

NEWS

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ELECTRIC CO-OP, INC.**

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For outage updates, energy efficiency tips and cooperative news.

FROM THE CEO/GENERAL MANAGER

Beware of Solar Scams

Give us a call — we're here to help



Jason Rabe

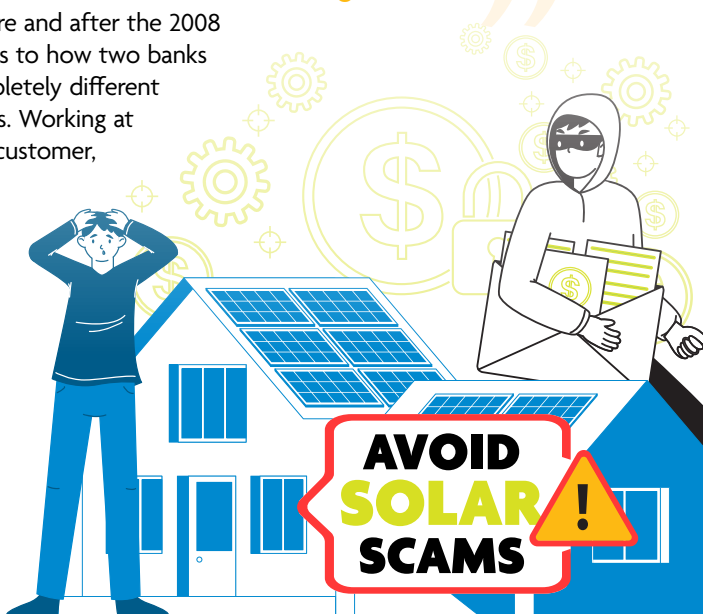
If you have spent any amount of time around older generations, you've probably heard these two favored phrases: "If it's too good to be true, it probably is" or "there is no such thing as a free lunch." At our member-owned cooperative and others across the country there has been a disturbing trend of deceptive solar sales practices by a few unscrupulous companies

taking advantage of members through overpromising, overselling, and ultimately underdelivering. Unfortunately, this puts a poor mark on the solar installers that do have members' best interest at heart and operate under a high set of standards.

As a recovering banker, I worked before and after the 2008 financial crisis, which opened up my eyes to how two banks in the same industry can have two completely different motivations and sets of ethical standards. Working at a community bank we cared about our customer, we saw them in the community, and we had to operate under sound business principles because we weren't deemed "too big to fail."

In our same community there were large national banks that preyed on people with poor financial literacy, customers who didn't fully understand what they were getting themselves into, and the most sickening method — leveraging older customers who may have been coerced into opening dozens

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Join us for a tour of
the new Belleville Outpost and
learn what's new at your co-op!

Oct. 3 | 8-10 a.m.
Coffee and light refreshments will be served.
Rolling Hills Belleville Outpost
1679 Marble Road | Belleville, KS 66935
1/2 mile north of Love's and 1/4 mile west of 81 Highway

Beware of Solar Scams *Continued from page 12A* ▶

We are here to help you find that sweet spot so that you can optimize your hard-earned dollars and not overbuy.

of accounts so that the bank could hit its sales marks — ethics need not apply.

A rising industry for the last decade has revolved around rooftop solar. Just like any industry, including the example above, there are knowledgeable, ethical installers that look out for what is best for their customers. However, there are a few that operate using deceptive practices, misleading claims, and false promises that end up scamming the customer. Even more disturbing, there are some that prey on, and oversell to, the easily confused just so they can make a big sale.

Recently, the U.S. Treasury Department issued an advisory noting the rise in consumer complaints regarding rooftop solar installations and emphasized that scams are against the law. The complaints involve “a small number

of unscrupulous solar companies” that consumers say deceived them on the costs and savings of the systems and relied on aggressive sales and marketing tactics, the advisory stated.

We recently had this happen at Rolling Hills with someone who wasn't even our member. They were confused as to who their electric utility was and called us with the solar salesperson on the phone as well. The tenor of the conversation drove us to ensure someone was advocating on behalf of the pressured individual — it was readily apparent the salesperson was not acting in the best interest of the confused sales target.

As your member-owned electric cooperative, we are here to help provide information on your solar installation. Solar can be a great solution if sized appropriately and the member is able to accurately calculate their return on investment while still understanding the full costs from the solar installation and the cooperative utility. We are here to help you find that sweet spot so that you can optimize your hard-earned dollars and not overbuy.

Key factors to consider include installation location (trees/shade), age of your roof (does it need to be replaced soon), and affordability of the capital outlay/payments for the system (does it offset your bill enough).

We are a phone call away at 785-534-1601 or 800-530-5572 to help answer questions pertaining to usage, installation or anything else that comes up.



**AVOID
SOLAR
SCAMS**

National First Responders Day



National First Responders Day, observed annually on Oct. 28, is an excellent time to recognize and honor the vital role of first responders. They make it their business to take action when disaster strikes.

First responders play a crucial role in protecting public safety and responding to emergencies. These dedicated professionals include firefighters, police officers, emergency medical technicians and paramedics. They face numerous challenges and make significant sacrifices to safeguard our communities.

It's important to note that utility workers, including those in the electricity sector, are also considered first responders. In 2003, President George W. Bush officially recognized public works professionals as first responders, highlighting the critical role utility workers play in emergency response and recovery efforts.

UTILITIES AND FIRST RESPONDERS: AN IMPORTANT PARTNERSHIP

Utility companies and traditional first responders often work hand in hand during emergencies. When natural disasters



First responders from the Rolling Hills service territory attend an electrical safety demonstration.

strike or accidents occur, utility workers are frequently among the first on the scene, working alongside firefighters, police and medical personnel to ensure public safety and restore essential services.

When traffic accidents, high winds, ice storms and other events involve downed power lines or power outages, they can cause both visible and hidden hazards that can put everyone at risk. It's important for utility workers and other first responders to work together to minimize risk.

First responders have a critical role in keeping communities safe. National First Responders Day serves as a reminder of the importance of collaboration, preparedness and mutual support in times of crisis.

To all who selflessly serve as first responders to keep us safe — we share gratitude on National First Responders Day and every day of the year.

Linemen Participate in Local KIDS AG DAY



Christina Jeffery (left), Farm Bureau, introduces Scott Splichal, Rolling Hills Electric Cooperative, before the presentation.



Scott Splichal answers children's questions during the demonstration.



An orange burned during the demo was passed around so kids could see the effects of coming into contact with power lines.



Scott Splichal captures the full attention of local fourth graders.



A mylar balloon demonstrates to the fourth-grade audience what happens when balloons come into contact with power lines.



YOU'RE INVITED TO THE CO-OPPORTUNITY DAY PICNIC

Friday, October 4

11 a.m.-1 p.m. Rolling Hills Electric Co-op in Beloit

**Join Central Valley Ag, Farmway Credit Union and
Rolling Hills Electric Co-op at a FREE Community Picnic
as they kick off National Co-op Month!**

Please bring a food pantry item to donate.



CENTRAL VALLEY AG

