

Cooperative REVIEW

for members of Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative

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SMECO moves forward on solar generation facility

In September, SMECO announced plans for its new wholly-owned subsidiary—SMECO Solar, LLC—to build a solar generating facility in Hughesville on a 47-acre parcel near the Co-op's new Engineering and Operations facility.

SMECO worked with the National Renewables Cooperative Organization (NRCO) to distribute a

Solar
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SunEdison installed this 2.2 megawatt solar system on a 17-acre site adjacent to the University of Maryland Eastern Shore in Princess Anne. It is a ground-mounted solar system that will provide approximately 15 percent of the campus's electric energy needs. SunEdison will be building a 5.5 megawatt system for SMECO Solar.



Solar

CONTINUED

request for proposals in March and received responses from 18 developers that submitted proposals for 28 projects. SMECO will work with SunEdison, based in Beltsville, Maryland, to construct the solar facility with a capacity of approximately 5.5 megawatts (MW) that can produce nearly 8,700 megawatt-hours (MWh) of energy annually. SMECO plans to use more than 10 percent of the solar energy produced to power its new Engineering and Operations facility. In addition, the project will provide energy to SMECO's customer-members and supplement SMECO's power portfolio.

Producing solar renewable energy will help us fulfill our renewable portfolio obligation as required by the state. Utilities are obligated to purchase 0.1 percent of their load from solar energy resources in 2012; that percentage increases each year thereafter. Utilities that do not purchase the required amount of solar energy must buy renewable energy credits or pay a penalty.

“We are making the most of our existing resources to increase our effectiveness as a cooperative: land that was once used to produce tobacco will now be used to produce electric energy,” according to Austin J. Slater, Jr., SMECO's president and CEO. “Working with NRCO and SunEdison has allowed us to develop a project tailored to our needs that will benefit our customer-members. Through our partnership, we will be able to obtain low-cost financing for infrastructure that will increase the availability of solar resources within our service area.”

We have established SMECO Solar LLC, a new wholly-owned subsidiary, which will own and operate the solar facility. Creating the subsidiary makes the solar project eligible for grants available under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The grant will cover 30 percent of the construction costs. Qualifying for and utilizing this grant is critical to keeping the project cost-effective and will help lower the cost to our customer-members for electricity produced from renewable resources.



Success with solar energy projects around Southern Maryland sets a precedent for our solar project in Hughesville. Shown here is the 503 kW DC solar panel installation at Carver Elementary School in St. Mary's County. SMECO inspected the completed installation in March 2011. The solar energy the system generates goes to offset the school's on-site electric use.

SMECO Solar submitted a filing to the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) on September 23, 2011, to request an exemption from the PSC's Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) process. With certain exceptions, anyone wanting to construct an electric generating facility must first obtain a CPCN. One of these exceptions is for certain on-site generating facilities. SMECO Solar filed for a CPCN exemption based on the following guidelines in the law: the capacity of the generating station does not exceed 25 megawatts, and at least 10 percent of the electricity generated each year will be consumed on-site. As a complementary filing, SMECO has asked the PSC to approve financing for the project and to waive some of its regulations to allow for the cost-effective operation of SMECO Solar.

SMECO plans to start the project before the end of the year to qualify for a federal grant from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The project is expected to reach full operation in early 2013 and should generate energy for at least 20 years.



Support local business

By January 2012, local suppliers interested in providing products or services to SMECO will be able to utilize our online Supplier Management Service tool to be listed as a qualified business. We will use this tool in conjunction with the Minority Business Opportunities Task Force's (MBOT) SmartBiz Tool. SMECO's goal is for 25 percent of all eligible procurements to be competitively awarded to small and diverse businesses.

The Tri-County Council of Southern Maryland initiated the MBOT in 2007 to create a portal for small and diverse businesses to gain access to opportunities that will promote the growth of our region's economy. The SmartBiz Tool connects businesses to knowledge, opportunities, and resources. People can gain information on how to start a company, and small businesses can learn how to plan for expansion, obtain certification information, and more, to compete in commercial, utility, or government venues. Businesses will also have access to a variety of products and services listed in the SmartBiz Tool Directory.

We support the growth of local business, both large and small. As part of this continued effort to increase opportunities for small and diverse businesses, SMECO is a sponsor for the kick-off event introducing the SmartBiz Tool on November 17, 2011, at the College of Southern Maryland, La Plata Campus, Room BI-113 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. For additional information about the kick-off event, please call Ann Frank at 301-374-1148, or visit mdsbdc.ecenterdirect.com and click on "Training Events."

