

Northfield Area Community Solar GNSC Article

Title:

Community Solar Gardens Come to Minnesota

Article:

A community solar garden is coming to the Northfield Area. The garden is a large array that gives anyone with an Xcel Energy electric bill access to solar energy, without having to install solar equipment on their property. Homeowners, renters, business owners, and congregations can all participate. Xcel will give you a monthly credit on your bill for the electricity generated by your subscription's portion of the array. A subscription lasts for 25 years. It's like a service contract, rather than ownership of the equipment, which means you don't have to worry about maintaining solar modules – you just watch the credits show up on your electric bill each month.

Community solar gardens are an idea whose time has come. Last month, Xcel Energy opened the application process for community solar gardens - over 400 applications were submitted—enough to replace an entire coal-fired power plant.

The Northfield Area will soon be home to one of Minnesota's first community solar gardens. Minnesota Community Solar has signed a lease with Eastgate Farms to place an array on their property. Anyone with an Xcel Energy account in Rice County or a surrounding county can participate. Subscribers can select the amount of energy that they wish to purchase from the smallest unit, a leaf, up to 120% of their actual energy usage.

You can take your subscription with you if you move (as long as you remain in Xcel territory). If you do move out of Xcel territory, you can transfer your subscription to someone else who's eligible, or MN Community Solar will buy it back from you. You can also give the gift of a subscription to your favorite non-profit. You will have the satisfaction of knowing that you have given them clean energy for the next 25 years!

Community solar gardens make solar for everyone.

For more information about community solar gardens in our community contact us at nacsolargarden@gmail.com, via Facebook or go directly to our subscription page <http://mncommunitysolar.com/northfield>. We will hold information sessions Monday January 12th at 7PM at the Just Food Coop Meeting room, Monday January 26th at 7:30AM at Tandem Bagels and February 13th at 5PM at the Carleton Weitz Center.

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