

Solar Energy & the Transition to Net Billing

A Fairer Way to Value Solar

Starting April 1, 2026, Concord Municipal Light Plant (CMLP) is moving from Net Metering to a Net Billing rate structure. This change better reflects the real-time cost of service and provides a more equitable way to value the clean energy you contribute to our grid.



The Move to Net Billing

- Elimination of the Fixed Distribution Fee: The monthly fixed Distribution Charge based on your system’s capacity will be eliminated.
- Variable Distribution: You will now pay a variable distribution cost of \$0.09183 on the electricity you send to CMLP. This is because that cost includes the impact of electricity flowing through transformers and wires on the distribution system.
- Higher Value for Excess Energy: Previously, excess monthly production was credited at a wholesale rate (often \$0.02–\$0.05/kWh). Under Net Billing, all solar electricity sent to the grid is credited at a significantly higher value based on the Time-of-Day retail rate (minus the distribution charge).

How Your Solar Credits Work

Under Time-of-Day rates, the timing of when your solar system sends energy to the grid matters.

Export Period	Standard Credit (Dec-Feb, May-Sep)	Shoulder Credit (Mar-Apr, Oct-Nov)
On-Peak (3-7pm Weekdays)	\$0.21132	\$0.16196
Super Off-Peak (1-5am Every day)	\$0.10934	\$0.10461
Off-Peak (All other times)	\$0.11249	\$0.11047

Will My Bill Change?

While the median solar customer is expected to save about \$36 per year, individual impacts depend on your specific setup. You are more likely to see a decrease in your bill if:

1. You are a high-energy user: There is no longer a “Tier 3” price penalty for usage over 835 kWh.
2. You have a large system: You will no longer pay the high fixed solar distribution fee.
3. You send excess power to the grid: You will now receive a much higher credit for your “excess” production than the old wholesale rate

Learn More

Rates are discussed and voted by the Concord Municipal Light Board, which is comprised of 5 residents appointed by the Town Manager. They typically meet the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:30am on Zoom.

View rates, FAQs and learn more on our website:



concordma.gov/tod

We are happy to answer questions about your specific situation. Please email us at concordutilities@concordma.gov or call us at (978) 318-3101 if the website does not address your questions or concerns.

Solar Frequently Asked Questions

Is the “Banking” rate going away?

Yes. It is being replaced by Net Billing. Instead of “banking” kilowatt-hours, you receive a monetary credit on your bill for every kWh you send to CMLP, valued at the retail Time-of-Day rate (less distribution.)

Do I still receive credits for my solar?

Absolutely. You continue to receive credits for all energy sent to the grid. The only difference is that the value of those credits now varies by the time of day to match the market value of that energy.

Why is the distribution charge variable now?

By moving to a variable distribution cost (\$0.09183) on received electricity, we ensure that solar customers pay a fair share for their use of the grid’s infrastructure while rewarding those who minimize their reliance on the grid during expensive peak hours.

How can I maximize my savings?

First, always reduce your use of electricity between 3 PM-7 PM on weekdays during the Standard months, whether the supply of that electricity is coming from CMLP or your solar panels. CMLP will pay you more for solar production sent back to the grid during these hours than you will pay CMLP to supply electricity during non-Peak hours. To get the most out of TOD rates, having some amount of your panels that are westerly facing may help generate solar in the later peak hours. If you are planning new solar, keep this in mind.

When should I use the electricity my solar panels produce?

Other than during Peak hours in the Standard months, our best recommendation is for customers to consume the electricity they produce as it is generated, rather than sending it to the grid and drawing it back later during off-peak hours. By using your own solar power to run appliances in all but the Standard month Peak hours, you avoid the variable distribution costs associated with drawing energy from the grid.

What is “Phase 2,” and how will it affect my solar strategy?

The Time-of-Day rates beginning in April 2026 represent Phase 1. Phase 2 rates are expected to become effective in 2027, which will likely feature an even higher price differential between peak and off-peak times. Once Phase 2 is implemented, our advice regarding whether to consume or export your energy may change to help you maximize the value of the higher peak-period credits. We will provide updated guidance as those rates are finalized.