

Solar*Rewards® Community® - Frequently Asked Questions

For Garden Operators

Minnesota

*The purpose of this document is to provide Garden Operators general answers for the most frequently asked questions in the Solar*Rewards Community program. For specific questions or details, please contact SRCMN@xcelenergy.com.*

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Updated 01/31/2017

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PROGRAM DETAILS

1. What is subscribed/unsubscribed energy?

Subscribed energy is the portion of kWh production allocated to subscribers. (If 80 kW of a 100 kW garden is subscribed, then the subscribed energy payments to the subscribers will correspond to 80% of the total production).

Unsubscribed energy is that which does not have a subscriber. The Garden Operator will receive a bill credit for unsubscribed energy. Gardens less than 40 kW receive the average retail rate (Rate Code A50 rate found in tariff). Gardens greater than or equal to 40 kW receive the avoided cost (Rate Code A51 found in the tariff).

- Under the Applicable Retail Rate bill credit, where the Company Solar Garden Operator has elected to transfer the solar RECs to the Company under the Standard Contract for Solar*Rewards Community, an additional payment of \$0.01/kWh will be paid to the Garden Operator for the unsubscribed RECs.
- Under a Value-of-Solar rate, the REC is automatically transferred to Company and an additional payment of \$0.01/kWh will be paid to the Community Solar Garden Operator for the unsubscribed RECs.

2. Does the Solar*Rewards Community program have Co-Location rules?

Co-Location or being Co-Located means two or more Community Solar Gardens that exhibit characteristics of a single development, such as common ownership structure, an umbrella sale arrangement, revenue-sharing arrangements, and common debt or equity financing. Community Solar Gardens will not be considered Co-Located solely because the same person or entity provided tax equity financing for the garden or garden project. The Solar*Rewards Community program includes a limitation of 1 MW for Co-Located sites.

3. How do I determine in which county the Solar Garden is located?

The single point of common coupling located at the main service meter is used to determine the county in which the Solar*Rewards Community project is located.

4. To participate, where can a community solar garden be located?

A community solar garden participating in the Solar*Rewards Community program must be within Xcel Energy's Minnesota service territory. This requirements means that the solar electric generating facility (the actual garden) must be entirely located in the service territory of the Company, including photovoltaic panels, inverter, output breakers, service meter, the facilities between the service meter and Production Meter, and the facilities between the photovoltaic panels and the Production Meter.

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5. Where can I find a map of Xcel Energy's service territory?

This map can be found at <http://www.mngeo.state.mn.us/eusa/>, as provided by the State of Minnesota.

6. Can a garden be installed on a site that already has an existing net-metered PV system?

Yes, as long as the Solar*Rewards Community system and meters are separate from any existing NSP service and meters on a property. Also, if that customer desires to be a subscriber, they would need to meet the 120% rule requirements like any other subscriber with a Solar*Rewards system on their roof.

7. Is there is a limit to the size of Solar*Rewards Community project?

The maximum solar garden system size is 1 MW AC. The system size is based on the sum of the inverter(s) maximum AC output.

8. What types of options are available under Solar*Rewards Community?

There are three program types that can be applied for:

1. *Solar*Rewards - MN with Solar*Rewards Incentive* (named *MN* in the SRC Application System) - Standard Bill Credit Only. This is only for gardens that are also applying for Solar*Rewards and comply with the Solar*Rewards rules such as system size under 20kW.
2. *Solar*Rewards - MN with Made In Minnesota Incentive* (named *MIM* in the SRC Application System) - Standard Bill Credit Only. This is only for gardens that have been accepted to the Made In Minnesota program.
3. *Solar Rewards - MN* (Named *Non-Incentive MN* in the SRC Application System) - Standard or Enhanced Bill Credit depending on Garden Operator Election. If Garden Operator elects to sell RECs then N is shown in the application system and enhanced bill credit is assigned, if election to keep RECs is made then Y is shown in the application system and standard bill credit is assigned. This program has a size limit of 1MW AC.

Beginning January 1, 2017, Bill Credits are based on the Value-of-Solar. All RECs are automatically assigned to Xcel Energy.

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APPLICATIONS

1. **What is the Application Deposit?**

An Application Deposit of \$100/kW is required for each application for the Solar*Rewards Community program.

