

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Your local electric cooperative has made it easy and affordable to invest in solar energy. But we've also gotten a lot of questions—about our program, and about solar power in general. Here are the ones we get most often.

CO-OP SOLAR AND HOW IT WORKS

What is Co-op Solar?

Co-op Solar is a program from your local electric co-op, Boone Power, that makes it easy for members to use solar energy without the cost or hassle of rooftop solar.

How does it work?

We use solar arrays throughout the Midwest to convert sunlight into electricity. And having several arrays across multiple states means we're less vulnerable to cloud cover—a little bad weather over one array doesn't mean the sun's not shining on another. Once the solar power is created, it's then purchased by our program participants.

What happens when the sun isn't shining?

We love solar power, but we know it doesn't work full-time. Unlike other sources of energy, solar power is intermittent, and does not produce (or is reduced) during nighttime hours, cloudy weather, or when temperatures are too hot. These factors, along with the seasonal angle of the sun hitting the arrays, determine how much solar output is produced. Given these variables, our solar arrays produce energy about 20% of the time. During the remaining 80%, we rely on the full infrastructure of lines, poles, and the electrical grid to supply power to our homes and businesses.

How does Co-op Solar compare to rooftop or ground-mounted solar options?

Many homes just aren't in a good location for rooftop solar. There are also larger upfront costs for installation, as well as the ongoing work of maintenance. For many members, rooftop just doesn't make sense.

But Co-op Solar isn't limited by these restrictions. We can provide solar power to our members while also taking care of the construction and maintenance costs.

Where are the arrays located?

Currently, our arrays are located in Peru, Wanatah, Greenfield, Danville, and Rockville, Indiana, as well as Ste. Genevieve, Missouri, and Paris, Illinois.

Why did Boone join with others to provide solar power? Why not do it alone?

By joining up with its wholesale provider, Wabash Valley Power, and ten other electric co-ops, Boone Power is able to leverage significant savings and increase our buying power. And since we're a not-for-profit, we pass those cost-savings directly to our membership. It also makes it possible for more members to participate in a Co-op Solar program, since it's offered at a lower cost.

WHAT YOU GET

What am I purchasing?
When you participate in Co-op Solar, you purchase a “share” of solar power. Each share you buy gives you access to solar energy. You can select up to 100 percent of your expected electric usage, not to exceed 83 shares per month.

How much does solar cost?
Co-op Solar costs an additional $0.44 per share per month.

How much energy does a share of solar power produce?
A share is estimated to produce an average 43 kWh/month.

How much electricity does it take to power typical household appliances?
According to **energy.gov**:

- A 1,000-watt coffeemaker used for one hour each day 365 days per year uses 365 kWh per year (less than a share of Co-op Solar)
- A clothes dryer used once a week for four hours uses 580 kWh per year (more than a share of Co-op Solar)
- A 26-cubic-foot refrigerator uses approximately 725 kWh per year (about 1.4 shares of Co-op Solar)

If I buy one share to start, can I still buy more in the future?
Absolutely! Your local co-op will advise you on how many shares are still available.

Do I have to buy any equipment?
Not at all. There’s no equipment to purchase or maintain, and nothing to install. Since we own the solar arrays, we’re responsible for taking care of them.

How will it help the environment?
Generating energy with solar power creates no pollution or CO_2 emissions, which is great for the environment. Solar power is a clean, renewable, and sustainable source of energy. And as solar power is adopted by more and more people, those benefits will really show. When you sign up for Co-op Solar, you don’t just help preserve our environment the way it is—you help restore it to how it used to be.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Who is eligible to participate?
To be eligible, you must be a member of a participating Wabash Valley Power co-op.

Do I need to own a home to participate?
Nope! The great thing about the Co-op Solar program is that you can still participate even if you’re renting.

What are my payment options?
Boone Power members have the option of adding Co-op Solar to their monthly electric bills at $0.44/share.

How do I sign up for solar?
You can sign up online at boonepower.com/renewable-energy. You can also call us at 800-897-7362 with any questions.