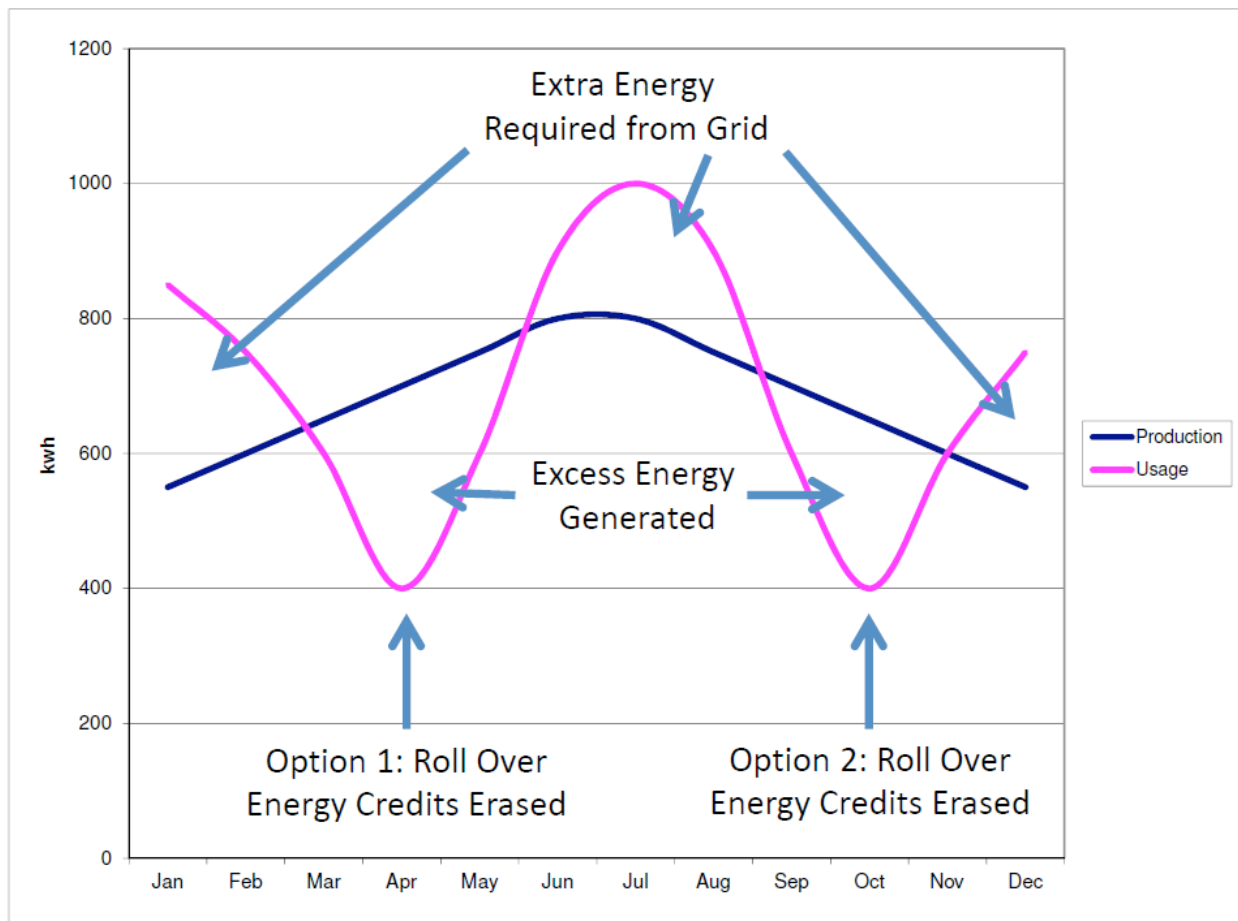


Why April or October for Net Metering Reconcile Dates?

Peter Gorr, ISEA member (4/29/12)

I just reached my first anniversary of have a solar system on my home (6.72kW PV). This spring has been especially good from a production standpoint and along comes my ComEd Net Metering bill. I had 97 kWh credits rolling over from February and I knew March was going to come in strong (333 kWh excess production). Upon opening my bill expecting to see 430 kWh of credits I see 0. Then it dawned on me. Net Metering requires the user to select either April or October as the date to reconcile Net Metering credits. In other words, the rolling over stops and resets to 0. Of course that only applies to credits earned since the user pays for energy pulled off the grid that is above your production each month. ComEd specifically recommends April for Solar systems. My reaction was and is what a scam.

You must tip your hat to ComEd and their smarts. As illustrated in this graph they know when excess energy will be greatest and as such the best time to reset the roll over. Why April? Why October? As the chart illustrates that's likely when they can score the most free energy from us little guys.



This graph is representative of my situation. Typical production curve (blue line) will look like a hill as short days get longer then shorten again. Typical usage curve (red) will be higher in winter due to short days and more lights, then lessen as lights are used less but the AC is not on, then the AC kicks in, and fall mimics spring. So ComEd wipes out most credits just as you are building them up in anticipation of using your AC in summer. If you choose Oct basically the same thing occurs just before a higher electricity season kicks in.

Have others noticed this? Can anything be done to offer different anniversary dates? I live in Palatine who just signed a municipal aggregation agreement with a new electricity supplier (and 100% renewables!). The village manager has been looking into Net Metering on my behalf and will put me in touch with the right people. My hope is that they will be more open to allow me to select a better anniversary date (like August). I let you know what happens.