

Capital Area Solar Co-op 2021

#CapitalAreaSolarCoop

Timeline: April 1 – August 30, 2021 (with the option to add September)

Jurisdictions: Montgomery County, Gaithersburg, Rockville, Takoma Park, Bowie, Poolesville, hopefully Prince George's County, Virginia (Arlington's page), DC

Why are we doing this?

To make sure we are reaching as many potential solar homeowners as possible. What we find is that people who live in Maryland work in Virginia or DC and vice versa – this will enable us to address everyone across invisible boundaries.

Join the Capital Area Solar Co-Op this year!

For the first time in jurisdictional history – the City of Gaithersburg will be joining the cities of Rockville, Takoma Park, Bowie, Poolesville, Arlington, Washington DC and as well as Montgomery County (maybe PG and Frederick) in an effort to promote residential solar installations! This is no April's Fool's Joke, this cooperative, collaborative Co-op opportunity will be available from April – August 2021 for residents all over the Capital Area! Have you been thinking about going solar but don't know where to start? Are you not sure about financing or incentives? This is the opportunity for you to learn everything you want about going solar – #itsaDMVthing #CapitalAreaGoesSolar

Goals

- Shared, coordinated, and planned outreach.
 - Landing page on Solar United Neighbors page with links to the three areas
 - Maryland Co-op page
 - Montgomery County page
 - Prince George's County page
 - Virginia Co-op page
 - DC page
 - Consistent info sessions (virtual) at least 2 per month – one general info session, one specialized
 - Experienced partners 'coaching' newer partners
- Joint collateral and marketing
 - [Solar Banks](#) – to be raffled off at events
 - Solar Ready Kit = [Punny t-shirt](#)/Sunscreen/Branded Face mask/Hand Sanitizer – to be given to everyone who signs up for a session? (maybe we can get this donated or sponsored)
 - Yard Signs, Decals, and [License Plate Frame](#)
- Demonstrating regional/collective impact
 - Environmental/GHG impact for a region (breaking silos)

- Regional resiliency goals and best practices
 - Battery storage deployment
 - EV charger deployment
- Sharing and connecting regional plans and outcomes
- Additional benefits or topics - Spanish language info sessions, and resources
 - SUN Cross regional topic areas of expertise
 - Community solar, LMI, PACE, Green Bank
- Internal competition between municipalities
- Sharing or pooling financing or other resources (PACE), LMI opportunities
- Promotion of the final Celebration Party, National Solar Tour, Solar Congress

Plan for Laura:

1. Logo
2. General Social Posts – Join the #CapitalAreaSolarCoop with website
 - a. Facebook
 - b. Instagram
 - c. Twitter
3. Images for Lawn Sign

Communications Plan

Thursday, April 1st – **LAUNCH** – This is not an April Fool’s Joke – Maryland, Virginia, and DC are working together to make sure residents know how to go SOLAR!

Takoma Park – 2 sessions – April 6th at 6:30 pm and June 24th at 12 pm (own zoom)

Gaithersburg – 2 sessions – June 9th at 12 pm and July 22nd at 6:30 pm (own zoom)

Arlington – 4 sessions, April 6, 7pm – can we change this date? May 4, Noon, Jun 4, 7pm, July 21, Noon

Rockville – 2 sessions – one at 6:30 and one at noon – Amanda will send dates.

Bowie – 2 sessions, April 22 at 6:30 pm and June 11 at noon.

Montgomery County – 4 sessions, one a month

Poolesville – 2 sessions – Apr 29 @7pm, May 20 @ noon

Frederick - ??

Prince George’s County – confirmation on Friday, March 12th

APRIL

- April 1st – Thursday – LAUNCH
- April 6th – Tuesday at 6:30 pm –Solar Co-op Session HOSTED by Takoma Park
- April 7th – Wednesday at 7:00 pm – Solar Co-op Session HOSTED by Arlington
- April 22nd – Thursday at 6:30 pm – Solar Co-op Session HOSTED by Bowie
- April 29th – Thursday at 7:00pm – Solar Co-op Session HOSTED by Poolesville

MAY

- May 4th – Tuesday at noon – Solar Co-op Session HOSTED by Arlington
- May 13th – Thursday at 6:30 pm – Solar Co-op Session HOSTED by Rockville
- May 13th – Thursday at noon – Solar Co-op Session HOSTED by Poolesville

