

requently asked FAQ Questions



Here's everything you didn't know that you wanted to know about ...



Thinking of making Green Blocks a part of your new normal? Here's what people are asking about this revolutionary program.

Q What are Green Blocks?

A The Green Blocks program is offered by SMPA and allows members to purchase Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) to offset their energy consumption with renewable energy. Each Green Block costs only \$1 and represents a block of 100 kilowatt hours (kWh) of renewable energy. Green Blocks can be automatically purchased monthly on your electric bill or as a one-time purchase at any time. Members can purchase as many Green Blocks as they wish.

Q What is a Renewable Energy Credit (REC)?

A A Renewable Energy Credit, or REC, is the non-tangible and marketable, "green" component of renewable energy. One REC represents proof that one megawatt-hour (MWh) of electricity was generated from an "eligible" renewable energy source like wind, solar or hydro. A REC is separate from the actual energy produced, and it is the REC itself—not the energy—that legally embodies the environmental attributes that are associated with the electricity that came from a renewable energy source. The environmental attributes are the environmental benefits—such as fewer carbon emissions and less pollution—that a clean, renewable resource has over a traditional resource like fossil fuels. RECs may be marketed separately from the energy or kept bundled with it.

It is important to note that the RECs also encompass the "claim" to the environmental attributes. That is, one may not make statements or claims about the environmental benefits of the energy if the RECs associated with that energy have been transferred to another party. Once RECs have been separated from the en-

ergy, the energy loses all legal and marketable claims to the environmental attributes.

A wealth of information about RECs can be acquired on the web and from organizations like Green-e, which specializes in certifying environmental commodities like RECs. See, www.green-e.org

Q How many Green Blocks do I need to purchase for a 100% offset of my electric use?

A An effective way to calculate the number of Green Blocks needed to offset your electric use is to take the total kWh you use in a year, divide by twelve, then by 100. This gives you the number of 100-kWh blocks needed each month. For example if you use 7,800 kWh in a year, then take $7,800/12/100=6.5$ Green Blocks. Yes, you can purchase fractions of a Green Block, but please round to the nearest tenth, or whole number.

Q What if I already own solar panels in the SMPA Community Solar Array in Paradox or have solar panels on my roof? Am I not offsetting my electric use with renewable energy already? Why should I also purchase Green Blocks?

A Chances are you received a cash rebate from SMPA when you purchased community solar panels or installed your solar array. In exchange for this rebate you assigned the Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) or Green Attributes that are associated with the energy your solar panels produce to SMPA. SMPA bundles these RECs and sells them in our Green Blocks program, and with the RECs that come with the purchase of Green Blocks, the owner can truly make the claim that they are

offsetting their power consumption with clean, carbon-free, renewable energy.

Q I already offset 100%; can I purchase more Green Blocks?

A Absolutely!

Q Does SMPA make money selling Green Blocks?

A The answer to that is a big YES!!! The cool part is what we do with that money. One-hundred percent of all Green Blocks revenue goes into the SMPA Green Fund. The Green Fund is strictly chartered to help fund local renewable energy and energy efficiency projects that benefit SMPA members and the environment. For example, in 2016, money from the Green Fund helped leverage grants from the state of Colorado and the Telluride Foundation which then let SMPA construct a 200 kilowatt solar array on a retired landfill outside Norwood. This solar array, known as the IQ Solar array, is dedicated to providing clean, renewable power to our grid while at the same time helping low-to-moderate income households that are in need cover part of their monthly electricity expense. For more information on our IQ Solar Program see SMPA IQ Programs.

Q Are Green Blocks a utility scam?

A No! And here's why: Supporting clean energy should be affordable, effective and transparent. Green Blocks has all of these qualities. First, offsetting all of your electric use is inexpensive with Green Blocks, just \$1 per 100 kWh block.

Next, purchasing Green Blocks to support renewables is very effective; one-hundred percent of all Green Block sales goes toward funding new local renewable energy projects, making real, near-term and long-term impacts on addressing climate change. Last, Green Blocks are almost entirely backed by Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) from a portfolio of local wind, solar and hydro projects, right within SMPA's service territory. Anyone can request information about how this portfolio is maintained. Chances are, one or more of the wind, solar or hydro plants in this portfolio is just down the road from you.

Q Where does SMPA get its RECs for the Green Blocks program?

A Green Blocks are almost entirely backed by Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) from a portfolio of local wind, solar and hydro projects, right within SMPA's service territory. Because the energy output from the projects in this portfolio varies from year-to-year as does the demand for Green Blocks, SMPA does supplement the program by purchasing wind power RECs from Tri-State Generation and Transmission.

Reference:

1 REC = 1 megawatt-hour (MWh) of renewable energy generation.

1 megawatt-hour (MWh) = 1,000 kilowatt-hours (kWh)

1 Green Block = 100 kWh

