

You're invited! Co-op Solar ribbon cutting this month

Construction crews this spring began installing a new solar array, a collection of solar panels that use the sun's energy to create electricity, at the EnerStar Electric Cooperative headquarters in Paris. The array is one of three new solar arrays being constructed as part of Co-op Solar, a new community solar program that will be available later this year for members of EnerStar and other electric cooperatives that receive wholesale electricity from Wabash Valley Power.

"Community solar programs have been gaining interest across the United States as a great way to take advantage of solar energy without requiring homeowners to spend a lot of money to install and maintain hardware themselves," said Mike Clark, President and CEO of EnerStar. "Often, people desire solar power, but are turned off by the complexity of installing and maintaining solar panels, or maybe their land is not conducive to the large installation footprint. We handle these difficulties so they can participate." Clark added that another benefit was that those who rent their home can receive solar energy as well.

In all, a half-dozen solar arrays in Indiana, Illinois and Missouri will create electricity for Co-op Solar. Those participating in the solar program get the benefit of solar arrays across the Midwest. "It may be cloudy here in east central Illinois, but it may be sunny in Missouri where one of our other solar arrays is located. That is a benefit to our solar program," said Clark. The arrays will have the potential to generate up to 1.7 MW of solar energy.

Members are invited to a ribbon cutting ceremony on September 27 to officially launch Co-op Solar. The arrays are located just north of the EnerStar office on Illinois Hwy 1. Signs will direct traffic, but the lane to the solar array is on the west side of the road between the Rodeway Inn and Pool's True Value.

HELLO SUNSHINE

Join us for a solar site dedication.



WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 AT 2 P.M. CENTRAL TIME

EnerStar Electric Cooperative
11597 Illinois Highway 1
Paris, IL

HOSTED BY
ENERSTAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
WABASH VALLEY POWER



Cooperative offices
will be closed Monday,
September 4th
for Labor Day

COOPERATIVE HEADQUARTERS
EnerStar Electric Cooperative
11597 Illinois Highway 1
Paris, IL 61944

TELEPHONE
800-635-4145
PAY BY PHONE
888-999-4201

OFFICE HOURS
Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

*Serving the Illinois
counties of Edgar,
Clark, Vermilion,
Douglas and Coles.*

Getting to know your cooperative employees

Engineering, Marketing and IT Departments

As we continue our series of getting to know co-op employees and their duties, we turn to three different departments for you to meet. Like many smaller electric cooperatives, it is not surprising that these departments are “one man shows,” or in the case of one department, a “one woman show.”

Tim Haddix is EnerStar’s System Engineer and began his co-op career in August 1989. He is involved in all the details behind construction plans for new build-ins, service upgrades and improvements to the co-op owned infrastructure. Much of Tim’s work is done in the field where he meets with co-op members to determine the location for the new or upgraded electric facilities. Back at the office, he sketches out the staking sheet which basically is a how-to for linemen out on the job site. Tim’s other hat is to act as EnerStar’s Energy Advisor. In this role, he helps members with high usage concerns or offers suggestions on improving energy efficiency.

Angela Griffin, who serves as the cooperative’s Manager of Marketing and Member Services, was also brought on board in August 1989. In her role, Griffin’s job varies greatly



Tim Haddix, Jim Lewis, Angela Griffin

depending on the time of the year. Most co-op communications, like member correspondence and the website, pass through her desk. She is also involved in special events such as the annual meeting and special projects such as Co-op Solar, which launches this month. Griffin is also responsible for the Member Services department, which involves all aspects of the department from billing software to member programs.

If it has to do with electronics or computers, you can pretty much bet Jim Lewis is involved. He

began his employment at EnerStar in 2000 but came to EnerStar with an extensive computer and information technology background and was the previous owner of Computer Wares in downtown Paris. Lewis is responsible for the co-op’s computer network and cyber security. He also works with the cooperative’s electronic meters and the computer mapping system as well as the billing and outage management software.

As you can see, three people wear many hats when it comes to these departments!

