



Power Pulse!

A quarterly newsletter featuring the latest news and information from the Illinois Power Agency.



Our vision is to provide a clean, reliable, equitable, and cost-effective energy future for residents and businesses across Illinois.

October 31, 2022

Illinois Power Agency Announces New Acting Director

On October 1, 2022, the Illinois Power Agency announced that the Executive Ethics Commission has appointed the Agency's Chief Legal Counsel Brian Granahan as the Agency's Acting Director. To facilitate a smooth transition, the IPA's current Director,

Anthony Star, will remain with the Agency in a senior advisory role for a six-to-nine-month period.

For more information, please read the announcement on the [IPA website](#).

The Passing of the Torch!

When Anthony Star took over as Director of the Illinois Power Agency in 2013, it was a different job and a different organization. Compared to today, the Agency had a smaller staff and a narrower range of work.

“At that time, the primary focus of the IPA was electricity procurement. The work on renewables was secondary,” Star reminisced. “Key concerns in 2013 included how to manage electricity supply risks resulting from changes in levels of municipal aggregation, and the development of sourcing agreements for the proposed FutureGen clean coal plant,” he added. While electricity procurement continues to be a vital part of the work today, the Agency’s scope increased vastly over the subsequent years due to the significant responsibilities resultant from the Future Energy Jobs Act and later through the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act. Those responsibilities include expanding the reach of the Renewable Portfolio Standard in Illinois with an increasing focus on ensuring equity within the clean energy economy, and supporting at-risk nuclear plants.

Star had previously served as a Policy Advisor to two Chairmen of the Illinois Commerce Commission and, before entering the public sector, he had spent thirteen years at the Center for Neighborhood Technology working on energy policy and environmental sustainability. His prior work in developing the nation’s first residential real-time pricing program prepared him for understanding the complex dynamics of energy markets needed to guide the policy choices in the Agency’s annual electricity procurement plans.

One of Star’s first tasks at the IPA was to improve Agency operations. In its early years, the organization had struggled to develop internal management structures and functions. As the Agency got on a more solid footing, it took on new responsibilities including the implementation of new programs and procurements that support a clean energy future for Illinois. He took on the challenge of developing solar programs that continue to support the installation of solar panels on the roofs of tens of thousands of homes and businesses across the state. Additionally, under his leadership, the Agency has implemented procurements that have led to the development of new large-scale solar and wind farms, and supported the continued operation of at-risk nuclear plants, which are critical to Illinois’ goal of reaching net zero emissions by 2050.

When asked what his most significant accomplishment has been as the Director of the IPA, Star pointed to the Agency’s maturation. “Seeing the Agency evolve and become a multidisciplinary team, with a staff committed and enthusiastic about the work they do, that has been meaningful.”

With his transition to the role of Senior Advisor and Interim Chief for the Planning and Procurement Bureau, Star will focus his remaining time at the Agency on transferring his knowledge and expertise to the new leadership and the rest of the team. “We’ve gone from being a small Agency where everyone is involved in everything to a team of more specialized individuals carrying out the cause and the work we do. Under Brian Granahan’s leadership, I’m confident the Agency will continue to grow. His

comprehensive knowledge of the energy sector and unwavering commitment to our work will prove essential in supporting the just and equitable transformation of the state's energy economy," said Star.

The IPA staff is thankful to Anthony for leading the Agency through a period of accelerated growth and significant transformation. When asked what his next chapter looks like, he said, "I hope to take a bit of a break to spend time with my family, finish half-read books, and try some recipes that I never was able to get to. After that, we'll see. I hope to continue to contribute to the crafting of sound energy policy in Illinois and nationally."

