



# Grow Solar Metro East Returns in 2019

June 26 2019 4:25 PM

*Bulk Purchase Program Helps Homeowners and Businesses by Reducing Cost of Renewable Energy*

GODFREY – JUNE 26, 2019 – Grow Solar Metro East, a solar group purchasing program in its third year in the Metro East St. Louis area, will help local property owners go solar through community outreach and education, and will help lower the price of solar through a volume purchase.

Since Solarize Madison County/Glen Carbon in 2017 and Solarize Metro East in 2018, the program has led to the installation of more than 864 kilowatts of solar power on 98 properties across Madison and St. Clair counties. The program has educated hundreds of individuals about the financial and environmental benefits of solar power and helped people save on solar installations through volume pricing. This year, in addition to properties in Madison and St. Clair Counties, program eligibility extends to Monroe County properties.

Local partners including Lewis and Clark Community College, Madison County Planning and Development, Glen Carbon Cool Cities Committee and the Sierra Club have teamed up with the Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA) to host a number of free, one-hour long, public education sessions about solar called Solar Power Hours. This educational effort is also endorsed by villages of East Alton, Glen Carbon, Godfrey, Hamel and Maryville, and cities of Alton, Belleville, Collinsville, Columbia and Edwardsville.

Navigating the solar market can be intimidating, creating barriers for solar adoption. The Solar Power Hours answer questions about installing solar, helping reduce those barriers.

“This year we’re partnering with key local organizations to help spread the word about the program and host the Solar Power Hour presentations,” said Peter Murphy, Solar Program Manager for the MREA. “The presentation provides folks the information they need to determine whether solar is right for them.”

The first Solar Power Hour was held Monday, June 17t, at the Glen Carbon Police Community Center.

Along with the Glen Carbon Police Community Center, other community partners hosting Solar Power Hours are Louis Latzer Memorial Public Library, Edwardsville City Hall, Old Bakery Beer Company, Collinsville City Hall, Belleville City Hall, Lebanon Visitor Center, West Park Bowl in Columbia, Hamel Community Center and the Edwardsville Farmers Market. Solar Power Hours are scheduled through Sept. 30, which is also the program participation deadline. All are free and open to the public.

The full list of Solar Power Hours is available at [growsolar.org/grow-solar-metro-east/](https://growsolar.org/grow-solar-metro-east/).

Lewis and Clark Community College has sponsored Grow Solar all three years of its run.

“We’re thrilled to continue supporting this ever-growing successful program,” said L&C Director of Sustainability Nate Keener. “Sustainability education is a key goal for the college, and Grow Solar not only helps to educate the region about renewable energy; it helps them benefit from it too,”

Several volunteers who help promote the Grow Solar Metro East program are also proud solar power installation owners. Chris Krusa, Glen Carbon, is one of those.

“I added 17 more panels via the Solarize program in late 2018, to the 12 that were installed previously, and am very pleased with the cost benefit,” Krusa said. “We are pleased to share our experience.”

MREA has facilitated 22 programs throughout the Midwest in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin, reaching more than 6,300 individuals and resulting in more than 7 megawatts of solar on more than 1,000 properties. Installers for these programs are selected through a competitive request for proposals process. A local advisory committee reviewed proposals based on professional certification, experience, and cost. The advisory committee chose StraightUp Solar, based in St. Louis for Grow Solar Metro East because of their high-quality solar installations, NABCEP credentialing, emphasis on customer service, and familiarity with the community. They are uniquely qualified to evaluate a homeowner’s energy needs, and provide quality solar installations.

The Grow Solar Metro East program enables residents to effectively reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve local energy security through the generation of renewable energy while simultaneously conserving energy and reducing long-term energy costs at their homes or businesses.

At the Solar Power Hours, attendees will learn how solar energy works, how much a typical solar system costs, what incentives are available and can have their questions about solar answered. The program website includes a sign-up form, the full calendar of Solar Power Hours, and will be used to announce program updates: [www.growsolar.org/grow-solar-metro-east/](http://www.growsolar.org/grow-solar-metro-east/).

The schedule of free, public Solar Power Hours is as follows:

- 6/20/19 – 6-7 p.m., **Louis Latzer Memorial Public Library** 1001 9th St., Highland, IL 62249
- 6/26/19 – 6-7 p.m., **Edwardsville City Hall** 118 Hillsboro Ave., Edwardsville, IL 62025
- 6/27/19 – 6-7 p.m., **Old Bakery Beer Company** 400 Landmarks Blvd, Alton, IL 62002
- 6/28/19 – 6-7 p.m., **Collinsville City Hall** 125 South Center St., Collinsville, IL 62234
- 7/8/19 – 6-7 p.m., **Edwardsville City Hall** 118 Hillsboro Ave., Edwardsville, IL 62025
- 7/10/19 – 6-7 p.m., **Glen Carbon Police Community Center** 149 N. Main St., Glen Carbon 62025
- 7/17/19 – 6-7 p.m., **Belleville City Hall** 101 South Illinois Street, Belleville IL 62220
- 7/18/19 – 6-7 p.m., **Old Bakery Beer Company** 400 Landmarks Blvd, Alton, IL 62002
- 7/22/19 – 6-7 p.m., **Edwardsville Public Library** 112 South Kansas St., Edwardsville, IL 62025
- 7/24/19 – 6-7 p.m., **West Park Bowl in Columbia** 1101 Valmeyer Road, Columbia
- 8/5/19 – 6-7 p.m., **Glen Carbon Police Community Center** 149 N. Main St., Glen Carbon 62025
- 8/7/19 – 6-7 p.m., **Belleville City Hall** 101 South Illinois Street, Belleville IL 62220
- 8/12/19 – 6-7 p.m., **Edwardsville Public Library** 112 South Kansas St., Edwardsville, IL 62025
- 8/14/19 – 6-7 p.m., **Hamel Community Center** 10 Park Ave. Hamel, Illinois 62046
- 8/15/19 – 6-7 p.m., **West Park Bowl in Columbia** 1101 Valmeyer Road, Columbia
- 8/19/19 – 6-7 p.m., **Old Bakery Beer Company** 400 Landmarks Blvd, Alton, IL 62002
- 9/5/19 – 6-7 p.m., **Lebanon Visitor Center** 221 W St Louis St Lebanon, IL 62254

- 9/11/19 – 6-7 p.m., **Belleville City Hall** 101 South Illinois Street, Belleville IL 62220
- 9/18/19 – 6-7 p.m., **Hamel Community Center** 10 Park Ave. Hamel, Illinois 62046

*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](http://www.midwestrenew.org).*