



Gateway Region Grow Solar Programs Reach Third Goal: 300kW Benchmark

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ST. LOUIS —The Grow Solar St. Louis and Grow Solar Metro East programs have met their third kilowatt-hour volume milestone of 300 collective kilowatts (kW), resulting in a larger discount to all participants. The limited-time program gives people access to solar education and competitive prices for solar installations on residential and commercial properties through volume purchasing. The participation deadline has been extended to Sept. 30, 2021.

Thirty-two households in the Gateway region are on their way to getting clean solar energy for their homes.

Area homeowners and other property owners who attend the Solar Power Hour information sessions learn solar basics needed to make informed decisions about solar on their property. Schedules of upcoming Solar Power Hour educational webinars and a sign-up form for the program can be found at GrowSolarSTL.org and GrowSolarMetroEast.org.

“My family cares a lot about living out our sustainability values of taking care of other people and the Earth, but it wasn't until our good friends got solar panels through Grow Solar that we actually seriously looked into solar power ourselves,” said Lacy Cagle, of St. Louis. “It was something we always thought would be out of our reach financially, but we also knew how impactful it could be – especially in a region that relies on coal.”

“All of the amazing people in the Grow Solar program helped us navigate the rebates and tax write-offs available that made this affordable for us. And, when we realized it was possible, our neighbors did, too,” said Cagle. “We ended up getting our solar panels installed the same week as our neighbors!”

The solar group buy and education program launched with below-market rate pricing. By reaching this second benchmark, participants receive a 1.5 percent rebate off their final price. Additional cost savings are in store if the group buy collectively reaches 500 kW, 750 kW, 1,000 kW, and 1,250 kW benchmarks, potentially bringing the average cost down by 3.5 percent. Any savings thresholds reached after property owners sign on for solar are retroactively rebated to those owners. All of this is in addition to federal incentives that can cover 26 percent of the cost of going solar.

Through a competitive selection process, an advisory committee chose St. Louis-based StraightUp Solar as the program's solar installer. They offer high-quality solar installations, certifications for solar work, emphasize education and customer service. StraightUp Solar also has an excellent history in working in solar group buy programs and is familiar with the region. Additionally, StraightUp Solar was awarded [Top Workplaces 2021 honor by St. Louis Post-Dispatch](#) back in June of 2021.

New to this year, the first 25 people to refer to someone who signs a contract will receive **\$500**.

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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.

The Missouri Botanical Garden's mission is “to discover and share knowledge about plants and their environment in order to preserve and enrich life.” Today, 161 years after opening, the Missouri Botanical Garden is a National Historic Landmark and a center for science, conservation, education, and horticultural display.

Lewis and Clark Community College is a two-year higher education institution with multiple campuses, a river research center, a training center, and Community Education Centers throughout the St. Louis Metro East. Lewis and Clark is dedicated to public engagement, from "greening" the campus, reducing the college's carbon footprint and providing technical assistance in sustainable practices and education, to delivering affordable healthcare to underserved populations throughout the district.