

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Burns & McDonnell Breaks Ground on First-Ever Community Solar Program in Southwest Missouri**

### *New Solar Installation Opens the Door to Additional Renewable Energy Opportunities Throughout the Region*

JOPLIN, Missouri — As part of its growing [solar power generation](#) design and construction services portfolio, Burns & McDonnell has broken ground on [Liberty Utilities-Empire District's Prosperity Community Solar](#) installation — the first such renewable generation program in southwest Missouri. Comprised of more than 5,500 bifacial photo-voltaic (PV) panels, the 2 MW-installation represents one of the utility's first steps toward its 17-year Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), which calls for the planned replacement of a coal-fired power plant with a combination of solar, wind, battery storage and distributed resource investments.

The utility's program will allow eligible subscribers to purchase blocks of the solar generation at a fixed rate as defined by Liberty's tariff. Additionally, the first phase of the community solar program allows subscribers to apply early while offering future pricing benefits associated with additional community solar installations by Liberty Utilities in the coming years.

Burns & McDonnell will self-perform all mechanical and electrical installation for the project. Following completion of construction by the end of 2020, the new installation is slated to be fully operational and online in January 2021.

"Burns & McDonnell and our direct-hire construction arm, AZCO, have a long history of working with Liberty Utilities," says [Doug Riedel](#), senior vice president for renewable generation, Burns & McDonnell. "We are honored to be Liberty's EPC contractor for the Prosperity Solar project and look forward to helping the utility develop and construct additional community solar and renewable projects in the future."

Across the nation, community solar programs are offering utility customers a more convenient way to directly participate in solar generation assets being installed on the electric grid. The Prosperity Community Solar program is part of a larger effort by Liberty Utilities to add hundreds of megawatts of wind, solar and battery storage programs throughout the next two decades.

"Burns & McDonnell and AZCO are currently executing multiple renewable energy solar projects nationwide utilizing the local workforce on all of our construction sites," says [Allen King](#), vice

president of project development, AZCO. “The Liberty Solar Project is another great example of how our commitment to supporting the building trades and how local hires can complete a project in a rapid timeframe.”

Burns & McDonnell, with an experienced team that has developed some of the largest solar generation projects in North America, uses an integrated solar design and construction team to optimize project delivery to meet specific project requirements — maximizing energy yield and capacity, while minimizing levelized cost of energy and capital expenditure. Burns & McDonnell ranks No. 1 in [Power](#) and as the No. 2 design firm in the Midwest, holding the top spot in Missouri and Kansas.

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### **About Burns & McDonnell**

Burns & McDonnell is a family of companies bringing together an unmatched team of 7,600 engineers, construction professionals, architects, planners, technologists and scientists to design and build our critical infrastructure. With an integrated construction and design mindset, we offer full-service capabilities with more than 55 offices, globally. Founded in 1898, Burns & McDonnell is a 100% employee-owned company and proud to be on *Fortune's* 2020 list of 100 Best Companies to Work For. Learn how we are [on call through it all](#).

### **About Liberty Utilities**

Liberty Utilities Co. owns and operates regulated water, wastewater, natural gas and electric transmission and distribution utilities in 12 states, delivering responsive and reliable essential services to approximately 783,000 customers across the United States. With a local approach to management, service and support, we deliver efficient, dependable services to meet the needs of our customers. Liberty Utilities provides a superior customer experience through walk-in customer centers, locally focused conservation and energy efficiency initiatives, and programs for businesses and residential customers. We measure our performance in terms of service reliability, an enjoyable customer experience, and an unwavering dedication to public and workplace safety. Liberty Utilities currently operates in Arizona, Arkansas, California, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Hampshire, Oklahoma and Texas.