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SEEDS November 2026 Newsletter

Sustainable Energy Education & Development Support of NEPA

*Community Energy * Lasting Change*

Good News from the SEEDS Community



The SEEDS Annual Meeting was held at Lukan's Farm Resort on Friday, October 16, 2026. It was a great celebration of the past year's achievements as well as a look ahead to some exciting projects in 2027. To view the highlights of 2026, click here for the presentation.

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2027 Green Business of the Year

SEEDS, in cooperation with The Chamber of the Northern Poconos, is proud to recognize the outstanding businesses and individuals who help make our region a great place to live, work, and do business! The Chamber is now accepting nominations for the 12th annual 2027 Green Business of the Year award. This award recognizes a Chamber member business that demonstrates a commitment to sustainability and environmentally-responsible practices. From energy conservation and renewable energy to water conservation, recycling, waste prevention, and pollution reduction, we want to recognize businesses helping create a greener Northern Poconos. If you know of a business that would be eligible, visit the SEEDS Green Business Award webpage, complete the nomination form, and submit it to the Chamber by November 27, 2026.

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Talking & Touring: Residential & Community Solar

In early October SEEDS worked with Wayne County residents to take part in the ASES (American Solar Energy Society) National Solar Tour, the nation's largest grassroots renewable energy education event. The National Solar Tour empowers thousands of homeowners, businesses, schools, and organizations across the country to open their doors and demonstrate real-world solar and sustainability solutions to the public.

Wayne County's participating sites highlighted the region's growing commitment to renewable energy, energy efficiency, and climate smart living. During the tour, SEEDS and local solar owners welcomed guests for in-person open houses, offering firsthand insights into how their systems work, what they cost, and how solar has reduced their energy bills and carbon footprint. These conversations help demystify solar technology and show how clean energy supports long-term affordability, environmental stewardship, and energy independence for families and businesses alike. The event helps educate communities about the benefits of solar energy, including cost savings and environmental sustainability.

Pictured above is Willow Wisp Organic Farm and the Farm Arts Collective, located in Damascus, PA. This stop provided a tour of the facility, and SEEDS Board member Jack Barnett discussed residential solar energy and sustainability, as well as community solar.

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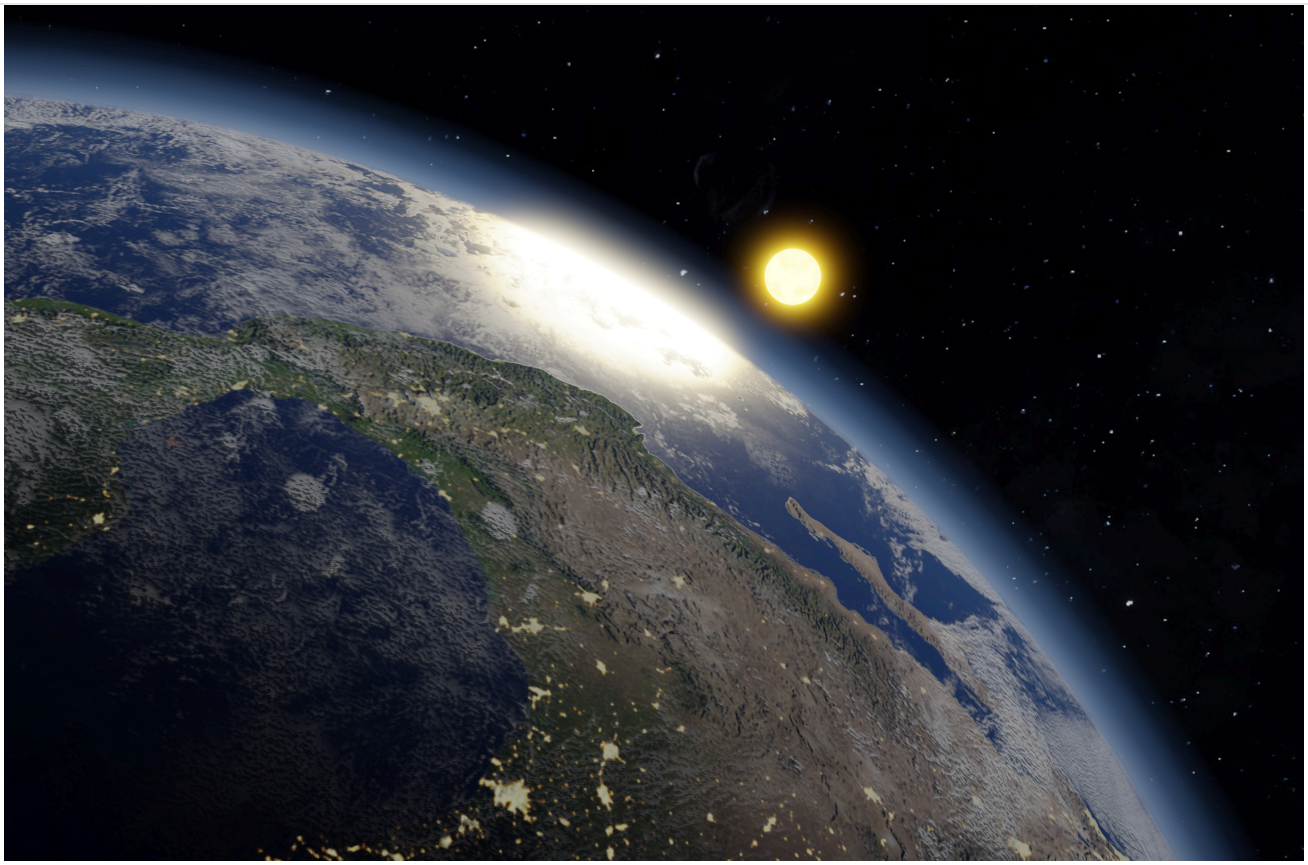


