

A Class For Members Who May Want to Produce Their Own Renewable Power

Benton REA gets its members helpful and accurate information about producing renewable energy.

It seems like you can't pick up a newspaper or turn on your radio or television without seeing something about global warming and renewable energy. It's a hot topic in which most everyone has an opinion about.

With so much attention being given to renewable energy sources such as wind and solar, many individual homeowners are taking a look at a small project for their home.

"We get a lot of phone calls from members, just looking for information," says Bruce Etzel, the Member Services Director at Benton REA.

Most members who call have already done some research. But the complexities of setting up a system and a few misleading claims can leave people with even more questions than when they started.

Questions such as: Do I want my project to be off grid or Net Metered and connected to Benton REA's electric system? What do I need to do to connect a project to the Benton REA system? What incentives are there and how do I qualify for them? How much will the total project cost?

To help answer these and many more questions, Benton REA offers a free, two hour class on small renewable projects for its members.

The topics covered at the classes include Net Metering (connecting the projects to Benton REA's electric



Bruce Etzel of Benton REA explains to members how the Benton REA solar demonstration project is Net Metered and connected to the electric grid.

system), safety, potential incentives, qualifying projects, state laws, and Benton REA's policies.

It's one thing to learn about the process of putting up a small renewable project safely and correctly, but it's even more helpful to actually see it.

That is why Benton REA has a solar demonstration project. Class participants get to see a one-kilowatt solar system that is operating and connected to the Benton REA electric system.

"The demonstration projects gives members a first hand look at all the components necessary to Net Meter the project and potentially deliver electricity onto Benton REA's power lines. It's critical that members understand all the necessary steps so

it's done correctly and is safe," says Bruce.

Benton REA also brings in speakers who install and/or sell various small renewable projects.

David Willis, the Director of Marketing and Sales with Columbia Basin Solar will be a speaker at the next Benton REA Renewable Energy Class on May 20th in West Richland.

David will focus on utilizing solar energy off grid for water heating. While much attention is given to Net Metering and connecting projects to the power grid, an off grid system may be the best option for some members.

Of all the information that Benton REA provides at these classes, a sample financial analysis of a typical solar projects is considered by many

to be the most informative.

Bruce says, "There is a lot of confusing information out there and I'm always asked how much a project with actually cost. Advertising claims that say stuff like *Unlimited Free Energy* just add to the confusion."

The financial analysis evaluates a 1.5-kilowatt solar project that is Net Metered to the electric grid. It takes into account the debt service

for the project and also evaluates the energy savings gained from the power produced by the solar project.

Bruce notes that the goal of the class is not to convince members whether or not to invest in a small renewable energy project or which projects are best. The class is simply designed to provide accurate information that members need to make informed decisions. If a

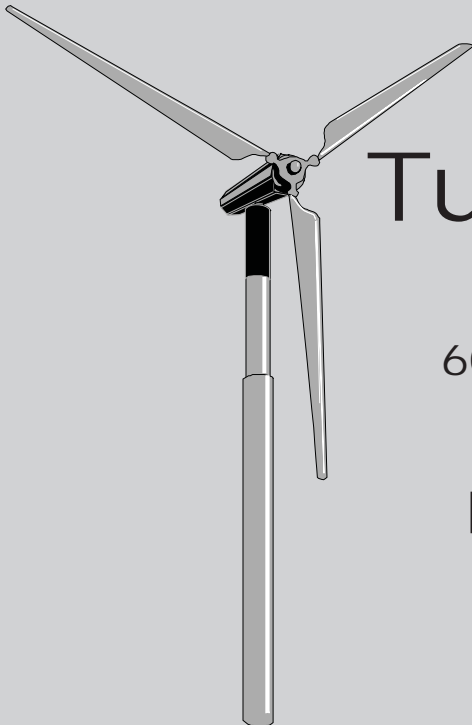
member decides to invest in a project, Bruce says Benton REA is committed to help them do it correctly and qualify for all available programs.

Benton REA Small Renewable Project Class!



Reserve Your Spot Today

- Net Metering
- Safety
- Potential Incentives
- Qualifying Projects
- State Laws
- Benton REA Policies



Tuesday, May 20th

6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

6095 W. Van Giesen, West Richland
Benton REA Community Room

Limited Space Available

RSVP required by May 16th.

Call Ann at 1-800-221-6987
or E-mail ann@bentonrea.org