



News Release

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Walton EMC Announces Largest Community Solar Project in Eastern U.S.

MONROE, Ga. – Walton Electric Membership Corporation (EMC) announces the construction and operation of a one-megawatt community solar electricity generation farm in northeastern Walton County near Monroe through its wholly-owned subsidiary, Walton Solar. The completed project will be among the seven largest community solar installations in the country and the largest in the eastern half of the U.S.

Community solar projects are cooperative efforts that allow access to consumers who might otherwise be excluded from owning and installing their own solar electricity generation. Obstacles like upfront costs, improper roof orientation, excessive roof shading, restrictive subdivision covenants or landlord prohibitions are frequent barriers to homeowners and renters who want to install solar systems.

“Our community solar project has many advantages for Walton EMC customer-owners,” said CEO Ronnie Lee. “The National Renewal Energy Laboratory estimates that only about 25 percent of the residential rooftop area in our country is suitable for onsite solar electricity generation. Cooperative projects allow people who live under the other 75 percent of unsuitable rooftops to participate in solar energy production.”

“Besides that, many consumers would like to participate in solar electricity generation but simply don’t want the hassle, maintenance and expense of owning their own system,” said Lee. “Our community system will allow them to have the benefits without those barriers.”

Customer-owners will be able to participate in the project depending on their level of need and interest. Details of the cost to consumers and available levels of participation are currently being developed. Construction is underway with the first solar-generated electricity flowing from the project by July 1.

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The cooperative has acquired an 11-acre site adjacent to the east side of its U.S. Highway 78 headquarters for the project. The actual solar panels will occupy approximately six acres of the total land area.

Walton EMC has selected Atlanta-based Radiance Solar, LLC to construct its community solar project. Founded in 2007, Radiance Solar is a leading solar contractor specializing in engineering, construction and maintenance, and has completed over 180 solar projects throughout the Southeast, including a 20-megawatt solar plant in Camilla, Georgia. The company is committed to bringing solar energy within the reach of every electric utility through a relentless commitment to innovative design and efficient construction techniques.

“Radiance Solar is excited to be working with an industry leader like Walton EMC to bring cost-effective solar energy to its customers,” said Jamie Porges, Radiance Solar COO and co-founder.

The project will also provide a multitude of educational opportunities. “We’ll get firsthand experience in solar electricity production,” said Lee. “That knowledge will allow Walton EMC to better advise our customer-owners and answer their questions on solar electricity generation. Our project will also serve as a practical example that educators from around the region can visit to give their students hands-on lessons in renewable energy.”

Walton EMC is a customer-owned power company that serves 123,000 accounts over its 10-county service area between Atlanta and Athens.

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