Illinois Solar for All

Affordable solar energy.
More savings. A brighter tomorrow.

Illinois Solar for All Annual Summary

Program Year 4
June 2021–May 2022

Illinois Solar for All (ILSFA) provides equitable access to solar energy to income-eligible households and the non-profit organizations and public facilities that serve them.

ILSFA continued to grow during its fourth program year, from June 2021 to May 2022. The program approved nearly 150% more solar projects compared with the previous program year to help more participants save on electricity bills. ILSFA is also helping the State of Illinois meet its renewable energy goals outlined in the Future Energy Jobs Act and the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act.

Program Impact

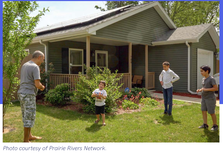


Photo courtesy of Prairie Rivers Network.

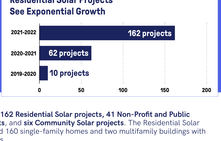
After installing solar panels on his Champaign home through ILSFA, Jaouad Barmaki expects savings of more than $14,000 over the next 15 years.

ILSFA **approved 209 projects**, an increase of nearly 150% over the previous program year and the largest number of projects approved in a given year since the start of the program. These projects had a total capacity of 14.3 megawatts AC for this program year.

These projects will prevent approximately 18,000 metric tons of greenhouse gases each year from entering the atmosphere. That equals the emissions released by nearly 4,000 gasoline-powered passenger vehicles driven for one year, based on national average data.

Projects

Residential Solar projects have increased every year, bringing solar savings to more income-eligible homeowners across the state.



ILSFA **approved 162 Residential Solar projects, 41 Non-Profit and Public Facilities projects**, and **six Community Solar projects**. The Residential Solar projects included 160 single-family homes and two multifamily buildings with five or more units.

- Notably, ILSFA **approved 100 more Residential Solar projects** than the previous program year, an increase of **more than 160%**.
- ILSFA also approved **24 more Non-Profit and Public Facilities projects** when additional program funding from the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act became available during the program year.

These projects advance ILSFA's goal of increasing access to solar in communities statewide.

Project Funding

Photo courtesy of BCMW Head Start/Early Head Start.

ILSFA made going solar possible for BCMW Head Start/Early Head Start, a non-profit child development program in Centralia.

ILSFA allocated more than **$37 million** during the program year. Of the funding for these projects:

- 91% went to projects located in income-eligible census tracts
- 69% went to projects located in designated environmental justice communities
- 65% went to projects located in ComEd territory
- 35% went to projects located in Ameren territory
- <1% went to projects located in MidAmerican territory

Funds Allocated

- Nearly **$21 million** went to Community Solar projects
- Nearly **$13 million** funded Non-Profit and Public Facilities solar projects
- Over **$3 million** serviced Residential Solar projects

ILSFA funding comes from the Renewable Energy Resources Fund administered by the Illinois Power Agency and funding supplied by utilities from ratepayer collections.

Approved Vendors

To ensure that more people can benefit from solar energy, ILSFA helps create jobs for members of historically marginalized communities and encourages minority and women-owned business enterprises to become Approved Vendors.

The Program Administrator welcomed 17 new Approved Vendors during the program year, bringing the total number of registered ILSFA Approved Vendors to 86. Of all 86 Approved Vendors, nine are minority or women-owned business enterprises (MWBE) and three Approved Vendors have indicated their MWBE certification is pending. ILSFA works to encourage the participation of MWBE Approved Vendors and sub-contractors to support the development of solar projects.

Fourteen Approved Vendors had at least one project approved. Across all three sub-programs, two MWBE Approved Vendors submitted 28 projects, 19 of which were approved.

Grassroots Education

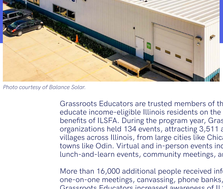


Photo courtesy of Balance Solar.

A Grassroots Education organization introduced the Habitat for Humanity ReStore in Bloomington to ILSFA. The ReStore uses solar savings to redirect money to its mission.

Grassroots Educators are trusted members of their communities who educate income-eligible Illinois residents on the basics of solar and the benefits of ILSFA. During the program year, Grassroots Education organizations held 134 events, attracting 3,511 attendees from 21 cities and villages across Illinois, from large cities like Chicago and Springfield to small towns like Odin. Virtual and in-person events included workshops, lunch-and-learn events, community meetings, and neighborhood tours.

More than 16,000 additional people received information on ILSFA through one-on-one meetings, canvassing, phone banks, and mailings. Activities by Grassroots Educators increased awareness of ILSFA and solar energy across the state.

Job Training

ILSFA supports a renewable energy workforce and equitable access to solar jobs by requiring Approved Vendors to hire trainees from qualifying job training programs to work on projects.

Approved Vendors hired 38 individual trainees from seven qualified job training programs. Many job trainees worked on multiple projects with the same Approved Vendor. Job trainees performed more than 7,200 work hours, and more than half were during the installation phase.

Public Engagement

In this video produced by a Grassroots Educator, senior Marie Cunningham explains how she's seeing solar savings at her Chicago home after participating in ILSFA.

ILSFA continued to engage and inform the public with announcements, newsletters, and the program website. Five program newsletters were shared with approximately 4,000 contacts. The newsletters featured essential program milestones, testimonials from participants, and Grassroots Education activities.

ILSFA also sent 18 email announcements to approximately 1,200 stakeholders. The email announcements featured news about the project submission windows, selection process, and budget for each sub-program. Other announcements provided updates on the development of the Illinois Power Agency's 2022 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan, which governs the ILSFA program.

Media coverage is also essential to raise awareness of ILSFA throughout the state and nationally. During the program year, 53 news articles mentioned ILSFA. Many of the articles featured news about Community Solar and Non-Profit and Public Facilities projects.

One example is a Quad Cities news article reporting on the Sisters of St. Benedict, St. Mary Monastery in Rock Island installing solar through Illinois Solar for All. "One array will send electricity to the monastery to meet up to 98% of the annual electricity needs, and the second array will meet up to 80% of the needs for Benet House Retreat Center," according to the article.

Illinois Solar for All is a program developed by the Illinois Power Agency and administered by Elevate Energy (Elevate). Elevate is a non-profit organization working with key partners to administer Illinois Solar for All, including AECOM and Shelton Solutions.

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