JUNE

- June 4th – Friday at noon – Solar Co-op Session HOSTED by Arlington
- June 9th – Wednesday at noon – Solar Co-op Session HOSTED by Gaithersburg
- https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_5Wfcv5ntTnKLwj5OrmFUDA
- June 11th – Friday at noon - Solar Co-op Session HOSTED by Bowie
- June 20th – Sunday – Longest Day of the Year!!!! Have a summer bash – either at a brewery or this is when we do the Drive In Movie or something?????
- June 24th – Thursday at noon – Solar Co-op Session HOSTED by Takoma Park

JULY

- July 15th – Thursday at noon – Solar Co-op Session HOSTED by Rockville
- July 21st – Wednesday at noon - Solar Co-op Session HOSTED by Arlington
- July 22nd – Thursday at 6:30 pm - Solar Co-op Session HOSTED by Gaithersburg
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_K9TS1fYgSV2Gmer4BsbkuA

AUGUST

- August 31st – Tuesday – CLOSES

SEPTEMBER

- PARTY!!!!

Outreach Methods

- Info Sessions – virtual and maybe a few in person at Beer Gardens or something?
- "[Suns out, Puns out](#) Competition – maybe these become the t-shirt designs????
- Light Bulb exchanges – **A Sun Light Exchange – thoughts on name!**
- Sunset or sunrise hike – at local park or trail or something, socially distanced – we could provide people with Solar Kits – [branded rollup blanket](#), Sunkist fruit snacks, Sunny D

juice, and sunscreen (maybe we can get this donated or sponsored)

- Outdoor movie night
- Photo contest for best “sun shot”– with prizes for winners – or we can use those images on materials???
- I still want to do a SHOW US YOUR SOLAR – contest but we really need help with this!!!

Virtual General Solar Co-op Info sessions

- Arlington
- General Montgomery County
- Gaithersburg
- Rockville
- Takoma Park
- DC

Specialty Info Sessions

- CCCOM
- Financing
- Battery Storage Session*
- PPA Session
- Community Solar
- EV Charging
- Frontline Communities
- Spanish Session – recorded

Solar Co-op Process - April 1, 2021 – August 30, 2021

Solar co-ops (group-buying process) generally require 8-10 months to complete and are divided into four phases. During each phase, the roles and responsibilities of the community partner may vary, depending on the size of the community. The most significant role for partners is during the outreach and promotion phases of the group.

- *Phase 1: Outreach and Promotion*

Months 1-3 (April – May)

Create and execute an outreach strategy to drive prospective participants to the solar co-op website and in person solar information sessions. The goal is to get 50-100 people to attend and at least 30 participants to sign up for the solar co-op. Community partners help identify appropriate media and community venues that will drive sign ups and spread the word about the solar co-op.

- *Phase 2: Request for Proposals and Bid Selection*

Months 2-3 (June- July)

Once the solar co-op has at least 30 participants, Solar United Neighbors issues a Request for Proposals (RFP) to area installers for them to bid on the project. Solar United Neighbors will then convene a selection committee made up of co-op participants and they will select the group's installer. Solar United Neighbors facilitates the process but does not make the selection. (Our model is stakeholder-driven and encourages active participation and education amongst participants)

Once the installer is chosen, Solar United Neighbors and participating partners announce the installer selection and drive further sign-ups to grow the group. Depending on interest and demand, the RFP may include residential and/or commercial projects and prioritize options for battery and/or Level-2 electric vehicle charging products.

- *Phase 3: Additional Recruitment Months 3-6 (August)*

Once the solar co-op's installer is chosen, they will visit each participant's home and provide them with an individualized proposal for a solar PV system based on the group pricing. While this is taking place, Solar United Neighbors and community partners will continue to recruit additional solar co-op participants to join the group.

A successful solar co-op will have, at minimum, 100 sign ups when it closes.

- *Phase 4: Assessment, Celebration, and Ongoing Support and Engagement Months 6-10 (September and beyond)*

Once the sign-up deadline for the solar co-op passes, Solar United Neighbors will continue to work with solar coop participants to ensure they have a positive experience as they sign contracts and have solar PV systems installed. Community partners will help plan and implement a celebration party for solar co-op participants, local elected officials, and any other groups interested in celebrating the successful co-op. Members of the solar co-op will be invited to continue to participate in regional activities.