The deposit shall be refunded, with interest, within thirty (30) days after the project is completed or the date when the Garden Operator informs the Company that it will no longer continue pursuing completion of the garden project, or if the project is not completed within the twenty-four (24) month timeline as set forth in the contract.

The Application Deposit can be mailed to Xcel Energy or sent via wire transfer. Details on these processes are provided on the Application Deposit Form, which must be signed and uploaded to the online application system prior to Xcel Energy receiving the funds. The deposit is returned in the same method it was received (either wire transfer or US Post) and Xcel Energy will contact the Garden Operator to ensure the proper wire or mailing address.

2. **How do I submit my Application and/or Deposit forms and payments?**

- a. Submit payment via check or wire transfer. **Include the Solar Garden ID on the check or wire transfer.**

i. Wire payments

1. Email SRCMN when you send your wire payments with the information below
2. Provide the following information in the Details/Memo section of your wire transfer:
 - a. Application Fees: SRCMN App Fee, SRC#s, Company Name
 - b. Deposit Fees: SRCMN Deposit, SRC#s & MW (e.g.: SRC0284 500kW),

Company Name

ii. Check payments

1. Provide the following information in the Memo section of your check
 - a. Application Fees: SRCMN App Fee, SRC#s, Company Name
 - b. Deposit Fees: SRCMN Deposit, SRC#s & MW (e.g.: SRC0284 500kW), Company Name
2. Send check payments by U.S. Mail to:
 - a. Xcel Energy
Solar*Rewards Community Program
P.O. Box 59
Minneapolis, MN 55440-0059

- b. Upload the signed and completed Application and/or Deposit form including a copy of

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- the wire or check payment to the online application system
- c. Email the Program Management team at SRCMN@xcelenergy.com to notify of uploaded document.

Please note that checks will not be accepted in person

3. Does Xcel Energy provide a way to determine optimal location prior to the application process?

Xcel Energy offers Capacity Screens to help determine whether an application is viable based on location. These screens require a \$250 fee and a signed NDA to enable to release of distribution infrastructure and load analysis on a per feeder basis based on the specific location of a proposed Community Garden Site.

In order to receive a Capacity Screen, the Company requires a site plan or at minimum an image of the proposed location, (Google maps/earth with the location of the solar facilities and point of common coupling shown).

For more information please visit our Solar Rewards Community Developer Resources website at www.xcelenergy.com or contact SRCMN@xcelenergy.com.

4. Why does Xcel Energy need proof of insurance from Garden Operators?

Xcel Energy's regulations require that, as a condition to interconnection, the operator/owner of each system carry insurance with a combined single limit for bodily injury and property damage per occurrence of a specific minimum depending on system size. The amounts are as follows:

- Systems less than 40 kW: \$300,000
- Systems between 40 kW and 250 kW: \$1,000,000
- Systems greater than 250 kW: \$2,000,000

However, Xcel Energy now offers the ability to sign a Contract Addendum to adjust these particular requirements.

- **Insurance Requirements for a Co-Located Community Solar Garden Site**
This addendum allows a Garden Operator to aggregate a Co-Located site, where the Garden Operator is either the same legal entity or corporate affiliate, for purposes of complying with the insurance requirements.
- **Insurance Requirement for Aggregate Limits on Required Insurance**
This addendum provides the same insurance policies covering the same legal entity and affiliates together need to not have aggregate limits of liability greater than \$35 million.

We ask for proof of insurance to confirm compliance with this requirement and to ensure financial protection of both the customer and Xcel Energy.

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5. Can I change my garden location at any time during the application process?

Garden Operators may adjust the garden location until the application has received the initial “deemed complete” designation. To help accommodate projects with potential service area, permitting or land use concerns, when possible Xcel Energy will allow sites to shift to a nearby location ($\leq 1/2$ mile) without starting over as a new application or losing queue position. If the new site requires a restudy, the Garden Operator would be required to pay additional costs to restudy and potentially have a shift in queue position.

Whenever possible, Xcel Energy will shift your site and update documentation later in construction, along with other project changes that may occur during design. Please contact SRCMN@xcelenergy.com or reach out during your scheduled calls to discuss any specific situations for consideration. If required, studies will need to be revised and you could incur costs associated with restudying or revising your interconnection to accommodate the new location.

If your project does not fall into one of these categories, Garden Operators must withdraw your application and resubmit with the new address.