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Renewable & Sustainability News

Our monthly feature on what's happening here at home and around the world.



Saving Money and Helping the Grid – One Kilowatt-Hour at a Time

Written by Daniel Berg, SEEDs member and Chair of the SW PA Chapter of the Clean Energy Coop

The following article is part one of two in the series (note: supported by interactions with ChatGPT).

What if changing WHEN you use electricity could save you money—and at the same time help make Pennsylvania's electric system more reliable?

For my home in Pittsburgh, I recently enrolled in Duquesne Light (my electricity distribution company) Time-of-Use (TOU) electricity rate and began shifting electricity use away from peak hours. The idea is simple: electricity does not cost the same to produce and deliver at every hour of the day (especially as demand shifts), so why pay the same price regardless of when we use it?

What is a Time-of-Use rate?

Duquesne Light's residential TOU supply rate divides the day into three periods. The peak period is 3PM - 9PM. The off-peak period is 6AM - 3PM and 9PM - 11PM, while super off-peak is 11PM - 6AM.

The current standard rate is about 14 cents per kWh. Under the TOU program, the rate is approximately 36 cents during peak hours, 8.7 cents during off-peak hours and 7.1 cents during super-off-peak. Charging an electric vehicle (EV) at 2AM rather than 5PM makes a substantial difference; using 300 kWh to charge an EV at the 7.1 cents/kWh instead of 36.2 cents/kWh, saves more than $1,000 a year.

It's important to note that the actual savings on a total bill will be smaller because distribution and other charges don't disappear. But for households with EVs, electric water heaters, heat pumps, batteries, or other flexible loads, the savings can be significant.

My experiment

I am now trying to make TOU pricing work for my household. The easiest change has been my EV. Instead of plugging in at all hours, I charge it overnight. I also try to run appliances outside of 3PM - 9PM. This does not mean using less electricity, just a change in when I use it.

If thousands of Pennsylvanians did the same thing, we could reduce demand during hours when the system is under pressure and shift demand to periods when electricity is plentiful and less expensive. This would be even more important as electricity demand grows because of data centers, electrification of transportation and heating, and new industrial loads. Duquesne Light itself notes that electricity demand is reaching record levels.

And what about my solar panels?

I have solar panels on my roof. My solar system produces electricity during daylight hours, including during the TOU 3PM - 9PM peak period.

When I installed the array, I assumed it would simply offset my electricity consumption on a kWh-for-kWh basis. But Duquesne Light's TOU rules contain a wrinkle: if a net-metering customer has electricity left over at the end of the annual net-metering period, the May 31 settlement payment is calculated according to the rate applicable when the kilowatt-hours were generated. Electricity generated during a high-priced peak period would have a higher value than electricity generated during a low-priced period.

