



Solarize Metro East reaches third milestone; Program deadline extended

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SWANSEA - [Solarize Metro East](#) has achieved another milestone, reducing costs for solar power. The group purchasing program for homeowners, renters, businesses, and non-profits includes price breaks as the group collectively reaches benchmarks, most recently 250 kW which earns all participants a three percent rebate on their purchase price.

"Solar energy pays for itself," said Dr. Mike Murphy, optometrist and owner of Vision Source in Swansea. "Why not control the cost of (or eliminate the cost of) something you must use every day and otherwise have to pay ever increasing rates?"

Since program launch on May 1st, 31 home, business, and farm owners in Madison and St. Clair Counties have committed to adding solar to their properties, and 3 households already have their solar arrays installed. Due to high demand volume, the program deadline has been extended to October 31.

The Solarize program invites Madison County and St. Clair County residents to encourage friends, families, and coworkers to join them in attending one of four remaining free non-profit-sponsored Solar Power Hours to learn more about solar energy and potentially invest in affordable solar. Regardless of where a person lives in the counties, residents may attend any of the four remaining educational events:

- [9/18 Tuesday 6:00 PM Old Bakery Beer Company 400 Landmarks Blvd Alton, IL 62002](#)
- [10/4 Thursday 6:30 PM Belleville City Hall in the Council Chambers 101 S Illinois St, Belleville, IL 62220](#)
- [10/8 Monday 6:30 PM Edwardsville Public Library 112 S Kansas St, Edwardsville, IL 62025](#)

- [10/11 Thursday 6:30 PM O'Fallon City Hall Council Chambers 255 South Lincoln Ave. O'Fallon, Illinois 6226](#)

Solarize Metro East is administered by the [Midwest Renewable Energy Association \(MREA\)](#) at no cost to the counties. This type of program has been successful in other jurisdictions in Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin, and as seen in Madison County as well as Urbana-Champaign, Bloomington-Normal, Milwaukee, and Cedar Rapids.

Solarize Metro East is also sponsored by the Lewis and Clark Community College, Sierra Club, Madison County Resource Management, the cities of Belleville and Columbia, and Glen Carbon Cool Cities Committee, one of several Cool Cities in Illinois established by the Sierra Club over the past several years.

A solar installation company headquartered in St. Louis with offices in Swansea, [StraightUp Solar](#), was selected through a competitive proposal process on the basis of quality workmanship and local experience to provide free solar site assessments and solar installations for the program participants.

The MREA was incorporated as a 501(c)3 nonprofit shortly after the first [Energy Fair](#) in 1990. MREA's mission is to promote renewable energy, energy efficiency, and sustainable living through education and demonstration. To learn more, call 715-592-6595 or visit [www.midwestrenew.org](#).