Today’s consumers want and expect options, including the type of energy powering their homes. Many homeowners are looking for a less expensive form of energy with ongoing savings. Some are looking for a green energy source. These two motives are why many homeowners are exploring rooftop solar panels.

The interest in alternative energy sources is also being fueled by decreasing costs for rooftop solar, the availability of financial incentives and the proliferation of companies offering solar panel installation. However, as attractive and popular as rooftop solar may appear, it is important for consumers to fully understand its true costs, the operational reality of this form of energy and actual energy savings. To determine whether rooftop solar is right for their particular situation, homeowners must undertake their due diligence.

We’re here to help.

As your trusted energy advisor, Tri-County Electric can offer a candid assessment of your specific situation. After all, we have a different “bottom line” that is not directly tied to the sale of a product or service. We constantly strive to find new ways to help you use energy more efficiently.

Tri-County is seeking to keep pace with the changing energy environment and evolving technology. We are exploring more options that will help you manage your energy use such as our Take Control & Save Rebate Program & Free Energy Audit Program - which is growing (read more in the April 2019 edition of Rural Missouri). We take a more holistic, objective view of how to achieve energy savings, and truly believe the greenest energy is the energy never consumed.

Is rooftop solar right for you?

To help determine whether rooftop solar is right for you, Tri-County Electric’s energy advisors will look at the:

• Overall energy efficiency of the home/building
• Age and pitch of the roof
• Orientation of the sun in relation to the home/building
• Tree coverage near the home/building
• Weather patterns for the region

Unlike a solar company that has one objective—to sell their products and services—we will look at the total energy picture and help you determine the best options for your home. While rooftop solar certainly works for many people, it’s not the answer for all.

When helping co-op members determine whether rooftop solar is right for them, a co-op energy advisor will also discuss the many financial considerations:

• Is there a large, up-front payment required or are fees spread out over time?
• Will the homeowner own the panels or will they be leased?
• Are there any hidden costs, i.e., does the roof need to be replaced before installing the panels?
• Are there ongoing maintenance fees?
• Are there rebates or other financial incentives available?
• Is the estimated energy savings worth the investment?
• Is it more cost effective to invest in other energy saving measures?

Most importantly, an energy advisor will provide perspective on the total energy puzzle. Taking into account current energy consumption, the home “envelope,” age and efficiency of the HVAC system and home site, an energy advisor can help co-op members determine whether rooftop solar is the best choice given the homeowners’ objectives.

When assessing solar options, it is an excellent time to examine other potential energy efficiency improvements for your home. For example, it may make sense to insulate the attic at the same time as installing solar.

We recognize that consumer interest in green energy sources and renewables is at an all-time high, and we stand ready to help our members determine their best options. Give us a call.

QUESTIONS TO ASK A SOLAR CONTRACTOR

• How long have you been in business?
• Are you licensed to business in my state?
• How many PV systems have you installed? Can you provide a list of consumer references in my area?
• Have you ever been involved in a legal dispute involving a solar installation?
• Will I be able to monitor the output of my panels? What is the process for doing so?
• How and when do you involve staff from my electric cooperative in the installation? Do you have experience interconnecting with utility grids?
• What size and type of system do you recommend for my site? Why?
• Will you be on the job site daily? If not, how do we communicate if there are questions or problems that arise? And how do I reach you after hours?

For this complete list, as well as the FAQ regarding the interconnection process, please call Tri-County’s office at 660-457-3733.

TRICOUNTYELECTRIC.ORG | MARCH 2019
Official Notice of Meeting

Tri-County Electric Cooperative will hold their 80th Annual Meeting of Members on Thursday, June 27, 2019 at Scotland County R-1 High School; 606 Lovers Ln, Memphis, MO 63555. As a member of the cooperative, you are entitled to one vote on any and all questions coming before the membership, and which will be decided by a majority vote. You will be voting on the election of three (3) directors for a three (3) year term from the following districts:

District 3, Eastern Scotland County (one term expiring) and,
District 6, Putnam County (one term expiring) and,
District 9, Adair County (one term expiring) and,
...no terms expiring in Schuyler County.

