



COMPASS TO MUNICIPAL POWER

CMPASgroup.org

CMPAS Offers Utilities Access to R4 Community Solar Subscriptions

Blue Earth, MN — May 1, 2017— Central Municipal Power Agency/Services (CMPAS – pronounced “compass”) is pleased to announce a voluntary program that allows residential and commercial/industrial electric customers to purchase R4 community solar subscriptions. The four R’s of the R4 represent best practices that “Are For” utilizing sources of renewable energy, reducing unnecessary energy use, respecting the environment, and repeating steps toward responsible energy use. Six public power utilities offer R4 Solar including Blue Earth Light and Water, Granite Falls Municipal Utilities, Janesville Municipal Utilities, Kasson Public Utilities, Kenyon Municipal Utilities, and Sleepy Eye Public Utilities.

For public power customers who are interested in solar, R4 Solar offers a price-competitive and hassle-free way to achieve environmental stewardship. In exchange for purchasing a solar subscription that represents energy needs, subscribers will receive an offsetting financial credit on their utility bill representing the solar panel’s production.

“A few years ago, Kasson Public Utilities incorporated solar energy into its system on the utility side of the meter. We are pleased to announce that we are offering customers’ subscriptions to community solar projects including an R4 solar billboard in Kasson,” said Theresa Coleman, Kasson City Administrator. “Our new 4-kilowatt solar billboard will be located at the public works facility on 16th Street NE, and when subscriptions exceed the size of the billboard, community solar subscriptions will be purchased from a shared municipal project near Owatonna, MN.”

Community solar subscription begins at \$42.50 a panel, and in exchange, a customer receives a proportional utility bill credit based on monthly panel production. If a customer begins mid-year, they will pay a pro-rated amount of \$3.55 a month. All subscriptions end June 30, and customers must renew their subscription(s) every July 1 to continue participating.

Customers wanting to buy subscriptions to match their energy use can refer to their billing statement for a 12-month period or contact their local utility for information to help them determine their subscription level. As an example, a customer can take into account that the average MN residential customer annually consumes about 9,144-kilowatt hours (kWh). Knowing one panel produces about 500 kWh a year, a customer could match their electric demand by purchasing subscriptions to 18 panels for \$765 (18 x \$42.50).

Although the price per panel is fixed, the credit offset will vary based on the amount of energy produced and energy market prices. The estimated credit offset is approximately \$30 a panel per year. R4 solar participants monthly credit offsets will be based on energy production from local solar billboards and energy from the Lemond Solar Center, LLC, near Owatonna, Minnesota.

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The Lemond Project is built in collaboration with several other public power utilities who either belong to Kasson's joint power agency, CMPAS, or the Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (SMMPA). The Lemond Solar Center will provide supportive generation to supply the annual power needs of approximately 775 homes.

Developed on a larger, utility-sized scale, the cost for R4 Solar panel subscriptions are significantly lower than rooftop installations. R4 Solar also minimizes operational issues, achieves the same environmental goals, and prevents the cross-subsidization of costs to non-solar customers. When solar subscribers pay their monthly electric utility bill, they receive bill credit offsets corresponding to the number of kilowatt-hours produced from the community solar project.

R4 Solar is offered through CMPAS's community services division, Central Municipal Power Community Services (CMPCS). CMPAS serves as a municipal, consumer-owned, non-profit agency that helps municipal utilities identify strategies that minimize wholesale power costs, manage future risks, and maintain stable competitive rates. As a result of strategic planning, CMPAS currently serves 48 percent of its 12 members' energy needs from carbon-free resources including hydropower, wind, nuclear and biogas.

For more information on how to participate, go to www.cmpcs.org/renewables.

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