



# Rural HIGHLIGHTS

Local News from Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative

## Over 1,300 ballots cast in 2020 Director Election

Thanks to all of those who took the time to vote in the 2020 Director Election. The ballots have been tabulated and the RECC inspectors certified the election results. The winners were officially seated at the July 28 regular board meeting.

Unfortunately, we were unable to include the election results in this publication. Complete details of the 2020 Director Election and a list of lucky drawing winners will appear in RECC's next newsletter. Look for it in the center section of September's Illinois Country Living magazine.



**Don't want to wait until September? Go to our Facebook page right now and get the election results. You can also see a list of winners from the post-election drawing. Results will also be posted on [recc.coop](http://recc.coop)**



## Retirement announced

Jill Mortimer retired on July 2, 2020. Her official title was part-time member accounts representative, but she was usually the first to greet our guests as they entered the lobby. Jill worked at the reception desk between 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. for the last 10 years.

Jill was flexible with her schedule and always available if the office was going to be short on staff. In addition to her assigned duties, she contributed in many other ways. Jill was an excellent proofreader and her talent for spotting improper grammar will be missed. She also helped set up for large co-op gatherings, maintained the kitchen, and kept all the office plants alive.

Finally, Jill will get to join her husband Steve in retirement. They will remain in Auburn where they have been RECC members since 1981. We wish them a long and happy retirement!

# Frequently asked solar questions



## Does RECC allow solar generation to be interconnected to their power system?

RECC does allow the safe interconnection of renewable energy to their power system.

## What size solar system is allowed?

RECC will allow any size renewable energy system to be safely interconnected to our system. However, there are different requirements and policies for systems above 10kW.

## What does the term 'net metering' mean?

Net metering is the policy of allowing a member's generated kilowatt-hours to be used at another time, effectively canceling out kilowatt-hours that would normally have to be purchased from RECC at a time when the generation system is not producing power.

## Does RECC have a net metering policy?

RECC has a quarterly net metering

policy for renewable systems under 10 kW (solar DC). This size system would produce enough energy to cover most residential home services. The kWhs can be banked for up to three months before being reset at the end of the calendar quarter.

## Does RECC calculate payback of renewable energy and renewable energy credits (RECs)?

RECC does not calculate the payback of renewable energy systems. We advise our members to speak with several installers and thoroughly understand all assumptions being made.

## What costs are involved interconnecting a 10 kW, or smaller, renewable energy system?

To help recover a portion of the costs incurred by the cooperative, \$500 must be paid when submitting interconnection application. There are no additional fees for standard installations under 10 kW.

## Does RECC charge a member with renewable energy any extra monthly fees?

There are no extra fees that are charged to a member who has a renewable energy system installed. A member may lose certain discounts afforded to them, depending on their billing rate or for the size or type of load they have had prior to the system being connected. Members will continue to receive a minimum bill or a 'facility charge.' This charge accounts for the cost of maintaining the power lines and systems up to your home and does not include the cost of energy used.

## Could my billing rate change?

Your billing rate is designated to your account depending on the type and amount of energy you use as well as any incentive discount rates you may be receiving. A renewable energy system could change the billing rate designation for your account. Net metering accounts are ineligible for special Grain Drying and Dual Meter

rates. Please check with our staff prior to committing to a renewable energy project.

#### Does RECC require the member to have insurance on the renewable energy system?

RECC requires a \$1 million liability policy to be kept on the renewable energy system for the longevity of the installation. RECC requires notification of any changes or cancellations to the insurance policy as well as yearly renewals to have the most accurate and up to date information on file. This policy protects service employees and the power grid to which the member connects his or her renewable energy system.

#### Does RECC require a contract to be signed?

RECC requires an agreement to be signed for interconnection and net metering. This agreement includes, but is not limited to, keeping insurance on the system, compliance with laws, rules, and regulations, and ensuring that the system will operate properly in case of an outage.

#### Does the system act like a back-up generator when RECC's power goes off?

In the case of a power outage, RECC requires that the renewable energy equipment be automatically disconnected from the power grid. This prevents back-feeding electricity into de-energized power lines and ensures the safety of our linemen. The shut-down is an important feature to prevent injuries, even death, to those working around de-energized lines.

#### When should I contact RECC about my plans for adding solar energy to my house/business?

RECC should be contacted at the earliest stage. We recommend submitting application and documents about two weeks before any work begins. Your qualifying project will be approved within two weeks. After installation is complete, your system will be inspected within three weeks.

#### Are there any rebates offered through RECC for a renewable energy system?

RECC does not currently offer any rebates for renewable energy systems.

#### Are inspections required?

RECC will do a final inspection to ensure that all laws, rules and regulations are followed.

#### Can you provide a list of requirements that RECC will need before inspecting our system?

Members must complete application, pay \$500, sign interconnection and net metering agreements, provide proof of \$1 million insurance, and submit a signed authorization form.

#### What if I need to make changes/alterations to my system?

If there are any changes or alterations to your service, this will need to be done with the help of one of our engineering technicians prior to the installation of the renewable energy system.

#### Who do I contact with further questions?

Please email any inquires to [recc.coop](mailto:recc.coop) or call our office at 217-438-6197.



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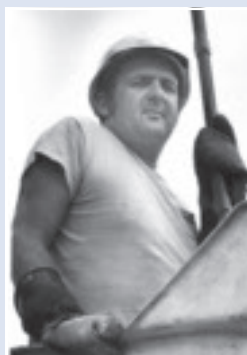
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**Buyer beware** - Some members have shown interest in energy alternatives like solar, while others simply want to manage their energy use. The changing energy market has created more consumer options, which leads to more scams and misleading information. Utility scams are common because consumers are understandably anxious with the threat of disruption to their electric service. New products and services in the energy industry also provide an opening for scammers and pop-up companies to present misleading information or shoddy products.

**Phone Scams** - A common phone scam typically begins with a phone number that appears to be from a valid utility company. The scammer will claim you have a past due account and threaten to disconnect service or take legal action. The scammer will typically demand that you use a prepaid debit card or money order, often within a short, urgent time frame to pay the "past due" amount. Be aware of your account status and never give your banking or personal information over the phone to someone you did not call. If you have a question or concern about your energy bill, call us directly at 217-438-6197. Do not use the phone number given by the scammer.

**Solar Scams** - Solar owners may receive calls offering an accessory upgrade or extended warranty for their solar array. The calls could be from crooks claiming to represent a solar company, promising to replace faulty or broken parts or improve efficiency. Again, if you are not expecting the call, don't be fooled. These calls offering misleading information are likely a scam. If you have a solar system, call the company that installed the solar array if you think there may be a problem. Other than occasional cleaning, rooftop solar is virtually maintenance-free.

**Trusted Sources** - If you're considering solar for your home, make sure you are working with a reputable company. Because this is still an emerging industry with evolving technology. There has been a proliferation of pop-up companies in the market to make a quick buck. Representatives of solar companies may have more sales experience than knowledge of the energy industry, and their primary goal could be making a sale and moving on to the next prospect. While RECC does not endorse any particular company, we can offer a candid assessment of your proposal. The co-op has been a trusted energy advisor for more than 80 years. We know the industry and we are only one click away, so please reach out with any questions about your electric service or bills – we're here to help.



## Obituary

James A. "Salami" Smith of Divernon passed away at the age of 83. Jim was a journeyman lineman with RECC and retired in 1994 after 38 years of service. He also served in the United States Army and was a member of the VFW.

