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Solar powered electricity has come to Red Boiling Springs. A roof full of panels sit on an old brick building on Hwy 56, about half-way between the stop sign and downtown. I am partnering with Tri-County to generate clean energy.

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We got our first solar panels in 1981. I snagged a regulator, battery and two tail lights off of my defunct Dodge Dart, and let there be light. The system is extremely simple, and is still operating today, with many improvements. The house runs on 12 volt (D.C.) current.

The system in Red Boiling Springs is not off the grid. There are no batteries. Instead, it is hooked up to Tri-County's wires and will feed electricity into their system. When the new Head Start across the street turns on electricity, it will likely be generated by solar power.

On the other hand, the electricity I use back at my cabin, or on the farm, will be purchased from Tri-County. They will credit my bill with the power they get from the solar panels. It's a 7.2 kilowatt system and will offset my bill by about \$150.00 per month.

Lightwave solar is the company doing the work. They have written grants to offset the initial cost. There is a grant with the State of Tennessee, one with the USDA, and another for tax credits. It's all too complicated for me; luckily they are dealing with all the grant writing.

Other ways of generating electricity have environmental problems. Coal ash spills, radioactive nuclear waste, and limited oil are just the tip of the iceberg. It's high time we switched over to solar, and the fact that there are grants available show that many people in power agree.

Tri-County will credit me 12¢ per kilowatt hour. Everybody wants solar electricity to succeed.

You are welcome to stop by and check it out. I envision any homes and businesses in Macon County being powered by solar energy. I hope this is a small step towards that vision.