



Greater Washington County  
**FOOD BANK**

*Our mission is to feed hungry people,  
increase public awareness about hunger,  
and to educate people about nutrition*



**WPPSEF**  
WEST PENN POWER  
SUSTAINABLE  
ENERGY FUND

Contact:

Morgan Livingston, Agricultural Innovation Manager, Greater Washington County Food Bank  
724-632-2190 X108

Barbara Robuck, West Penn Power Sustainability Energy Fund Communications  
814-865-7380 or [wppsef@ems.psu.edu](mailto:wppsef@ems.psu.edu)

**Greater Washington County Food Bank Receives \$121,700 in grants from West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund to fund Energy Efficiency & Solar Projects**

September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 – Greater Washington County Food Bank (GWCFB) is the recipient of two grants from West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund (WPPSEF) to fund energy efficiency and electrical surge protection upgrades for its facilities, as well as funding for the construction of a 209 kW solar array. These projects will improve the environmental and financial sustainability of GWCFB's 29,000 square foot facility, housing the Food Bank and its associated programs, the Healthy Habits Training Center, Country Thrift Market, and The Farm.

WPPSEF previously funded a comprehensive energy audit and electrical study of GWCFB's entire facilities in 2019, where potential energy saving measures and power quality concerns were indentified. WPPSEF then approved a \$21,700 grant to fund many of these upgrades, including upgrading to a more efficient heat pump water heater, converting all of the food bank's interior lighting to LED, and the installation of a comprehensive electric surge suppression system to mitigate the impact of electrical spikes on GWCFB's electrical equipment. These improvements reduce GWCFB's electrical use and protect electrical equipment that is critical to its operations, including commercial refrigeration and computer systems used to provide emergency food services.

WPPSEF's support of the food bank's energy audit and upgrades were critical in laying the groundwork for the installation of a 209 kW solar ground array that will help offset an annual \$25,000-\$30,000 in electrical expenses. The solar array, currently being installed at GWCFB's site by Groundhog Solar, LLC., was made possible through a \$100,000 grant from WPPSEF, in addition to funds made available through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development's Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP). UPMC Health Plan, Washington Financial Bank, and Northwest Bank have also contributed funding to GWCFB's solar project as part of the

NAP program. This partnership is enabling GWCFB to offset its energy costs through the construction of the solar array.

"The solar system fits into the Food Bank's philosophy of environmental sustainability and its mission to be a leader in innovative and sustainable business practices in the fight against hunger. We're grateful for the support of these organizations, whose efforts allow us to continue to fight hunger in Washington County," commented Connie Burd, GWCFB Executive Director.

The Coronavirus pandemic has brought about both an increase in demand for the food bank's services, as well as unprecedented disruptions to the economy. These factors mean that organizational efficiency and controlling operational expenses are more important than ever, goals that the WPPSEF grants will help accomplish.

"Washington County has an estimated 25,000 people who are food insecure. The money saved from energy efficiency improvements will allow the GWCFB to increase services, trainings, and the availability of healthy foods, local produce and products available to the community", said Joel Morrison, WPPSEF Director.

The **West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund (WPPSEF)** is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that invests in the deployment of sustainable energy technologies that benefit West Penn Power ratepayers in Pennsylvania. WPPSEF investments are focused in three broad categories:

- ✓ Deployment of sustainable and clean energy technologies;
- ✓ Deployment of energy efficiency and conservation technologies; and
- ✓ Facilitating economic development, environmental betterment, and public education as they relate to sustainable energy deployment in the WPP service region.

Visit <http://www.wppsef.org> for further information. [YouTube](#) – Listen to what our project partners have to say about us.

###