Conclusion

Pennsylvania could do more to recognize the value of electricity produced when the grid needs it most. The system could recognize and credit for all energy (not just excess energy) produced during peak hours to further encourage solar generation and flexible electricity consumption.

For December's article, I will be discussing what Pennsylvania could do to better utilize these programs and how my experiment is going utilizing this new rate system. Keep an eye out for it!

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Upcoming Events



What: Sustainability Storytelling Video Challenge

When: Deadline for submissions is January 10, 2027

What: The ***Sustainable Storytelling Video Challenge*** invites young people across Wayne, Pike, Monroe, and Lackawanna Counties to share their vision for a sustainable future through the power of video. Participants can win up to **$1000 in two age groups** by producing **three original 60-second videos** on a sustainability topic of their choice—from clean energy and recycling to food waste and environmental justice.

For all the details on the challenge and prizes click here.

We're inviting local businesses, organizations and individuals to join SEEDS as sponsors of this exciting initiative. Your support helps fund prizes, outreach and educational resources, directly fueling youth creativity and environmental awareness.

To learn more about sponsorship opportunities, contact director@seedsgroup.net.



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Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

This month’s tip is: Give Thanks for Every Drop and Save Water This Thanksgiving!

As we gather with family and friends for Thanksgiving, water usage can increase as we prepare large meals, wash dishes, and welcome guests into our homes. With more people using showers, sinks, and toilets, everyday water consumption can add up quickly and lead to higher utility bills. Being mindful of our water use can help conserve this valuable resource, reduce costs, and make holiday celebrations more sustainable.

There are several easy ways to save water this Thanksgiving. Installing low flow toilets can significantly reduce the amount of water used with each flush, helping conserve water throughout the year. When cleaning up after a large holiday meal, running a full load in the dishwasher is generally more water efficient than washing dishes by hand. You can also reduce water waste by turning off the faucet while washing produce, fixing leaky faucets, and encouraging guests to take shorter showers. These small changes can make a meaningful difference, especially when household water usage increases during the holidays.

This November, give thanks for the resources we often take for granted by making water conservation part of your holiday routine. Simple changes can help lower utility bills, reduce water waste, and support a more sustainable home throughout the holiday season and beyond.

Read more at: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: WaterSense: Simple Ways to Save Water



SEEDS Reads!

Looking for your next read? Check out the book recommendations below from our Volunteers. These titles support curious minds and sustainable futures.

CHILDREN'S PICK

The Pumpkin Book by Gail Gibbons

The Pumpkin Book explains how pumpkins grow, describes different types of pumpkins and how they are picked, stored, and prepared. A perfect read for this Halloween and Thanksgiving season. Gail Gibbons has also authored *The Moon Book, From Seed to Plant,* and *Ladybugs*.

ADULT PICK

Surviving Climate and Chaos: What Dinosaurs Teach Us About Climate Change and Resilience by Evan Jevnikar

In Surviving Climate and Chaos, paleontologist Evan Jevnikar takes readers on a journey through Earth's prehistoric past, revealing how dinosaur extinctions, ecosystem collapse, and resilience offer powerful lessons for understanding climate change and preparing for the challenges ahead. Blending cutting-edge science, fossil discoveries, and thought-provoking insights, the book shows how the story of the dinosaurs is not just about the past, but a guide to surviving and adapting in a rapidly changing world.

Message Board Info

Subscribe to the SEEDS new online message board to ask questions, share expertise, and get alerts on upcoming learning opportunities! Have a specific question about solar, energy efficiency, or clean tech? Want to promote an upcoming event or resource? SEEDS is building an online forum to serve as a center of knowledge on all things clean energy!

Visit https://groups.io/g/NEPA-solar-and-energy-efficiency or send an email to NEPA-solar-and-energy-efficiency+subscribe@groups.io to subscribe!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES!

- Are you someone who loves to organize files? I have a job for you! As we go into 2027, the SEEDS office is looking for a cleanup and can use a few extra organized hands.
- We are currently looking for individuals interested in participating in our Circle meetings. We have circles, not committees. If you have a skill set in fundraising, marketing or are just a dedicated SEEDS supporter, there is always a seat for you at our table.

If you are interested in any volunteer opportunities you can also contact Development Director Michele Long at director@seedsgroup.net

Donate to support SEEDS!



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