

Duke Energy Florida installing solar panels in Central Florida

- 15,000 panels on 17 acres in Kenansville will help power the Sunshine State



New Duke Energy logo.

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla., Feb. 24, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- Thousands of solar panels are being installed in Osceola County as part of Duke Energy Florida's strategic solar plan. The company is on track to double the amount of utility-owned solar energy in the state by 2024.

The Duke Energy Osceola Solar Facility, scheduled to come online this spring, is one of many that will begin producing solar electricity over the next three years, helping provide Florida customers greater access to renewable energy.

"We are excited by the advancements we're making in Florida's solar development," said Alex Glenn, Duke Energy state president –Florida. "This is one more step in providing cleaner, smarter energy solutions that customers value. We'll continue taking advantage of declining solar prices as we move forward with our strategy."

Construction of 15,000 solar panels and related facilities is well underway on 17 acres of a larger 25-acre parcel owned by Duke Energy Florida on Canoe Creek Road in Kenansville. The larger parcel includes the Canoe Creek transmission substation, owned and operated by DEF. The existing substation will allow the new solar facility to be connected to the grid without additional easements or extensive line construction. When operational, the Osceola Solar Facility will generate up to 3.8MW of electricity.

Members of the news media are invited to the site on Friday, Feb. 26, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Panels will be installed and solar experts will be available for interviews. One megawatt of large-scale solar is equivalent to approximately 200 typical residential rooftop systems. The number varies by state and conditions.

The company is busy with other solar projects in the Sunshine State. It plans to add up to 500 MW by 2024.

Announced last October, construction for the 5-MW Perry Solar Facility is underway on 22 acres of utility-owned land in Taylor County. The project will use approximately 22,000 solar panels and will be about the size of 17 football fields. The project is expected to be operating this summer.

In 2015, Duke Energy also announced construction of a 5-MW solar facility that will serve Reedy Creek Improvement District, the power provider to Walt Disney World. The project is also expected to be completed in spring 2016 and will span 20 acres and feature 48,000 solar panels.

A \$1 million rooftop solar and battery storage project has also been developed in conjunction with the University of South Florida (USF) St. Petersburg. This system is being used in an ongoing research project with USF to explore the integration of solar photovoltaic energy and distributed energy storage.

Over the past eight years, Duke Energy has invested more than \$4 billion in solar and wind facilities in 12 states, including the company's Stanton Solar Farm located in Orange County, which became operational in 2011. The company plans to invest about \$3 billion in renewable energy over the next five years.

Duke Energy Florida

Duke Energy Florida owns coal-fired and natural gas generation providing about 9,000 megawatts of owned electric capacity to approximately 1.7 million customers in a 13,000-square-mile service area.

With its Florida regional headquarters located in St. Petersburg, Fla., Duke Energy is the largest electric power holding company in the United States. Its regulated utility operations serve approximately 7.3 million electric customers located in six states in the Southeast and Midwest, representing a population of approximately 23 million people. Its Commercial Portfolio and International business segments own and operate diverse power generation assets in North America and Latin America, including a growing portfolio of renewable energy assets in the United States.

Headquartered in Charlotte, N.C., Duke Energy is a Fortune 250 company traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol DUK. More information about the company is available at duke-energy.com.

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