

SEPTEMBER 2023

THE CURRENT



Energy news from around Philadelphia and beyond



In this Month's Newsletter:

- **The climate friendly kitchen**
- **Renewable electricity fixed rates are now open**
- **Learn about solar prices in our Renewable Energy Classroom**
- **Updates from our friends and partners**

The Climate Friendly Kitchen

If you're like many members of [The Energy Co-op staff](#), as Autumn approaches and the weather starts to cool down, you may find yourself spending more time in the kitchen making your favorite Fall recipes. But as you preheat your oven and perhaps notice your produce drawer overflowing, you may start to wonder how you can be more strategic with your energy use. In this edition of our newsletter, we're excited to share five strategies to help you create a more environmentally conscious kitchen!

1. Start a Compost Bin

Composting kitchen scraps is an eco-friendly way to reduce landfill waste and its associated methane emissions. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [estimates](#) that about 24% of municipal solid waste is comprised of food scraps and yard trimmings. That's 170 million metric tons of carbon dioxide per year! By composting, you can create nutrient-rich soil for your garden while minimizing the environmental impact of food waste. And even if you live in a city or apartment and don't have a use for your compost, there are still options for you. Do some research to see if there is a local compost service in your area who will pick up your compost to nurture local gardens and farms.

2. Grow Your Own Food

Whether you have the backyard space for a large garden or just a windowsill for a cherry tomato plant and some basil, growing your own food can significantly reduce your carbon footprint. According to the Worldwatch Institute, the average food item [travels between 1,500 and 2,500 miles to reach your plate](#). By cultivating your own food, you can slash transportation emissions and enjoy the freshness and health benefits of homegrown produce or herbs.

3. Shop Local and Shop Consciously

As a member of The Energy Co-op, you support local energy. Supporting local food production sources as well can not only help your community thrive, but it reduces the carbon footprint of your meals too! Shopping at a local food co-op or farm puts money right back into your community, and shortens the distance food needs to travel, decreasing emissions from transportation as a result. Wherever you shop, it can be easy to overload your cart, especially if you shop hungry. Planning out your meals ahead of time and showing up with a list is a great way to avoid food waste. And spreading out grocery trips throughout the week or supplementing your weekly trip to the grocery store with a trip to your local farmer's market can help make your food purchases more sustainably focused as well.

4. Eat Lower on the Food Chain more often

Shifting towards a diet with more plant-based options can be a game-changer for the environment. Animal-based food production [is responsible for 58% of food-related greenhouse gas emissions](#). And remember, eating lower on the food chain does not have to be an all or nothing endeavor! Whether you want to try vegetarianism for a month, put a few meatless Mondays on the calendar, or even just incorporate more whole grains into your diet, bringing more plants into your diet can help curb emissions, conserve resources, and boost your personal nutrition. Need help adding plants to your diet? Check out a few of our team's favorite recipe sites [here](#) and [here](#) for plant based cooking ideas.

5. Evaluate Your Appliances

The energy efficiency of your kitchen appliances can significantly impact your

household's energy consumption. The Natural Resources Defense Council notes that upgrading to Energy Star-rated appliances [can cut energy bills by up to 30%](#). Appliances like refrigerators, dishwashers, and ovens are available in energy-efficient models that not only save you money but reduce energy-related greenhouse gas emissions.

By adopting these climate-friendly practices in your kitchen, you can take meaningful steps toward a more sustainable lifestyle. Each conscious choice you make to reduce your carbon footprint has a positive ripple effect and contributes to a greener future for Pennsylvania.

Renewable Electricity Fixed Rates

A reminder that there are still some September fixed rate slots available for renewable electricity service with The Energy Co-op!

Starting September 1, The Energy Co-op has made 100 additional fixed rate slots available on a first come first serve basis; 75 for current renewable electricity members and 25 for new or returning renewable electricity members. If you did not get a chance to sign up in August, this is a great time for you to lock in a stable and predictable electricity rate as we head into the colder months.

Interested in signing up for a fixed rate? Fantastic! If you are a current member of The Energy Co-op enrolled in one of our renewable electricity products, you can switch to a fixed rate using [this form](#). If you are not currently enrolled in one of The Energy Co-op's renewable electricity products, use [this form](#) to enroll. If you have any questions, please feel free to drop us a line at 215.413.2122 or send us an email at info@theenergy.coop.