6. What is the Interconnection Generation Interconnection Application Fee Process?

Details on the Generation Interconnection Application Fee are noted in the Electric Rate Service Tariff, Section 10.

To initiate a new interconnection study, please download from the Solar*Rewards Community application system, fill out, and upload the Generation Interconnection Application Fee Form. Once received, the one line and site plan that you have uploaded in the application system are sent to the engineering team for review and comments.

7. How long do I have to complete my installation?

Applications are valid for 24 months from the later of August 6, 2015 or the date the application is Expedited Ready to achieve Mechanical Completion.

In addition, day-to-day extensions will also be applied to the extent the application is subject to an Independent Engineer review, to the extent it is directly delayed as a result of an Independent Engineer review for another application in the same Study Queue, or, in the Company’s determination, a project has suffered a Force Majeure event prior to Mechanical Completion.

Mechanical Completion is defined by the application of the nine items the application’s personnel

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is required to complete in Step 8 of our Section 10 Tariff.

If you do not complete your installation within this 24-month period, your application will be rejected. For more information, please see our Electric Rate Book, Section 9 and 10.

8. Can a Garden Operator change names and contact information?

An applicant may request to change the Garden Operator name, owner and contact information provided the project is co-located at a site that meets the applicable Co-location limits before and after the change, if the Garden Operator updates all required documentation and application system updates, and provides proof of the transaction upon request.

9. Where can I find the deposit interest rate?

The deposit interest rate can be found [here](#).

10. How do I contact the Builders Call Line (BCL) to order an account and premise number?

To order an account and premise number, the Garden Operator must submit the Service Activation form to the BCL only after they have moved into Step 2 of the application process; the SRC number from your application needs to be included in your request for a premise/account combo. The form and info can be found [here](#). The BCL can be contacted at builders.call.line@xcelenergy.com.

11. When does the decision need to be made as to if the Solar Garden's RECs will be retained or sold?

The decision on the RECs needs to be determined prior to the solar garden being "deemed complete". Once a solar garden is deemed complete, the REC decision has been locked in place.

This option is only available to those projects under the Applicable Retail Rate bill credit. Those under the Value-of-Solar are required to provide the RECs to Xcel Energy.

12. Where can I find the Interconnection Application?

The interconnection application can be found on Original Sheets 32-40 of the MN Section 10 tariff. The tariff in its entirety can be found [here](#).

13. When are account and premise numbers required?

Before applications are sent to engineering review please send a spreadsheet detailing SRC numbers, garden premise number and garden account/customer number to SRCMN@xcelenergy.com.

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14. What is the certificate of good standing requirement?

The state certificate of good standing must come from the State of MN. This requirement ensures that the Garden Operator is in good standing in MN. More information can be found on the State of Minnesota Secretary of State Website.

15. What requirements exist for legal entities entering into contracts with Xcel Energy?

To execute your Interconnection Agreement (IA), you will need to provide documentation that each solar garden owner/operator listed in the Interconnection Agreement is a legal entity. In addition, registration with the Minnesota Secretary of State will need to be completed before the garden is approved to become commercially operational. Specific requirements are listed below.

To have your Interconnection Agreement considered executed, you must:

- a. Be a recognized legal entity. We can only enter into contracts with legal entities (such as corporations or LLCs). We verify that each garden entity is a legal entity through the Minnesota Secretary of State Website.
- b. If these are legal entities and have been formed in another state, you must provide us documentation showing this.
- c. If these are not legal entities, you must immediately provide us with the names of actual legal entities to put on the IAs. Any adjustments to your Interconnection Agreement documents to accommodate a request for changing names will not extend your 30-day timeline to execute the Interconnection Agreement and all associated requirements. Please plan accordingly.

Before reaching commercial operation:

- d. If the legal entity on the IA is formed in another state and is not registered with the MN Secretary of State to transact business in Minnesota, it will need to be so registered in order for us to sign the Standard Contract for Solar*Rewards Community prior to the garden going into commercial operation.