Directors whose terms expire in 2019 and who are also eligible for re-election are:

District 3, Eastern Scotland County: Kenneth (Kenny) McNamar of Gorin;
District 6, Putnam County: William (Bill) Triplett of Livonia;
District 9, Adair County: Kelley Church of Brashear.

Although the meeting is not until June, your cooperative staff must start early in the year to ensure a successful and enjoyable 80th Annual Meeting! It's time to circle June 27th, 2019 in your own calendar!

By-Law Provisions: Article IV Directors

SECTION 1. GENERAL POWERS. The business and affairs of the Cooperative shall be managed by a board of nine directors which shall exercise all of the powers of the Cooperative except such as are by law, the articles of conversion or these bylaws conferred or reserved to the members.

SECTION 2. ELECTION AND TENURE OF OFFICE. At each Annual Meeting there shall be three (3) directors elected. The territory in which the Cooperative supplies electrical energy to its members shall be divided into geographical districts for the purpose of equitably distributing the Cooperative's directors over the district in which its members reside. The Board shall consist of one board member from each district as follows:

District No. 1. District Number One shall consist of all that part of the Cooperative's territory lying within the County of Schuyler in the State of Missouri north of Highway 136.
District No. 2. District Number Two shall consist of all that part of the Cooperative's territory lying within the County of Schuyler in the State of Missouri south of Highway 136.
District No. 3. District Number Three shall consist of all that part of the Cooperative's territory lying within the County of Scotland in the State of Missouri east of Highway 15.
District No. 4. District Number Four shall consist of all that part of the Cooperative's territory lying within the County of Scotland in the State of Missouri west of Highway 15.
District No. 5. District Number Five shall consist of all that part of the Cooperative's territory lying within the County of Scotland in the State of Missouri.
District No. 6. District Number Six shall consist of all that part of the Cooperative's territory lying within the County of Putnam in the State of Missouri.
District No. 7. District Number Seven shall consist of all that part of the Cooperative’s territory lying within the County of Adair in the State of Missouri east of Highway 63.
District No. 8. District Number Eight shall consist of all that part of the Cooperative’s territory lying within the County of Adair in the State of Missouri west of Highway 63.
District No. 9. District Number Nine shall consist of all that part of the Cooperative’s territory lying within the County of Adair in the State of Missouri.

Directors shall be elected to serve until the third succeeding annual election of the members thereafter or until their successors shall have been elected and shall have qualified. Directors shall be elected by a plurality of the membership voting by mail, absentee or electronic ballot or in person at a membership meeting.

SECTION 3. QUALIFICATIONS. No person shall be eligible to become or remain a director or to hold any position of trust in the Cooperative who:

a) is not a member and bona fide resident in the area served or to be served by the Cooperative;
b) is in any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the Cooperative, or a business primarily engaged in selling electrical or plumbing appliance, fixtures or supplies to the members of the Cooperative;
c) is the incumbent or candidate for an elective public office in connection with which a salary or compensation in excess of one hundred dollars per annum is paid;
d) is currently employed or during the five (5) years prior to becoming a director, have been an employee or a close relative, as defined in Section 7 below, of a full-time Tri-County Electric Cooperative employee or director. Upon establishment of the fact that a director is holding office in violation of any of the foregoing provisions, the Board of Directors shall remove such director from office. Nothing contained in this section shall affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken at any meeting of the Board of Directors.

