



Co-op Chronical



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May/June 2023

UDWI and Solar Energy

UDWI REMC strives to provide safe and reliable energy to its members and understands there are options available to members for residential usage. The co-op is pro-renewable energy and supports its members in the choice to utilize solar energy systems.

For those making the decision to pursue solar installation, our team wants to provide members with the necessary information and offer guidance throughout the process.

Solar power is more affordable, accessible, and prevalent in the United States than ever before. The price of installing solar has declined by 43 percent over the last five years.

As with all forms of renewable energy, members and utility companies alike face pros and cons when choosing solar. Advantages of the system include lower energy bills, and no air pollution or carbon dioxide emissions. Potential barriers to consider include the large amount of space needed for equipment, high initial/upfront costs associated with installation, and solar power doesn't produce energy at night or on cloudy days, with less produced during the winter months as well. It is important to understand all these factors before making the decision to utilize solar systems.

UDWI does not sell solar panels or related solar equipment to its members. Instead, we will work with interested members to provide them with the information they need to determine if a solar system works for them. UDWI will assist members in the process of safely installing their solar system and getting it connected to UDWI's distribution system.

Members interested in solar are encouraged to contact our office to start the process by filling out an interconnection application. As you work through the process, we want to remain in contact to follow the progress, offer support, and ensure your safety as well as the safety of our linemen post-installation. Our application offers a complete list of requirements and follows industry standards.

If members choose to utilize a solar system at their residence or business, they are responsible for the installation and maintenance costs. However, if more solar energy is produced than used by the member, UDWI will buy the energy back at their avoided price. This avoided cost rate is based on what UDWI would have paid to Hoosier Energy, our power supply provider, for an equivalent amount of energy.

If you are interested or have questions about solar, or would like to start the installation process, please contact our office for more information, or email us at solar@udwiremc.com.

OFFICE INFORMATION

Our office will be closed:

Monday, May 29—Memorial Day

Tuesday, July 4—Independence Day

Wishing you safe & happy holidays!

ANNUAL MEETING

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT—UDWI held its Annual Meeting of the Members last month. UDWI CEO Doug Child's presentation from the meeting can be found on our website!



Summer Food Assistance Programs

USDA works to ensure that children who receive on free or reduced-price school meals can get the nutrition they need when schools are closed. Through USDA's summer meal programs, approved sites in communities across the country can serve meals to kids up to age 18 at no cost. Families can use this tool to find directions to nearby meal sites, as well as their hours of operation and contact information. Use the QR code to get directed to their website to find schools in our area!



In addition, several nonprofit organizations in our service area provide meals, either as a direct feeding programs or are involved in feeding needy families. UDWI's Community Fund personally helped several of these groups and we are grateful to have such wonderful organizations working to take care of the members of our community! Please check with these organizations to confirm availability and schedules.

Healthy Hearts WRV provides healthy snacks on the weekends to students at WRV Worthington & WRV Lyons for any child whose parents have signed a permission slip.

Loaves & Fishes' weekend meal program is designed to provide nutritional food needs for Linton/Stockton students PK-12 during the school year whose parents fill out & return sign-up sheets.

Lyons Food Pantry serves people living in the 47443 (Lyons) and 47465 (Switz City) zip codes bi-monthly. Distribution food lines are monthly on the first Saturday (9-11:30 AM) and the third Monday (3-5 PM).

St. Mary's Community Kitchen & Pantry serves hungry, lonely, and poor persons living in Sullivan County regardless of age, race, gender, or religion. Meals are served weekly from their kitchen and can also delivered to homebound, disabled, and the elderly. Its pantry is also open on a weekly basis.

North Lawrence Community Schools is offering summer meals (free breakfast and lunch for children under 18) at Bedford Middle School. No paperwork is required.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Darren Denham

How long have you worked at UDWI REMC? 3 years

Current Position: Warehouseman

What is your favorite part of working at the co-op? Never a dull moment so not likely to get stuck in a rut

What are your hobbies? Hunting, spending time with family, and enjoying the great outdoors

What are your pet peeves? Laziness, entitlement attitudes

Favorite Food & Drink: Meatloaf and Sweet tea

Guilty pleasure: Dove Dark Chocolate



Meet
Darren!

UDWI Fiber Partnership Updates

Smithville Update: The project continues to move forward as more members are provided with fiber to their homes. Members can take advantage of the early sign-up option by calling 800-742-4084 or visiting www.smithville.com to pre-register for services. Below is the status for the various phases of the Stanford-area project.

- Phase 1 thru 4 – Taking orders
- Phase 5 – Starting to take orders in April
- Phase 6 – Under construction
- Phase 7 – Targeted for 2024

SCI Update: The fiber backbone for the Freedom West Zone is complete. Fiber distribution construction is complete, awaiting completion of splicing in the north west corner along Hoot Road, Sassafras Road, and others. We anticipate drops starting in late spring 2023 for this area. Crews will soon begin distribution construction near the Freedom area. **Early registration is encouraged to help expedite the construction and drop process! Please register as soon as possible at join.sciremc.com.**

Construction & Upgrades

Are you building a new house/garage/barn? Wanting to switch from overhead to underground service? Need your service upgraded?

UDWI's Operations Department wants to work with you to make these changes!

Check out our website to view our Service Pamphlet and Staking Guide to Start the process!

TELL US HOW WE'RE DOING!

YOU MAY BE ASKED TO PARTICIPATE IN A SURVEY

In an upcoming survey conducted by Cooperative Insights, some members will be randomly selected to provide feedback about your cooperative.

The survey will:

- Take 15-20 minutes to complete.
- Help your cooperative understand how it is doing.
- Ask about customer satisfaction, your cooperative's strengths, weaknesses and reliability, and opinions on emerging technologies like renewable energy.

If you are contacted, we strongly encourage you to participate and provide honest feedback to help us better understand how we can best provide our members with The Cooperative Difference.



Meter Testing Continues: UDWI meter technicians continue with routine meter tests in our entire service territory and will do so over the next few years. Employees will be driving a white utility van with our logo placard. Be sure to identify these items before approaching any vehicle that may be in your area. Report suspicious behavior to your local law enforcement office.

"Like" us on Facebook to stay up to date on current testing locations.

Did You Know? Members who sign up to receive electronic billing statements AND opt-in for automatic payments from a checking or savings account can save money on their electric bill every month! Eligible accounts can receive a bill credit of \$2 per account every month.

For more information on this bill credit, contact customer service at 812-384-4446 or email memberservice@udwiremc.com.