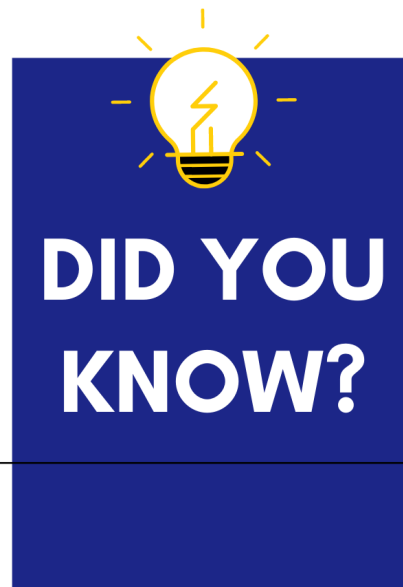
Illinois Power Agency Files the 2023 Electricity Procurement Plan with the ICC for Approval

On September 28, 2022, the Illinois Power Agency filed its 2023 Electricity Procurement Plan with the Illinois Commerce Commission for approval. The Procurement Plan provides a roadmap for the Agency to set forth a procurement approach to secure sufficient electricity, capacity, and associated transmission services, plus any required demand response, to meet the supply needs of residential and small commercial customers of Illinois electric utilities. The 2023 Electricity Procurement Plan and supporting documents can be found on the [IPA website](#).

Did You Know?

Did you know that Illinois Shines' traditional community solar program will open for new project applications on November 1, 2022? Last year, the enactment of CEJA paved a path forward for community solar in Illinois in a meaningful way.

CEJA allocated program capacity to support 250 MW of community solar projects to be taken off the waitlists of previous community solar applications in the Spring of 2022. Additionally, the reopening of the traditional community solar program will allocate additional block capacity of 160 MW for new projects, and the next block capacity of 200 MW in June 2023.



Illinois Power Agency Announces Updated Names for the Illinois Solar for All Sub-Programs

On August 31, 2022, the Illinois Power Agency **announced** updated names for the Illinois Solar for All (ILSFA) sub-programs.

- *Low-Income Single-Family and Small Multifamily Solar* (formerly Low-Income Distributed Generation, 1-4 units) is now called **Illinois Solar for All: Residential Solar (Small)**.
- *Low-Income Large Multifamily Solar* (formerly Low-Income Distributed Generation, 5+ units) is now called **Illinois Solar for All: Residential Solar (Large)**.
- *Low-Income Community Solar* is now called **Illinois Solar for All: Community Solar**.
- *Non-Profit and Public Facilities* is now called **Illinois Solar for All: Non-Profit and Public Facilities**.

The new participant-friendly names will help reduce barriers to getting involved by making terminology simpler and easier to understand. Furthermore, the changes will support solar contractors who are participating in ILSFA in their efforts to effectively market the sub-programs. The changes will appear in all program documents and participant-facing materials for Program Year 5, which lasts from Fall 2022 through Spring 2023.

Illinois Solar for All Announces New Grassroots Educators

On October 14, 2022, Illinois Solar for All announced their selections for Grassroots Educators to conduct grassroots education during ILSFA's fifth (2022-2023) program year. These trusted members of their

communities across the state will conduct educational campaigns to educate income-eligible Illinois residents on the basics of solar and ILSFA Program's benefits.

The ILSFA Program is excited to work with these Grassroots Educators to promote ILSFA solar opportunities to Illinois residents.

- A Just Harvest & Pilsen Environmental Rights and Reform Organization
- Citizens Utility Board Consumer Education and Research Fund
- Community Organizing and Family Issues
- Ecology Action Center
- El Valor
- Faith in Place
- Garfield Park Community Council
- Imani Works!
- Kenwood Oakland Community Organization
- Macedonia Development Corporation
- METEC



- Mildred Franks Community Development Corporation
- People for Community Recovery and Southeast Environmental Task Force

Thanks to the ILSFA Program Administrator Elevate for the picture of the grassroots educators at their recent cohort onboarding (see above).

Recap of Past Illinois Power Agency's Events

IPA Power Hour 6: Understanding Power Procurement for Residential and Small Commercial Customers of Illinois Electric Utilities

On July 29, 2022, the Illinois Power Agency hosted its sixth Power Hour of 2022: Understanding Power Procurement for Residential and Small Commercial Customers of Illinois Electric Utilities.

During this webinar, IPA Acting Director Brian Granahan, NERA Economic Consulting Associate Director Kathleen Orlandi, and Levitan & Associates, Inc. Consultant Mario Bohorquez provided an overview on the IPA power procurement for residential and small commercial customers of Illinois electric utilities, discussed the development of the annual Electricity Procurement Plan, including statutory deadlines and plan approval litigation. Additionally, the webinar highlighted the Agency's competitive procurement process, its goals, and role of the Procurement Administrator to design the procurement process in accordance with the law. The webinar was offered for continuing legal education credits.