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STUDY PHASE

1. **How are engineering and interconnection costs determined?**

Xcel Energy's metering and area engineers will review an applicant's line diagram, site plan and generation interconnection application during the application process. The applicant is responsible to pay all engineering and interconnection costs associated with interconnecting the new load of the solar garden. Engineering fees will be estimated and collected by the Xcel Energy Engineering Group separate from the Solar*Rewards Community application fee and deposit. Interconnection and engineering costs are project-specific and will be determined on a case-by-case basis as engineering design and review is completed. Actual circumstances and detailed studies, as specified in the tariff, will determine actual requirements and costs.

2. **Can a Garden Operator apply for interconnection outside the Solar*Rewards Community application process?**

Yes, but those interconnection applications are not valid for the Solar*Rewards Community program. Garden Operators wishing to participate in the program will be required to apply for interconnection through the program process.

3. **How can I receive a copy of my study analysis?**

Garden Operators can receive a copy of their study analysis after receiving the Interconnection Agreement. In order to receive a redacted copy of the analysis, submit a request to SRCMN@xcelenergy.com. The Company will then send an NDA for signature for all parties receiving the study. Please allow two weeks between the Company receiving signatures to receiving the study via a secure email to requesting parties.

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DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

1. **Where can I find more information associated with metering for Solar*Rewards Community projects?**

All Solar*Rewards Community projects require two meters: Two Company-owned meters are required to be installed at each service location associated with each Customer generation source subject to this Contract. One meter is located at the main service and will record energy delivered to the Customer from the Company. The second meter (the 'Production Meter') will record energy generated by the PV System only. The Company shall install, or cause to be installed, own, operate and maintain the Production Meter to measure the AC production of the PV System, at the Customer's expense and including the cost of the Production Meter itself.

2. **What do I do if I have design changes after I have signed an Interconnection Agreement?**

Changes, within program guidelines, do occur during design refinement. Please work with your DG engineer and designer to make adjustments as necessary. A formal request can be submitted directly to your team while copying SRCMN@xcelenergy.com.

Your assigned Xcel Energy design team will contact you directly.

3. **What if I need to put my project on hold?**

In order to request a hold on your project during the design development phase of construction, Xcel Energy requests the submission of the Hold Request Form. Requests for the form can be sent to SRCMN@xcelenergy.com.

Certain conditions will be placed on projects on hold and will only be granted if there are no projects actively behind your project in queue. Further details and conditions are outlined on the Hold Request Form.

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SUBSCRIBER DETAILS

1. **How do I add, delete, and manage subscribers in the application system?**

The process for managing subscribers can be found on our website. The primary application manager assigned to your Salesforce account will have access for entering the subscriber in Salesforce. In order to enter a subscriber, you will need the account number, allocation, email address and premise number – much of which will need to come from your subscriber.

Data Privacy forms and the Subscriber Contract will need to be uploaded in order for validated by the Company and earn bill credits.

2. **What are the requirements around the data privacy (Utility Consent to Disclose) form?**

Beginning December 1, 2016, Xcel Energy will allow for Third Parties to submit Subscriber Agency Agreements (SAAs) in place of Data Consent Forms for customers. SAAs need to be completed in a similar manner to the Data Consent Forms, including the developer name, email and phone number to tie to the submission of a subscriber. You will only need to submit pages 89 and 93 from the Subscriber Agency Agreement and Consent Form, we do ask you submit the whole contract (11 pages) to the customer so they can be aware of all the language in the contract. You must include the customer's name, account number and premise number when submitting. Like with the Data Consent Forms previously we will allow for multiple account & premise combos to be included in an attachment if a single signatory is the authorized party for multiple accounts. These still need to be submitted to DataRequest@XcelEnergy.com, in the same way as with the Data Consent Forms previously you may request *No Usage History Needed* by indicating as much in the subject line. This along with the new Delegation process (attached) in My Account we are hoping can help to limit the number of forms customers must sign along with the time in which DataRequest@XcelEnergy.com team must process document.

3. **Is there a timeframe in which subscribers must be entered into the system in order to earn bill credits?**

All subscribers must be entered five days prior to the end of the month otherwise subscribers may not receive bill credits for production for the next month.

4. **How does the subscriber account maintenance work for the 25 years of the contract?**

The garden owner will have access to the online SRC application system for the life of the twenty-five (25) year contract. During that time they can add and remove subscribers. Keep in mind that that garden must always have at least five (5) subscribers, and cannot have a single subscriber with more than 40% of the garden allocation. All subscribers must be entered five (5) days prior to the end of the month.

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