

News Release

WRIGHT-HENNEPIN AND CITY OF ROCKFORD LAUNCH UNIQUE SOLAR SOLUTION

Rockford, Minn. (July 14, 2015) — Last week Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association (WH) and the City of Rockford launched a unique solution that the city is calling “Bantam” solar project. The Bantam solar project delivers solar energy for facilities owned by the city on otherwise unusable land that is visible to the community.

For Rockford, the Bantam solar project will result in approximately 60 solar panels being placed on the city-owned Rockford City Center Mall, and 270 solar panels on the city’s water tower property.

“Putting this pilot project together took a bit of creativity with a special focus on the City of Rockford’s and Wright-Hennepin’s renewable goals,” said Mark Vogt, WH President and CEO. “We are grateful to Rockford’s leaders for working with us on this pilot. It will help confirm if theory meets reality, and if it does, Wright-Hennepin will be excited to offer this to other members of similar load characteristics. We both already met one of our major goals, which was wanting to keep the project local, while using land that was otherwise ‘unusable,’ while being visible to the community.”

The solar project is predicated upon a 25-year agreement where 67 percent of the city’s electric energy needs are met with solar energy, resulting in cost savings over the regular projected rate for the 25-year term of the agreement.

Rockford Mayor Renee Hafften lauded the city’s “progressive and forward thinking” in regards to new and specialized projects, and said, “Keeping this project local to our city and visible to our community was important.”

“Wright-Hennepin is delighted to be a part of another groundbreaking renewable energy project. Wright-Hennepin was the first utility in the state to open a community solar project for its members,” Vogt said.

Bantam Solar:

- Produces solar energy supporting the facilities owned by a city or school district
- Established on what is regarded as unusable land
- Owned and maintained by Wright-Hennepin

“The City of Rockford’s Bantam solar project captures the essence of who we are as a cooperative – local and visible,” Vogt said. “We look forward to breaking ground in the months ahead and a ribbon cutting ceremony later this year!”

To view the City of Rockford’s press release, visit: www.cityofrockford.org.

WH is a member-owned non-profit electric utility that provides electric power to Wright County and the western part of Hennepin County. The cooperative has been a corporate citizen in this area since 1937 and currently serves more than 46,000 electric accounts. The utility started its WH Solar division in 2013 and provides solar power options to members and non-members alike.

-end-