SECTION 4. NOMINATIONS. Any fifteen (15) or more members acting together may make director nominations by petition not more than ninety (90) days and not less than sixty (60) days prior to the meeting and the Secretary shall post such nominations at the principal office of the Cooperative. The Secretary shall be responsible for the mailing with the notice of the meeting or separately, but at least ten days (10) days before the date of the meeting, a statement of the number of directors to be elected and the names and addresses of the candidates. No member shall sign more than one (1) nominating petition for a candidate seeking election from the same district. The names of incumbents shall be listed first on the official ballot. The remaining nominees shall be listed on the official ballot in the order of the receipt of the nominating petition.
At the December meeting of the Board of Directors of Tri-County Electric Cooperative, the board reviewed the following items:

• The board reviewed and approved the proposed agenda.
• The board reviewed and approved the following board meeting minutes Regular Board Meeting (12/06/2018).
• The board reviewed and approved new memberships.
• The board reviewed and approved write-offs.
• The board amended policy B-009 Standard Construction Practices
• The board approved the reschedule of the January 2019 board meeting.
• The board received a safety report, a member services and a communications report.
• The board received a report of operations.
• The board reviewed financials and expenditures in detail.
• The board heard reports from NEP and AMEC.
• The board discussed strategic planning reports.
• The next board meeting was set for January 24, 2019.

*2018 Year-to-Date Financials Coming in April

Why should MY BUSINESS participate?

The Co-op Connections® Card program is an easy and cost-effective way for businesses to reach customers in the local area and throughout the state. But why should my business sign-up?

• There is no out-of-pocket advertising expense with our program.
• You’ll receive FREE listings in all our member communications about the program, including listings in our magazine, bill inserts, website - www.connections.coop, and more. The cooperative also provides window clings and cash register stickers so customers will be able to recognize participating businesses!
• There is NO catch! Simply commit to a discount offer (customizable by you) and agree to accept customers who present the Co-op Connections Card at check-out. Whether you’re the owner of a local business or you run a newly opened retail store, the Co-op Connections Card program can be individually catered to you.

We need your help! #SpreadTheWord to your local commerce today!

Visit Connections.coop

Spring Into Energy Efficiency

As spring approaches, it’s time to shut down the furnace, take down plastic sheeting over windows and schedule an air conditioning checkup. Here are some projects to take on this spring to improve the energy efficiency of your home:

Tighten up your house — If you failed to do this last fall in prepping for winter, you can reap the same benefits now by prepping for spring and summer. Sealing cracks and openings to prevent outside air from leaking into your home makes sense year around. Look for air leaks around doors and windows — that could save as much as 30 percent on your energy bill. Once you’ve fixed the air leaks, insulate; it will reduce the work load on your air conditioner. Here’s insulation guidance from ENERGY STAR:

Zone 5 (Upper Missouri and southern Iowa) — attic, R38-R60; wall cavity, R13-R21; floors, R25-R30

Shade windows — If you have south- or west-facing windows that get a lot of direct sun, add an awning, drapes or protective film to shield those windows. Insulated drapes are a good investment for summer and winter. Also plant trees, vines or shrubs to naturally shade windows over time.

Get a programmable thermostat — Programmable thermostats can save about 10 percent a year on energy costs when used properly. Use one that can automatically set back your heating and cooling system 2-3 degrees when you’re not home, then back to your desired temperature when you get home.

Service and/or upgrade your AC — Maintaining your air conditioning system extends the life of the system and saves you money in the process. The U.S. Department of Energy recommends using the first day of spring as a reminder to check the system’s evaporator coil.

Buy a ceiling fan — A fan will allow you to raise the thermostat by about 4 degrees without feeling the difference. And you’ll use about 4 percent less energy for every degree change.

Seal the garage — Your attached garage may leak more conditioned air than any other part of your home. Add weather strips to the bottom of the garage door and the door into your house.

December 2018 Board Report

At the December meeting of the Board of Directors of Tri-County Electric Cooperative, the board reviewed the following items:

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TRICOUNTYELECTRIC.ORG | MARCH 2019
Teaching The Important Lesson of Energy Efficiency

Electronic and mobile devices, TVs, computers and gaming stations have become ubiquitous fixtures in our homes, particularly those with children. Consumer electronics coupled with the proliferation of smart home appliances, technology and electric vehicles have slowly but steadily changed our homes and lifestyles.

