

Sawnee EMC Commercial Virtual Solar Program

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Why should I participate in Sawnee's Virtual Solar program?

The goal of the program is to allow members the ability to use energy that is generated from renewable sources, without owning, installing, or leasing solar panels themselves.

A few other advantages of Sawnee EMC's Commercial Virtual Solar program are:

- The large size of a utility scale solar project brings the cost down
- Participants receive the benefits of solar energy, without owning a system, and they also get the Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) associated with the energy
- No maintenance or upkeep
- No long-term contract or financing

Where will the solar energy come from?

The energy will come from solar panels allocated to Sawnee EMC at the SR Loving Solar Facility located in Jeff Davis County near Hazlehurst, Georgia. Sawnee has designated a portion of the energy we receive from this project to be used for the Virtual Solar program. Information on the construction of this facility can be seen [here](#).

Who is eligible to participate in the Commercial Virtual Solar program?

All accounts billed under the Cooperative's Large General Service (Schedule "G"), School Service (Schedule "SCHS") and Large Power Service (Schedule "LPS"). Existing Net Energy Metering (NEM) program participants are **not** eligible.

How does Sawnee's Commercial Virtual Solar program work?

- The Virtual Solar program is designed to give participants similar benefits as if they installed solar panels on their own property; but without the common issues associated with installing, owning, and maintaining solar panels
- Participating members can subscribe (purchase) blocks of solar energy each month. Each block includes ten (10) solar panels. Members can subscribe up to a maximum of fifty (50) blocks per account
- The energy output from each block is estimated to be approximately 135 to 203 kilowatt-hours (kWh) per month, and will vary based on the actual output, the time of the year, the number of cloudy days in the month, and other factors.
- The energy output from each block (in kWh) will offset an equivalent amount of traditional energy used, allowing members to enjoy the benefits of renewable energy at an affordable fixed monthly price.

What is the cost to participate in the program?

- Blocks of solar electricity will be billed as follows:

Period	Per Block
April – Sept.	\$26.00 per month
Oct. – March	\$19.75 per month

Do participants sign a contract?

No. Members may cancel their participation in the program at any time.

How am I going to be billed?

You will be billed on your regular Sawnee EMC electric bill, as stated above, for each subscribed block of virtual solar. Then, the number of solar kWhs produced by your block(s) of solar panels, associated with that billing period, will be deducted from the amount of traditional kWhs you used for the billing period. You also may receive a credit on your billing demand. If your block(s) produces more energy than you use in a billing period, you will receive a credit for the excess energy, according to Schedule NEM.

Will the program reduce my electric bills?

The Commercial Virtual Solar program is **not** designed to reduce electric bills; the program is meant to offer an easy, affordable way for participating members to meet a portion of their electric needs with renewable energy. The output of your subscribed solar panels is reduced from your total consumption in that billing period, so by participating you will reduce the amount of energy that you are billed... but traditionally, the overall cost to produce solar energy may not make your bill go down. However, there could very well be certain months of the year where your block(s) of solar panels produce enough energy such that you saved money compared to our standard rate, but one should not participate in Sawnee's Commercial Virtual Solar program with the sole motive to save money.

How can I sign up for the program?

You can sign up online at <https://www.sawnee.com/vs-enroll> or by calling our Call Center at 770-887-2363.

Is the energy from my solar panels really delivered directly to my business?

Not exactly. The solar arrays feed energy onto the transmission system and that energy is delivered to Sawnee's members, along with energy from other sources of generation we own or participate in. But the energy produced by your solar panels absolutely displaces energy which would have otherwise had to be produced from a conventional source such as coal or natural gas.

How will I know how much solar energy my block(s) have produced?

Each month, your bill will include a line item that details the amount of solar energy (in kWhs) that your block(s) has produced relative to that particular billing period.