

Neighborhood Net Metering In Underhill

- Steve Webster and his wife, Barbara Yerrick, in an effort to be more sustainable, decided to install a solar photovoltaic (PV) system on their barn roof, as well as a solar hot water heater.
- Because the couple only use about 1,800 kWh per year and because the PV system produces around 12,000 kWh annually, the couple decided to share the electricity they are generating with one other household and a small business, and thus started a group net metering project.
- With group net metering several households or businesses share the electricity produced by a set of solar arrays, and the kWh usage portion of the customers' electricity bills are reduced by the amount of electricity the solar arrays produce. The customers still pay the other portions of the bill, such as monthly service charges, and pay the system owners for the kWh's they've used that month. However, if the system produces more electricity than the customers use in a month, then the customers can "carry over" the credits for any excess kWh's for up to a year and apply those credits to future bills.
- The net metering group was so happy with their system that Steve and Barbara decided to expand the project, and have added five solar trackers from AllEarth Renewables. The trackers turn to follow the sun through the day for maximum electricity production. In total, six households and a small business now share in the group net metering project, which will hopefully produce around 40,000 kWh per year, enough energy to cover most of their electricity needs.
- The couple found the additional people to participate in their net metering project by sending out emails to the community. The response was extremely positive, and many additional households were interested. However, the couple could only accommodate so many solar arrays on their property. On a positive note, others in the community have been inspired by the project, and Steve has already heard word about another group of people considering a group net metering project.



Outcomes:

- The project will provide renewable and sustainable electric power for six households and a small business.
- In addition, the project sets an example for the community and others across the state.

Keys to Success or Lessons Learned:

- A contract should be drawn-up among all members of the net metering project, so that all participants know all the details of the project and their responsibilities as a part of it.

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