This ever-connected world is the modern environment in which children are growing up. And with lifestyles increasingly reliant on technology and in turn, energy consumption, teaching youngsters to save energy is an important life lesson.

The Why

But before parents can teach their children how to save energy, they must first answer the question, “what’s in it for me?” As most parents can attest, convincing kids to care about energy efficiency is a hard sell. Parents need to explain why it’s important to save energy and how it benefits the child—otherwise they will not understand the need to change their habits and will be less motivated to do so. In the simplest terms, less money spent on an electric bill can mean more money used for fun activities (that’s something children can relate to!).

Less tangible, but just as important, using less energy means running your home more efficiently, conserving natural resources and helping the environment.

Learning by Doing

Because “saving energy” is an abstract concept for children, be specific about energy efficiency actions and set an example. We know that children learn by observing what their parents do. Even if they don’t say anything, children are processing your actions. When you turn off the lights when leaving a room or unplug the phone charger once the device is fully charged, they will notice.

Learning about energy efficiency doesn’t have to be a boring lecture. Make it fun for greater impact.

For younger kids, turn energy efficiency into a “treasure hunt” game to locate all the things in your home that use electricity. Depending on the age of the children, challenge them to count and group the items into categories: electronics, appliances, lights, etc. If age appropriate, have them create a list. Ask which gadgets and appliances could be turned off or unplugged to save power every day.

For older children, show them how to program the smart thermostat and appliances. Shop with them for LED lights and discuss ENERGY STAR-rated appliances. Show them the electric bill so they can see the costs, energy use and how their actions impact the bill.

Kids of all ages can learn a few simple energy-saving habits that can last a lifetime:

• Turn off lights, devices, computers and video consoles when not in use.
• Open blinds and curtains during winter days to let warm sunlight in and close them during summer days to keep your home cooler.
• If your children are old enough to run the dishwasher or wash their own clothes, teach them to run these appliances only with a full load and during off-peak energy hours.

Rewards

Offer rewards for agreed upon milestones. Rewards provide positive reinforcement on energy-saving actions. The idea is to create a habit of being energy efficient. And for parents, this could mean less nagging about turning off the lights!

Teaching your children about saving energy is not only a creative way to spend time with them; it helps your home to be more energy efficient and can instill good habits that will benefit your child long into adulthood.

Dates To Observe: Office Closed

No days to observe in March or April

Office Information:

16894 US Hwy 63
PO Box 159
Lancaster, MO 63548

Local: 660-457-3733
Toll Free: 888-457-3734
Website: https://www.tricountyelectric.org

To Report an Outage:

Before calling check your breakers or fuses. Check to see if your neighbors have power.

When calling be sure to have the following:

*Your name
*Member number
*Location
*Which account (if you have multiple accounts)

Tri-County Fee Schedule

Late Payment Fee $10.00
Meter Test Fee $50.00
Returned Check Fee $30.00
Collection Trip Fee $50.00

Trip Fee for Member’s Side Outage

Office Hours $60.00
After Hours $225.00

Reconnect Fee

Office Hours $120.00
w/in 12 months $185.00
After Hours $225.00

We offer levelized billing. If interested, please call the office at (660) 457-3733

Bill Payment Options

The Office
You’re always welcome to pay in person at our office.
See office information for address.

Drop Box
Located at our office available 24/7.

Online Bill Pay
Available 24/7 at www.tricountyelectric.org

By Mailing To
Tri-County Electric Cooperative, 16894 US Hwy 63, PO Box 159, Lancaster, MO 6348

Auto Pay
From your checking or savings account or with your debit/credit card. Set yourself up online or give us a call.

By Phone
Using your debit/credit card by calling us locally (8 A.M. - 4:30 P.M. M-F) 660-457-3733 or Toll-Free (24/7) at 888-457-3734.

*Which account (if you have multiple accounts)