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Solarize Johnson County residential solar purchase program announced

Johnson County, IA - Residents in Johnson County and West Branch have an opportunity to learn more about solar energy and potentially invest in affordable solar through a new program called Solarize Johnson County. The program builds on the success of Solarize Cedar Rapids and Linn County, where more than 500 individuals attended free solar education sessions and nearly 100 property owners added solar to their properties in 2017.

Now, Johnson County, Johnson County Public Health, Johnson County Conservation, and six municipalities are teaming up with a Wisconsin-based nonprofit organization to launch a similar program. Cities helping host free educational events, called Solar Power Hours, include Coralville, Iowa City, North Liberty, Solon, Shueyville and West Branch.

Regardless of where a person lives in the county, or West Branch, and regardless of whether a city is a formal partner, residents throughout the county are welcome to attend any Solar Power Hour that is most convenient for them. The free educational sessions will help prospective participants learn how solar works and get their questions answered, said Mike Carberry, chairperson of the Johnson County Board of Supervisors.

“Solarize Johnson County will be a tremendous opportunity for anyone in the county to consider adding solar to their home, and reaping the benefits of clean, affordable renewable energy,” Carberry said. “We’re really excited about the partnership.”

The program kicks off at noon on Thursday, April 26, at the Johnson County Health and Human Services Building, Room 203B-C, located at 855 S. Dubuque Street, in Iowa City, and runs through August with more than 20 Solar Power Hours. The program’s website, SolarizeJohnsonCounty.com, lists all the events and includes a sign-up form that area residents can fill out for an estimate, or to receive general program updates.

Solarize Johnson County is administered by the [Midwest Renewable Energy Association \(MREA\)](http://MidwestRenewableEnergyAssociation.org) at no cost to the county. This type of program has been successful in other jurisdictions in Iowa,

Wisconsin and Illinois, and as seen in neighboring Linn County as well as Milwaukee, Urbana-Champaign and Bloomington-Normal.

“Over the past several years we have helped educate thousands of property owners all over the Midwest about solar,” said Peter Murphy, Solar Program Manager for MREA. “There’s a huge demand for information about solar, and folks are learning that it’s no longer an inaccessible technology of the future, but rather it’s available to them right now.”

Tom Wieseler, of Mount Vernon, not only added solar to his home through the Solarize Cedar Rapids and Linn County program, he also helped to lead it. Wieseler delivered more than 20 free educational Solar Power Hours last year on behalf of MREA and will do the same in Johnson County.

“It was an easy decision for my wife and me to invest in solar for our home,” Wieseler said. “Each day I check to see what my solar production has been. I’m looking forward to serving as the presenter for the Solarize Johnson County program and spreading the message of residential solar energy in Johnson County this summer.”

More information about the program is available at SolarizeJohnsonCounty.com.

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