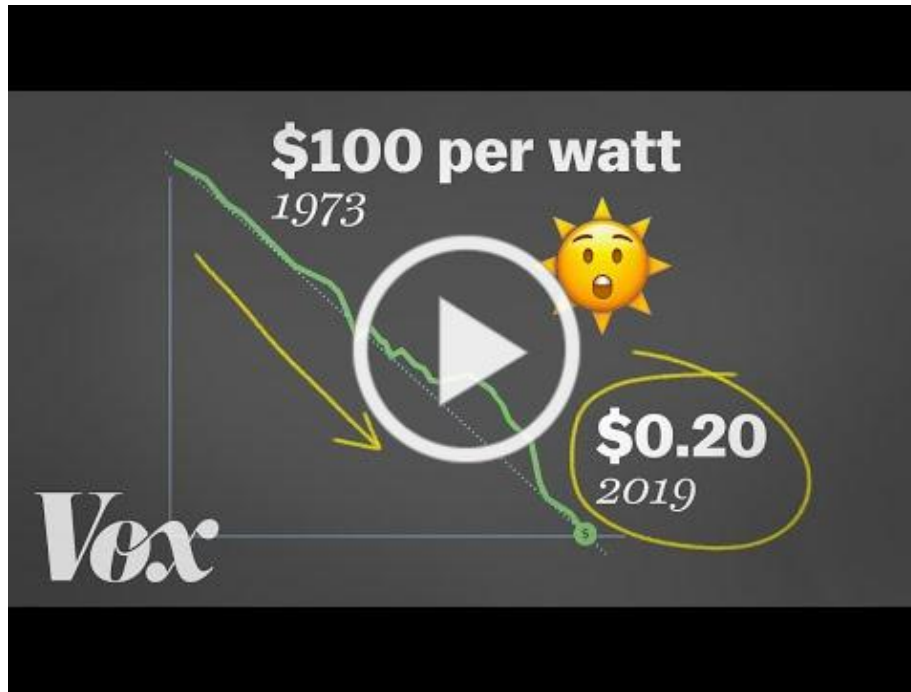
Renewable Energy Classroom

Welcome back to our Renewable Energy Classroom, where we highlight different aspects of the generation, purchase, delivery, or use of renewable energy with a new video or article each month. In this month's Renewable Energy Classroom, let's discuss the cost of solar electricity, and the reasons behind its precipitous fall since its initial commercial introduction.

Starting off as a niche technology in the 19th century, the first silicon solar cell was successfully created in 1953. These early solar cells were first used by toy and small electronic manufacturers with little application for large commercial use because of the exceedingly high price of solar electricity and the inefficiency of solar cells. Thanks to international cooperation, investment by the United States, China, and The European Union, and the climate-based resistance to fossil fuels, the cost of solar electricity per kWh has fallen significantly since the 1970s, and a whopping 90% since 2009 alone.

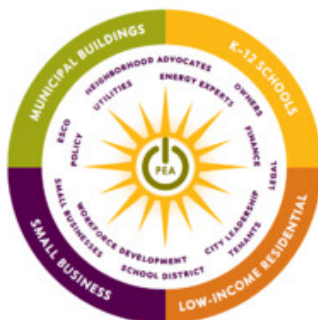
Today, solar energy is cheaper than natural gas, coal, and nuclear power. While there are still challenges to wider solar proliferation, this incredible cost decrease over the years is a significant milestone, and one that will put solar in the driver's seat as we move towards a clean energy future. For some more

information, let's take a look at this great video from [Vox](#) on the history of the cost of solar electricity.



Updates from our Friends and Partners

The Energy Co-op is proud to partner with [Shade & Seeker Beauty](#), a sustainable, Pennsylvania-based business that powers its beauty studio with 100% wind-and-solar energy from The Energy Co-op! From now until September 15, customers at Shade & Seeker will be eligible for \$50 off their first electricity bill when they sign up for renewable electricity service with The Energy Co-op. Stop by Shade & Seeker at 112 Cricket Avenue, Ardmore, PA to shop local and support our partnership!



Our friends at [The Philadelphia Energy Authority](#) are hiring! The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) has left Philadelphia with an unprecedented opportunity to build and support clean energy infrastructure; PEA is looking for a Senior Manager of Policy and Strategic Partnerships to manage and increase IRA development and other funding opportunities. If you are looking for a position building a robust and equitable clean energy future for Philadelphia, [learn more about the position and apply here](#).

Events

Member Happy Hour - Center City, Philadelphia

Thursday, September 7, 5:30 – 7:00pm

[Gran Caffe L'Aquila](#)

Come meet your fellow members and The Energy Co-op's staff while enjoying complimentary drinks and appetizers.

Member-to-Member Webinar with Sage Integrative Health

Thursday, September 14, 6:00 - 7:00pm

Zoom | [Register Here](#)

Join us for our next Member-to-Member Webinar with Dr. Wendy Romig, founder of [Sage Integrative Health](#). Tune in for a great discussion on the intersections of personal and environmental wellness.

Mount Airy Village Fair

Sunday, October 1, 11:00am - 4:00pm

West Mount Airy (At the corner of Carpenter Ln. and Greene St.)

The Energy Co-op will be tabling at this year's [Mount Airy Village Fair](#)! Stop by to say hello to our staff, work on a fun renewable energy themed craft, and learn more about The Energy Co-op.

What We're Reading

[Rivian backs massive solar plant atop old coal mine in Kentucky](#)

The biggest solar installation in the eastern U.S. could soon sit atop one of the nation's largest coal mines in southeastern Kentucky.

Julian Spector, Canary Media

[Chester Residents Unite Against Philly LNG Task Force](#)

The Philadelphia Liquefied Natural Gas Export Task Force faced a torrent of opposition toward siting a facility in Chester, Delaware County

Kenny Cooper, WHYY

[By stalling on RGGI, here's what PA residents are missing | Opinion](#)

By delaying joining RGGI, Pennsylvania taxpayers will miss out on millions of dollars, cleaner air, and better health outcomes.

Joseph Otis Minott, Pennsylvania Capital Star

[Utility Dive - Energy Efficiency Trendline](#)

While the Biden administration is deploying funding to advance energy efficiency, progress at the state level can be uneven. (*sign up required to view*)

Larry Pearl, Utility Dive

Blog Posts

[Spotlight on Renewable Energy Technology: Offshore Wind Power](#)

By Eric Miller

[Faces of The Energy Co-op: Lauren Keller](#)

By Colin Teague

[Energy Saving Series Recap: Four Ways that you Can Keep your Energy Bill](#)

[from Rising with the Temperatures this Summer](#)

By Eric Miller



THE ENERGY CO-OP
Leading the Energy Evolution

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