. The solar arrays feed energy onto the transmission system and that state energy is delivered to Sawnee’s members, which also contains energy from other sources of generation we own or participate in. But the energy produced by your solar

panels definitely displaces energy that would have otherwise had to be produced from a conventional source such as coal or natural gas.

If I move, can I still be in Sawnee's Virtual Solar program?

Yes, as long as you are moving to another premise that is served by Sawnee EMC. If you are moving to a "new" location served by another electric utility, you will be removed from the program when your Sawnee service is disconnected.

How will I know how much solar energy my block(s) have produced?

Each month, your bill will include a line item that details the amount of solar energy (in kWhs) that your block(s) has produced relative to that particular billing period.