To view the presentation and recording of the IPA Power Webinar on power procurement, visit the [IPA Events](#) page.

IPA Power Hour 7: The Role of Regional Transmission Organizations in the Development of Renewables

On August 26, 2022, the Illinois Power Agency hosted its seventh Power Hour of 2022: The Role of Regional Transmission Organizations (RTOs) in the Development of Renewables.

During this webinar, IPA Senior Advisor and Interim Planning and Procurement Chief Anthony Star, Grid Strategies LLC Founder and President Rob Gramlich, and Illinois Commerce Commission's Assistant Director (Policy Division) Katharine McCormick provided an overview on the role of RTOs in the development of renewables, discussed how RTOs generate and track Renewable Energy Credits to meet Illinois RPS, and shed some light on trends and challenges facing RTOs today.

To view the presentation and recording of this IPA Power Hour Webinar on the role of RTOs in the development of renewables, visit the [IPA Events](#) page.

IPA Power Hour 8: CEJA Turns One: Key IPA Highlights

On September 30, 2022, the Illinois Power Agency hosted its eighth Power Hour of 2022: CEJA Turns One: Key Highlights from the IPA. During this webinar, IPA Acting Director Brian Granahan, Illinois Shines Senior Program Manager Audrey Steinbach, Illinois Solar for All Program Manager Jennifer Schmidt, and Diversity, Equity, and

Inclusion Manager Sharon Johnson provided an overview on the IPA's implementation of programmatic and procurement activities under CEJA, its impact on IPA solar programs, and key activities on the horizon.

To view the presentation and recording of this IPA Power Hour Webinar on the IPA's highlights of CEJA implementation, visit the [IPA Events](#) page.

IPA Power Hour 9: The Role of Energy Storage for Accelerating the Transition to a Decarbonized, Clean Energy Future in Illinois

On October 28, 2022, the Illinois Power Agency hosted its ninth Power Hour Webinar of 2022: The Role of Energy Storage for Accelerating the Transition to a Decarbonized, Clean Energy Future in Illinois. During the webinar, IPA Senior Advisor and Interim Planning and Procurement Chief Anthony Star, Deputy Legal Counsel Sarah Duffy, Clean Energy Group/Clean Energy States Alliance Energy States Alliance Senior Project Director Todd Olinsky-Paul, and Illinois Commerce Commission's Policy Analyst Michael Stieren provided a discussion on the role of energy storage in decarbonization, barriers, state-by-state activities, and federal support for energy storage. The webinar also explored what energy storage currently looks like in Illinois, including the ICC's role in it.

To view the presentation and recording of this IPA Power Hour Webinar on the IPA's highlights of CEJA implementation, visit the [IPA Events](#) page.

Equity Accountability System Webinar

On October 4, 2022, the Illinois Power Agency and Energy Solutions (the Illinois Shines Program Administrator) held a webinar formally introducing the Equity Accountability System (EAS). During the webinar, Deputy Legal Counsel Sarah Duffy and DEI Manager Sharon Johnson provided an overview of the EAS, its key elements, and its applicability to the Illinois Shines Program. A recording of the webinar, a copy of the presentation slides, and a viewer attestation form are available on the Equity Accountability System page of the [Program website](#).

External Events Featuring IPA Speakers



IRPS Conference

On October 26, 2022, Illinois Power Agency Senior Advisor and Interim Planning and Procurement Chief Anthony Star spoke on the "Update on CEJA Implementation" panel at Illinois State University's Institute for Regulatory Policy Studies' annual conference alongside ICC Chairman Carrie Zalewski, ICC Public Utilities Bureau Chief Jim Zolnierek, and DCEO Deputy Director Jason Horwitz. During the discussion, the

panelists provided a status update on their respective agencies' implementation of CEJA's requirements and provided an overview on upcoming changes.

The conference was attended by IPA Acting Director Brian Granahan and other staff (see above).

Chicago Urban League and Invenergy Panel

On October 13, 2022, Illinois Power Agency Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Manager Sharon Johnson spoke on the “Clean Energy Opportunities in Illinois Deep Dive” panel organized by the Chicago Urban League and Invenergy.