Report SMECO security yard lights and street lights out

SMECO offers a variety of street and security yard lights to enhance both the safety and the aesthetic appeal of your community.

If you have a security yard light out on your property, or if you notice a street light out in your neighborhood, please visit www.smeco.coop, and under the “Your Accounts” tab, select “Report Outside Lights Off.” You will be directed to an online form to report it. You can also call our Contact Center at 1-888-440-3311 to report the light.



Please have the following information available when you report the security yard light or street light that is out:

- Exact address of the light
- ID number of the light pole (if applicable)

Please do not use this form to report power outages. If you have a power outage, please call 1-877-747-6326 (1-877-74-SMECO) to report a power outage.

Before you dig, make the call

Call Miss Utility by dialing **811** before you plant a tree or shrub, start a garden, or install a fence. SMECO will mark the location of underground power lines on your property.

Don't plant your trees near overhead power lines. Trees that will grow 20–50 feet tall should be planted at least 30 feet from overhead lines.

One call will save you a lot of time, trouble, and money. It could also save your life!





Do not run your furnace fan continuously. The fan in a large oil furnace can easily consume \$50 of electricity in a month if it is running 24/7. Switch the fan to the "Auto" setting and significantly reduce this amount.

around **TOWN**

December 3

Family Plantation

Christmas

Sponsor: Historic Sotterley

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sotterley Plantation, Hollywood. St. Nick and Mrs. Claus, horse-drawn carriage rides, live seasonal music, craft vendors and petting zoo, fun crafts and activities for children, garden greens from the Sotterley Garden Guild, carols, and a John Deere toy display. **\$ Admission.**

301-373-2280

sotterley.org

10th Annual Candlelight

Victorian Christmas

Sponsor: Dr. Samuel A. Mudd House Museum

11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Dr. Samuel A. Mudd House Museum, Waldorf Music, Mr. and Mrs. Claus,

a re-enactment by Civil War soldiers in uniform, and refreshments.

\$ Admission. Free for members.

301-274-9358

301-645-6870

somd.lib.md.us/MUSEUMS/Mudd.htm

December 3-4

Festival of Trees

Sponsor: Hospice of St. Mary's

St. Mary's County

301-994-3023

December 4

Holiday Vendor/

Craft Fair at Wildewood

10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

22961 Wildewood Drive, California, MD

Crafts, food, jewelry, hand-made items, and other fabulous gifts.

prcraftfair@gmail.com



Visit www.smeco.coop/community/aroundtown for more events.

December 10

Breakfast With Santa

Sponsor: St. Thomas' Episcopal Parish

8 a.m. to noon

14070 Brandywine Road

Home-cooked country

breakfast and gift

shop Secret Santa

Shop for children

and pictures

with Santa.

\$ Admission.

301-627-8469

stthomascroom.org



December 17

Holiday Greens Workshop

Sponsor: Historic SMC

10 a.m. to noon

Historic St. Mary's City

Assemble a beautiful evergreen arrangement.

All materials provided.

Space limited; advance

registration required.

240-895-4489

stmaryscity.org/events.html

Christmas Craft Workshop

Sponsor: St. Thomas' Episcopal Parish

9 a.m. to noon

14300 St. Thomas Church

Road, Upper Marlboro

Make boxwood wreath, a

centerpiece, a boxwood

Christmas tree or a door/

table swag. All materials

provided. Refreshments

served. Reservations

required. **\$ Admission.**

301-627-8469

www.stthomascroom.org

Herb Reid and

The Platters Concert

Sponsor: Mission of Mercy

6 p.m. doors open; 7 p.m.

concert, Leonardtown

High School, Leonardtown

Top hits from the Platters

and a selection of Holiday

music. **\$ Admission.**

301-247-3283



"It is good to be able to help a neighbor."

—Jack H., SMECO member

One dollar a month could help your neighbors keep their lights on

We know that part of being a good neighbor is to lend a hand when needed, and we know our customer-members share this charitable spirit. For people who have fallen on hard times, receiving enough money to pay past due electric bills can make a big difference. By contributing to Members Helping Members, you can help other SMECO customer-members to help keep the lights on.

How does it work?

It's easy! Simply sign up to add \$1 to your SMECO electric bill every month. The Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee will administer the funds to those customer-members who seek aid and meet the qualifications.

If you would like to donate just \$12 a year, you can sign up to enroll in Members Helping Members. Just call 1-888-440-3311, go online at www.smeco.coop/mhm, or sign up in person at the customer service counter at a SMECO location. If you would like to make a larger donation to Members Helping Members, you may send a check to Members Helping Members, P.O. Box 1937, Hughesville, MD 20637. Participants can opt out at any time.