Mill Creek Park, Oakland Food Pantry receive grant

For the sixth year, EnerStar Electric Cooperative is pleased to announce this year’s recipients of the CoBank Sharing Success Grant. Mill Creek Park, a part of the Clark County Park District, and the Oakland Food Pantry in Oakland will split the \$10,000 donation.

EnerStar matched local dollars with grant funds from CoBank which operates a \$3 million charitable fund designed to benefit cooperatives and the charitable groups they support throughout rural America.

Under the program, CoBank matches contributions by its

cooperative members to the charitable organizations of their choice on a dollar-for-dollar basis up to \$5,000. CoBank requires that the charitable organization is established as a non-profit under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Service code. Other potentially eligible organizations include schools, churches and government organizations, as long as the donation serves a public purpose and is consistent with the program’s purpose and guidelines.

CoBank, a non-profit, cooperatively owned bank, assists rural America

with loans and other financial services to agribusiness and rural electricity, water and communication providers in all 50 states.

“This is a great example of cooperatives working together to support communities, and we are proud to support such worthwhile organizations,” said EnerStar’s Marketing and Member Services Manager Angela Griffin. She explained that EnerStar is guided by seven cooperative principles, which include “Cooperation among Cooperatives” and “Concern for Community.”

Congratulations to this year's recipients!

Oakland Food Pantry

The food pantry, which is a ministry of the Oakland Ministerial Association, was recently gifted a building to use for food storage and distribution. But it was an older building with much needed upgrades and repairs. The grant monies were used to replace the flooring and to bring a bathroom up to code with new plumbing. The electric service was also upgraded as the facilities could not adequately run the food storage freezers.



Clark County Park District

The Fay Pickering Mountain Bike and Hiking Trails has once again been ranked #1 by a top biking website. To further enhance the trails, Mill Creek Park, which is served by EnerStar, used its awarded funds to create a bike and foot path across the lake's dam. The new path provides for better flow and connects eight miles of existing trails. The single track, dug out mostly by hand, attracts riders and event participants from all over the Midwest.



Past Sharing Success Grant Recipients

2016 – Twin Lakes All-Ability Playground

Assisted with the construction of a playground in the heart of Paris' Twin Lakes Park with a special design for children of all abilities, where children with physical limitations can play equally with others

2015 – Human Resources Center of Edgar and Clark Counties

Donation to the HRC's capital campaign to expand its comprehensive behavioral healthcare in east central Illinois

2014 – University of Illinois Extension Service in Edgar and Clark counties

To further develop educational youth

and adult programming, funds used to purchase computer tablets and cooking school kits. New copiers were purchased for both the Clark and Edgar County offices. The Extension service was able to use the funds to match with another grant from the state of Illinois to receive an additional \$7,500.

2013 – Marshall Food Distribution Center and Martinsville Food Pantry

Grant funds used by two food pantries in Clark County to upgrade their facilities. The Marshall Food Distribution Center received

\$7,500 and the Martinsville Food Pantry \$2,500. The amounts were determined by the number of families served by each organization.

2012 – Paris High School

During school construction, which is served by EnerStar, funds were used to furnish a science and a math classroom. On a side note, that same year, EnerStar also secured a \$75,000 Power Moves grant that was used for energy efficiency initiatives including a geothermal heating unit, LED lights and motion sensors.

EnerStar Electric Cooperative proudly supports 4-H

Did you know that our electric cooperative was founded in 1938 by the Edgar County Farm Bureau? Yep! That's right! And we are proud of our ag roots. That is why we strongly support 4-H and the local county extension offices each year. Here are just a few fun photos from this summer's 4-H fairs. We appreciate the hard work of all the participants, but we have a soft spot for those electricity projects.

Congratulations to Adam Cox, winner of the Outstanding Electricity Award at the Clark County 4-H Fair. Presenting the plaque to Adam is EnerStar's newest board member Jeremy Williams of Martinsville. Jeremy joined the board upon the retirement of Gene Higginbotham. Good job!



Edgar County 4H



A big thanks to EnerStar's **Chad Cornwell** for judging the electricity division at the Edgar County 4-H fair. What a great group of kids and awesome projects!

