



## Scott County Solar Plant

State Sen. Sam McCann, Mary Warren, USDA; Robert Brown, Co-op Board President; U.S. Senator Dick Durbin, Ellen McCurdy, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity; and State Rep. C.D. Davidsmeyer.

The co-op held a ribbon cutting on March 7th for the Scott County Solar Plant which is located south of Winchester on Illinois Highway 106, next to one of the substations.

The co-op was greatly honored to have United States Senator Dick Durbin in attendance.

*continued...*



### Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative

P.O. Box 80, Two South Main Street  
Winchester, Illinois 62694

[www.e-co-op.com](http://www.e-co-op.com)  
1-800-468-4732

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U.S. Senator Dick Durbin speaking at the Scott County Solar Plant ribbon cutting.

The solar plant, covering about four acres, consists of 2,223 solar panels, all of which were manufactured in the U.S. At full capacity, it will provide enough electricity for about 170 homes on the hottest day of the year. The installation is the first utility-scale photovoltaic solar energy system by a cooperative in Illinois.

“We very much appreciate the support of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and its \$500,000 grant through the Renewable Energy Business Development Program,” said Robert A. Brown, the cooperative’s president. An additional grant of \$415,992 was received from the United States Department of Agriculture through its Rural Energy for America Program. The total cost of this new solar project is \$1,800,000. “We couldn’t have undertaken this project without federal and state assistance,” Brown continued.

This solar project, in addition to the cooperative’s wind turbine in Pike County and its share of Prairie Power’s wind resources, brings Illinois Rural Electric’s renewable resources equal to more than 14% of the cooperative’s peak demand. “We take real pride in being able to use renewable resources that are produced at a cost which is beneficial to our members,” explained Brown. “Our renewable portfolio gives us the diversity which we believe to be critical for the long-term.”

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“The Scott County Solar Plant will provide clean, renewable energy to homes and businesses across this region. The plant continues the long tradition of cooperatives in Illinois providing electricity at an affordable price to rural communities and serves as an excellent example of local, state and federal governments working together to support clean energy,” said U.S. Senator Dick Durbin, who has been a strong supporter of the project. “The plant will also provide opportunities for high school students to learn about solar power through hands-on lessons. Projects like this help ensure that Illinois communities will be well-positioned to create jobs, gain greater energy independence, and help build a strong, sustainable America for the 21st century.”

For more information on the Scott County Solar Plant, visit our website at [e-co-op.com](http://e-co-op.com).



The Scott County Solar Plant which is located south of Winchester on Illinois Highway 106.



# Spring Energy Tips

Caulking around windows can help ensure cool air doesn't escape your home.

Adding a few items to your list of spring chores can help make your home more energy efficient and deliver electric bills that won't make you sweat when temperatures soar.

Start with your air conditioner. Spring and early summer are good times to make sure that your air conditioning unit is ready to work when you flip the switch:

- Get help from a professional who can inspect and service your unit.
- Give your air conditioner a do-it-yourself cleaning. Shut the unit off, and clear away leaves and yard debris outside. Inside the unit, clean or replace filters that can restrict air flow and reduce overall efficiency by making the air conditioner work harder on hot summer days.

Dust the fan blades if you can do so safely. Make sure air can flow freely over the inside and outside coils. Vacuum registers to remove any dust buildup.

- Check weather stripping. When using window units, ensure that weather stripping is in place. Placement should be between the middle of the top window pane and the bottom pane.
- Check out your roof. See how well your roof has weathered the winter. Few things can shorten the life of your home faster than a roof leak, even a minor one can damage your attic insulation before you know it. A roofing professional can assess and repair things like loose or missing shingles, repair leaks, and clear gutters.

For more ways to save on energy costs, visit [togetherwesave.com](http://togetherwesave.com)!

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