Sharon was joined by Illinois Finance Authority Board Member Ameya Pawar and Chicago Urban League Senior Project Manager Karen Youngblood. The panel was moderated by Invenergy’s Senior Associate of Global Risk and Government Affairs Reine Rambert.

The panel raised awareness about job training programs and contracting opportunities for job seekers and clean energy professionals, including Black-owned companies in the clean energy and Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) space. In addition, the panel discussed the importance of equity in the clean energy industry and opportunities available through CEJA’s implementation for transition to clean energy economy.

Thanks to Invenergy for the panel photos (see above).

Indiana, Illinois, Iowa Foundation for Fair Contracting Training Event

On October 13, 2022, Illinois Power Agency Deputy Legal Counsel Sarah Duffy and Legislative Counsel Zoe Lanier gave a presentation on renewable energy incentive programs in Illinois for the staff at the Indiana, Illinois, Iowa Foundation for Fair Contracting (IIIFC) during their annual training event.

IGEN Net Zero Fall Collaborative Meeting

On October 25, 2022, Illinois Shines Program Associate Olivia Matthews joined a solar development panel at the Illinois Green Economy Network (IGEN) Net Zero fall collaborative meeting hosted by SEDAC. Olivia was joined by panelists Stetson Tchividjian, Business Development Manager from D3Energy, Dr. Paul Bruinsma from Frontier Community College, and Craig Roper from Kaskaskia College. The meeting focused on college solar development and was coordinated by SEDAC (Smart Energy Design Assistance Center), an applied research program at the University of Illinois that seeks to decrease the energy footprint of the State of Illinois and beyond.

Upcoming Events

IPA Power Hour 10: Net Zero Buildings and the Role of On-Site Solar

Date: November 18, 2022

Time: 12p.m.-1p.m. CT

[REGISTER HERE](#)

IPA Power Hour 11: Navigating the Energy Transition-Growing Pains and Path Forward

Date: December 16, 2022

Time: 12p.m.-1p.m. CT

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Prevailing Wage Webinar

Date: November 16, 2022

Time: 3:20p.m. CT

[WEBINAR LINK](#)

Employee Spotlight



Andrea Herrera

Program Associate, Illinois Shines

Andrea Herrera is the Program Associate of the Illinois Shines Program. In this role she assists the Program Manager, facilitates and tracks projects, develops updates to program requirements, oversees compliance by program participants, among other duties.

Andrea, who is originally from Chihuahua, Mexico, a northwestern state adjacent to New Mexico and Texas, joined the Agency in March 22.

Prior to the IPA, Andrea worked as a Research Analyst at the Energy Department of the Secretaría de Innovación y Desarrollo Económico, a state agency responsible for managing renewable energy investments in Chihuahua. As the Research Analyst, Andrea was responsible for keeping track of all the firms building solar projects in the state.

Andrea earned an engineering degree in Renewable Energy from the public Universidad Tecnológica de Chihuahua in 2019.

“The opening of the Program on September 1, 2022, for the Program Year 2022-2023, excites me. Indeed, it is an exciting time for Illinois’ renewable energy sector as a whole. With the opening of the equity eligible contractor block within the Program, equity-eligible contractors can now access capital to build renewable energy projects in the state. The Illinois Shines Program will be doing some innovative work to make clean energy accessible for all. A mentorship and training program for minority- owned, women-owned, disability-owned small companies that want to work in solar is one of many efforts that the Program will be implementing in the next year. That’s part of why I’m so happy to be

here.”

Outside of work, she enjoys reading thriller novels, cooking, and exploring Chicago.

IPA Recent Hires

- Zoe Lanier, Legislative Counsel
- Michael Amedeo, Communications Specialist
- Brian Hepner, Communications Associate
- Abigail Ramirez, Program Associate, Illinois Solar for All
- Rachael Bruketta, Legal Fellow

IPA in the News!

Chicago Tribune: **“A way to get solar energy — no rooftop panels required — is making headway in Illinois: ‘Community solar is about to explode’”**

Energy News Network: **Department of Energy looks to Illinois to lead on low-income community solar**



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The IPA is committed to the planning and procurement of reliable, efficient, and cost-effective electricity for residents and businesses in an ethical and objective manner, insulated from improper influence. The IPA also administers incentive programs and procurements to promote renewable and zero-carbon energy generation, while building an equitable clean energy future for all Illinoisans.