



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Grow Solar Milwaukee Program Returns in 2019

MILWAUKEE - Grow Solar Milwaukee, the latest in a series of solar group purchasing programs in the Milwaukee area will help local property owners go solar through community outreach and education, and will help lower the price of solar through a volume purchase. The program builds on successes of previous solar group buy programs, which began as smaller-scale neighborhood efforts, and have since grown to include properties throughout the city and county. The City of Milwaukee's solar program, Milwaukee Shines, and Midwest Renewable Energy Association are partnering with Milwaukee Public Library and Milwaukee Public Museum to host a number of free, public education sessions about solar called Solar Power Hours.

"Mayor Barrett and the Milwaukee Common Council have joined over 400 other cities to show that the City of Milwaukee remains committed to the principles of the Paris Climate Agreement," said Elizabeth Hittman, the City's solar program coordinator. "Acting on climate change means reducing our use of fossil fuels and transitioning to more clean energy. One of the ways the City is facilitating this is by partnering with the MREA on these solar group buy programs, and working to make the installation of solar easy and less expensive for people here in Milwaukee."

"The Museum is committed to its mission to preserve and protect our world's natural diversity, and so this partnership with Milwaukee Shines was a very natural one for us," said Dr. Ellen Censky, Interim President & CEO, Milwaukee Public Museum. "We put our solar wall up in 2014 and became the first full solar wall in Milwaukee. Since that time, it has generated over 325,000 kilowatt hours of energy, and has demonstrated the importance of green technology to our visitors as well as the impact that small changes can have in preserving our natural resources. Hosting Milwaukee Shines to talk more about what individuals can do to their own homes to preserve our resources furthers that effort."

"Libraries are wonderful gathering spaces for residents to read, learn and connect; not only to each other but to the resources that enrich their lives and our communities," said Paula Kiely, Director, Milwaukee Public Library. "We're proud to have our Central library and branches be a showcase for what's possible in green infrastructure, especially the use of solar energy, and we look forward to the City of Milwaukee continuing to lead on this issue."

Since 2013, the partnership between the MREA and the City of Milwaukee has resulted in solar installations on 169 properties for a total of 616 kW of solar -- or about 2,050 individual solar panels.

“My wife and I installed a sixteen panel solar array on our East Side duplex three and a half years ago,” said Greg James, who participated in Milwaukee’s solar group buy in 2015. “In that time we’ve offset more than 27 metric tons of carbon and saved an average of 63% on our electric bills per month. The group buy program made the process simple and cost effective. It is an investment we would make again in a heartbeat.”

Over the next few months, the MREA and the City of Milwaukee will provide free, public, one-hour long educational sessions called Solar Power Hours at the Milwaukee Public Museum and various Milwaukee Public Library branches. Prospective participants will learn how solar energy works, how much a typical solar system costs, what incentives are available and can have their questions about solar answered. The program website includes a sign-up form, the full calendar of Solar Power Hours, and will be used to announce program updates:

GrowSolarMilwaukee.com

The schedule of free, public, Solar Power Hours is as follows:

- 5/20/19 Monday 6-7pm Milwaukee Public Library Zablocki Branch 3501 W Oklahoma Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53215
- 6/6/19 Thursday 5:30-6:30pm Milwaukee Public Museum 800 W Wells St, Milwaukee, WI 53233
- 6/15/19 Saturday 2pm-3pm Milwaukee Public Library East Branch 2320 N Cramer St, Milwaukee, WI 53211
- 6/29/19 Saturday 11am-12pm Milwaukee Public Library Tippecanoe Branch 3912 S Howell Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53207
- 7/9/19 Tuesday 6pm-7pm Milwaukee Public Library Center Street Branch 2727 W Fond Du Lac Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53210
- 7/11/19 Thursday 5:30-6:30pm Milwaukee Public Museum 800 W Wells St, Milwaukee, WI 53233
- 7/22/19 Monday 6pm-7pm Milwaukee Public Library Central Library 814 W Wisconsin Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53233
- 8/5/19 Monday 6pm-7pm Milwaukee Public Library Mitchell Street Branch 906 W Historic Mitchell St, Milwaukee, WI 53204
- 8/8/19 Thursday 5:30-6:30pm Milwaukee Public Museum 800 W Wells St, Milwaukee, WI 53233
- 8/20/19 Tuesday 6pm-7pm Milwaukee Public Library Villard Square Branch 5190 N 35th St, Milwaukee, WI 53209
- 9/5/19 Thursday 5:30-6:30pm Milwaukee Public Museum 800 W Wells St, Milwaukee, WI 53233

MREA has successfully implemented similar programs in communities across Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

The MREA was incorporated as a 501(c)3 nonprofit shortly after the first [Energy Fair](#) in 1990. MREA’s mission is to promote renewable energy, energy efficiency, and sustainable living through education and demonstration. To learn more, call 715-592-6595 or visit www.midwestrenew.org.

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