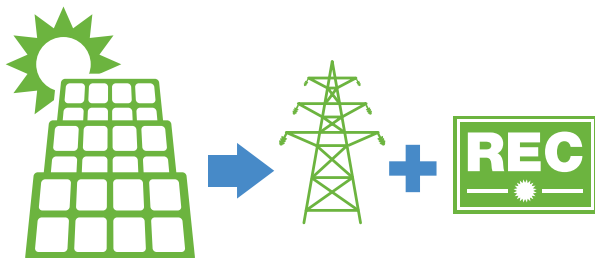


# Making Public Claims About Renewable Energy Usage When Participating in Green Power Providers

## What is a Renewable Energy Credit (REC)?

Renewable energy provides an environmental and social value beyond the value of the electricity itself, but after renewable electricity enters the power grid it is unrecognizable from any other energy. Renewable Energy Credits (defined as the non-energy/environmental attributes of one megawatt-hour of renewable electricity) are used to represent the ownership of the environmental and social value of renewable energy beyond the value of electricity. Companies and individuals may want to purchase RECs in order to offset generation, make marketing claims, and increase the renewable generation on the grid.

In TVA's Green Power Providers program, TVA purchases renewable energy produced by a third party. In doing so, TVA purchases the RECs or "environmental attributes" for use in meeting the demand for renewable energy in its voluntary green pricing program called Green Power Switch®. Because Green Power Switch only sells Green-e certified energy to its purchasers, TVA and its supply sources must abide by the requirements of the nonprofit Center for Resource Solutions, which certifies green power programs as Green-e Energy® Energy Certified.



RECs produced by Green Power Providers are sold back to TVA as a supply source for Green Power Switch.

## What is Green-e certified energy?

- The renewable sources of energy (i.e. solar, wind) are independently verified by Green-e Energy.
- The purchaser of a Green-e Energy Certified REC is the sole "owner" of the environmental attributes of a specific megawatt-hour of energy. Independent verification ensures that no energy is double-counted.

## What does this mean for Green Power Providers (GPP) participants?

This means that GPP participants should refrain from making claims that their home is powered with "green power," or that they produce a product made with renewable energy. Making these types of claims means that the REC is being claimed twice, by the GPP participant and by participants in TVA's Green Power Switch. This is commonly called "double-counting". In essence, GPP participants should be careful not to in any way allow the misperception that they are using the renewable or solar energy from their system.

## What can I say about my solar installation?

*"As a Green Power Provider participant, we are proud supporters of locally-generated, renewable resources."*

*"We increase the amount of renewable energy on the grid by selling the energy generated at this site through TVA's Green Power Providers program."*

*"We provide supply for TVA's renewable energy purchasing program, Green Power Switch."*

*"Our installation generates renewable energy, which is sold to TVA."*

It is also acceptable for the site to display the Green-e seal along with the GPP/TVA logo. The use of both together is likely not deceptive provided that other advertising does not imply other deceptive claims.

## What should I not say about my solar installation?

*“Our solar installation helps to reduce our company’s carbon footprint.”*

*“Our products are made with solar power/renewable energy.”*

*“Our facility is solar powered.”*

*“This installation makes my business greener or more environmentally friendly.”*

The above statements are misleading marketing claims because the energy and the RECs produced by your installation have both been purchased by TVA.

### Example:

**A toy manufacturer places solar panels on the roof of its plant to generate power, and advertises that its plant is “100 percent solar-powered.” The manufacturer, however, sells RECs to TVA through Green Power Providers, based on the renewable attributes of all the power it generates. By doing so, the manufacturer has transferred to TVA the right to characterize that electricity as renewable. The manufacturer’s claim is therefore deceptive. It also would be deceptive for this manufacturer to advertise that it “hosts” a renewable power**

**facility because reasonable consumers likely interpret this claim to mean that the manufacturer uses renewable energy. It would not be deceptive, however, for the manufacturer to advertise, “We generate renewable energy, but sell all of it to TVA through its Green Power Providers program.”**

## How might someone make the claims on renewable energy that are not allowed as a GPP participant?

Green Power Switch allows customers to purchase renewable energy credits and thereby claim the environmental attributes associated with the amount of green energy purchased. For example, as a purchaser of Green Power Switch renewable energy blocks (which contain environmental attributes), you may claim that you are reducing your environmental impact or carbon footprint. Each \$4 block is made up of 150 kWh of renewable energy, so if you consume 1,500 kWh of electricity per month and purchase 1 block per month, you may state that 10 percent of the energy you use is renewable.

## Can a Green Power Providers participant also participant in Green Power Switch?

Absolutely! In fact, participating in Green Power Switch allows you to make claims on the renewable energy based on the amount purchased. To sign up, contact your local power company or go to [www.greenpowerswitch.com](http://www.greenpowerswitch.com).

Unsure about what language to use on advertisements or press releases? Email [greenpowerswitch@tva.gov](mailto:greenpowerswitch@tva.gov) with any questions regarding the claiming of renewable energy usage or the purchasing of RECs.