

Questions and Answers about Using Solar in My Home

What is rooftop solar and how does it work?

Solar photovoltaic panels are installed to face the sun and convert the sun's energy to electricity. That energy can supplement energy usage in your home.

What if I want to install solar panels on my existing roof?

Since your solar panels will claim a 20 to 30 year life, it will be important that your roof has another 20 to 30 years of life before your panels are installed. Otherwise, you should consider the costs of panel removal and resetting when your roof needs replacement.

Does Pee Dee Electric offer rebates for solar installation?

No, Pee Dee Electric does not offer rebates with the idea that rebates earned by a few members would be paid for by many other members of the cooperative.

What are the components of a residential solar (photovoltaic or PV) system?

A residential PV system typically consists of a roof-mounted array and one or more inverters to convert the DC output of the panels to AC power which can be used in your home. Systems may include energy storage (batteries) for times when the sun isn't shining.

What are the safety issues with solar generation?

All inverters must meet strict UL-1741 and IEEE 1547 standards to prevent your system from generating power onto Pee Dee Electric lines which could injure a line worker.

Does the solar generation system provide all of my power?

Not usually. Solar energy will not be generated at night or on cloudy days.

Where will I get electric power at night and cloudy days?

Most consumers expect to buy power from their utility at those times.

Can I store the solar energy which is generated during the day and use it at night?

Some systems offer battery storage which adds to the expense of the system's installation.

Does Pee Dee Electric offer net energy metering (NEM)?

No, Pee Dee Electric does not offer net energy metering. Our rate is at avoided cost.

What is Pee Dee Electric's avoided cost of power?

Currently, 5.5¢ per kWh is the amount Pee Dee will pay you if there is any excess electricity over and above what you used for your own home.

Why is avoided cost of power used as the price which Pee Dee pays for my excess power generation?

That number is equivalent to the rate Pee Dee would pay in the wholesale market to buy our "next" kilowatt hour of energy for resale. It's currently 5.5¢ per kilowatt-hour.

How can I be sure that I have chosen a reputable dealer/installer to build my solar generation?

Solar companies should always be licensed contractors able to perform the work.

How long will the solar power generation last?

Most vendors claim that solar systems have a lifetime of 20-30 years.

How much can I save using solar power generation?

This is dependent upon how much solar generation that you install.

Should solar power generation be my first option?

Remember that creating energy efficiency in your home will be cheaper than solar power generation. It is easy to get excited at the thought of generating your own electricity with a rooftop solar electric array. But it's important to remember that spending money to generate electricity to power inefficient lights and appliances may not make financial sense. You should always start with making energy efficiency improvements first.

Is Pee Dee Electric investing in solar power generation?

Yes, Pee Dee Electric built a 100-kW community solar farm adjacent to the corporate office in Wadesboro, NC.

Will I still receive a bill from Pee Dee Electric if I install rooftop solar panels?

Yes. If your system has batteries installed, you will still probably need for Pee Dee Electric to "stand-by" to provide electric service after several rainy/cloudy days or at night.

If a solar system is of interest to me, what would my next step be?

See a reputable contractor, evaluate the energy efficiency of your home, study the size, angle, and orientation of your rooftop, confirm the age of your roof, and evaluate tree cover over the roof. You also can choose to participate in Pee Dee Electric's community solar farm.

Beside solar, what alternatives are available to help save home energy use?

Energy efficiency measures can save some homeowners on their monthly bills.

What will Pee Dee Electric need to know if I move forward with solar on my rooftop?

You will need to contact Pee Dee Electric to discuss the installation and next steps. Contact Todd Moore at 704-694-2114.