



OWEN ELECTRIC CONNECTION

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Owen Electric, evolving to meet demand

As I've noted before in previous columns, the energy industry is undergoing a dramatic transformation as consumer demand for more renewable energy sources grows, and innovation and technology continue to advance exponentially. You're likely witnessing this energy evolution first-hand.

If you've driven Interstate 64, outside of Winchester, you may have noticed fields of solar panels owned by Owen Electric and other co-ops. Some of you may also have noticed your neighbors installing solar panels on their roofs. Maybe you've heard about the impending changes in the transportation sector with most major vehicle manufacturers announcing plans to offer more electric vehicles at more affordable prices.

Consumer interest in renewable energy is strong and growing. In addition, national studies indicate consumers have an expectation that companies operate in an ethical and responsible manner—especially when it comes to the environment.

At Owen Electric, we have always put the good of our community first. While our primary function is to provide reliable and affordable energy to our members, we are more than an electricity provider. Because we are a co-op, our mission is to enrich the lives of our members and to serve the long-term interests of

our community. We feel we're doing both by investing in renewable energy sources.

Green energy is certainly not new. Solar, wind and hydro power have been around for decades. However, the recent innovations and advances in renewable technology have led to sharp decreases in cost, making it more feasible and accessible. In 2003, Owen Electric helped pioneer Envirowatts—a program marketing renewable energy via biomass—to its members. Today, the Envirowatts program offers members a choice of four renewable energy sources to support, including biomass, solar, wind and hydro. This program, along with the more recent addition of the Cooperative Solar farm, allows Owen Electric to further diversify its mix of energy sources.

To borrow a nautical analogy, it takes a long time to turn the direction of a large ship—and changing the energy mix we use to power homes and businesses doesn't happen overnight. While renewable energy use is increasing, we will still depend on traditional forms of energy to keep power flowing reliably to your home. After all, solar and wind energy are referred to as "intermittent" power since the sun does not always shine and the wind does not always blow. This fact coupled with the growing demand for renewables creates its own challenges. That's why there is real value in maintaining a balanced mixture of fuel types to ensure reliability, resiliency and meet the growing demand for electricity.



TIM WEBB

As the energy industry continues to evolve, Owen Electric is striving to take advantage of technological advances and market opportunities as they become available. This means the cooperative can leverage the flexibility of the grid to offer a wider range of renewable power selections as we continue to bring safe, reliable and affordable power to our community.

Albert Einstein once observed that, "Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving." In order for Owen Electric to meet the growing demand for renewable energy and ensure the reliability of our power supply, we must constantly make operational adjustments as we strive for balance and a brighter future for our members.

President and CEO
Michael Cobb



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

The sun shines bright on our old Kentucky home



Cooperative Solar
Owen Electric

solar power from your local electric cooperative

www.cooperativesolar.com

Solar options to fit your needs

The sun is shining, weather is warm, and it's the time of year to get some new outdoor projects done around the house. If solar panel installation and net metering is on your list, don't go it alone—Owen Electric wants to be your resource for energy information.

Our energy experts can help you determine the investment you'll likely make to meet your energy production goals, as well as discuss what is feasible using local weather data, your energy usage, and comparisons to similar home solar arrays on our system.

If you find that a home system doesn't suit your needs, we can advise you on other ways to support renewable energy, such as licensing a solar panel through Cooperative Solar, or purchasing renewable energy through the Envirowatts program.

For more information about home solar arrays and renewable energy, call us at (800) 372-7612, option 4.



We've added something neat to our fleet!

The newest member of our cooperative fleet is the 2020

Chevrolet Bolt!

Adding the Bolt to our fleet of vehicles is just one more way Owen Electric is committed to sustainability. We're looking forward to learning more about this all-electric vehicle (EV) through everyday use and being a practical resource to our members who may be interested in purchasing an EV of their own. Look for us on the road and in your community!

The stats, per Chevrolet:

- Range: 259 mi battery-only
- MPGe: 127 city / 108 highway
- Battery charge time: 10h at 220V

Wondering if an electric vehicle may be right for you? Check out our electric vehicle calculator by going to ownelectric.com, selecting Save Energy, Save Money, and clicking the link to our Energy Efficiency Calculators.



Darryl Ammerman, left, talks to Residential Services Manager Jude Canchola about the all-electric Chevrolet Bolt following a Falmouth Rotary program about electric vehicles and Owen Electric's renewable energy programs. Photos: Whitney Duvall

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Q: How often should I change my HVAC filter, and does it really make that big of a difference?

A: Forced air heating and cooling systems need adequate return air to work as designed and to offer the highest energy efficiency. How often you change the filter really depends on the filter you're using. Fiberglass models allow more air to pass through—along with contaminants—thus needing to be changed LESS often. Pleated filters catch more contaminants, but also suppress the amount of air flow, and thus need to be changed MORE often.

When looking at HVAC filters, the higher the MERV rating, the smaller particles it will filter. Things to consider would be:

- Are there pets in the home?
- Does anyone smoke?
- Does anyone have allergies?
- How airtight is the home?



- Is the ductwork in a conditioned or unconditioned space?
- Obviously a lot of things to consider! Most manufacturers recommend changing the filter every 30 days, with the exception of high-end HEPA filters, but that is talking 30 days of RUN time. In late March, April, early May, late September, early October, your system doesn't run as much. During these times, if you're changing your filter every 60 days, you will be fine.

Check out filters at www.filterchange.com and get free shipping and returns as a co-op member.

Question for our expert? Send it our way: info@owenelectric.com.



Member moment

Thanks to Cindy Stivers Perkins for sending in this photo of her grandson and mini-member, Joshua Lucas Stivers Mason, 2, to us!