



Installed solar panels at the Scott County Solar Plant between Winchester and Alsey.

Through the cold and snow, construction crews have continued to make progress on the Scott County Solar Plant. All of the panels are now mounted and conduit is being trenched in to run the electrical connections.

The solar plant consists of 2,223 solar panels covering about four acres. The plant will produce upwards of 840,000 kWh per year.

continued...



Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative

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Working to improve the quality of life in the communities we serve since 1936.



Bigelow Electric installing the mounts for the solar panels.

At full capacity, the solar plant will produce enough electricity to power about 170 homes on the hottest day. The power produced will be less expensive than our purchased power, therefore there should be a very slight lowering on members' bills.

The Scott County Solar Plant is being paid for through a \$500,000 grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity through the Renewable Energy Business Development Program. An additional grant of \$415,992 was received from the USDA.

To see more pictures of the solar plant progress, visit us on Facebook at [facebook.com/illinoisruralelectric](https://www.facebook.com/illinoisruralelectric).



Conduit being trenched for the underground electrical connections.

Want to Save Energy and Money? We Have Apps for That!

Today, thanks to computers, smartphones, and tablets energy saving tips and information is more available at our fingertips than ever.

As a member of Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives, the branding program of the nation's electric cooperatives, we are proud to offer two mobile apps: Together We Save.com—Save Energy, Save Money, and one for our popular Co-op Connections® Card. The TogetherWeSave.com—Save Energy, Save Money app, the newest addition to our Together We Save energy efficiency campaign portfolio, lets you see how much money you could pocket each month by switching from traditional incandescent lightbulbs to compact fluorescent lamps or light-emitting diodes. In addition, you can use the app to evaluate energy guzzlers in your home—for example, what does it cost to run a dishwasher for an hour? Kilowatt-hour rates specific to Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative needed for the calculations are available in the app by entering your ZIP code and selecting our name.

In addition, the app delivers handy pop-up “Tip of the Day” reminders on ways to make your home more energy efficient. The free app is available for Apple iPhones and iPads at the iTunes store and for Android smartphones at Play.Google.com; search for: Together We Save.

Search *Together We Save* in the app store!



Your Co-op Connections Card connects you to savings on prescriptions, restaurants, hotels, groceries, and lots of other services from national and local retailers. The free Co-op Connections Card app uses GPS technology to help you quickly locate stores and businesses offering discounts and—better yet—share your favorite deals! Android and Apple iPhone versions of the app are available at www.connections.coop.

Check out these two money-saving apps at togetherwesave.com or search Together We Save in the app store.



Programmable Thermostats

A programmable thermostat is one that is designed to adjust the temperature according to a series of programmed settings. These settings can be based on a number of factors, including the time of day. Technology has allowed for some of the newer models to be controlled by your smartphone while you are away. This works by connecting the thermostat to your home wi-fi network.

Programmable thermostats can save up to \$160 a year in energy costs. Match thermostat settings to your schedule: cold when you're away and warm when you're at home. In winter, set the thermostat to 68 degrees during the day (lower at night when in bed). By turning your thermostat down 10 to 15 degrees for at least eight hours, you can shave 5 to 15 percent from your heating costs.

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