



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.

Attention mobile users: For best experience, rotate device to landscape mode.

Illinois Commerce Commission Approves Results of Spring 2023 Block Energy Procurement



Illinois Power Agency Launches Minimum Equity Standard Landing Page

The IPA recently launched its new **Minimum Equity Standard (MES) landing page**. The Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) created a new equity accountability system mandating minimum equity workforce targets for the IPA's Illinois Shines solar incentive program and for utility-scale solar and wind procurements. The MES helps ensure that:

On April 20, 2023, the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) approved the results of the IPA's Spring 2023 Block Energy Procurement event. This procurement event brings block energy supply under contract to meet supply requirements of those residential and small commercial customers of ComEd, Ameren, and MidAmerican who have not elected to take supply service from a competitive supplier ("eligible retail customers").

The results of the IPA's block energy procurement event, in part, determine the supply charges that eligible retail customers pay through utility bills. Spring 2023 block energy procurement results can be found on the [IPA website](#).

After high and volatile electricity prices in 2022 due to the war in Ukraine and other factors, energy markets have stabilized in 2023 and electricity prices have fallen. The Agency's preliminary analysis is that these lower electricity prices could reduce the Ameren default service rates by between 2 and 2 ½ cents per kilowatt-hour compared to the current rate. However, the Ameren default service rate will also in part depend on the results of the capacity auction conducted by MISO (Midcontinent Independent System Operator), the results of which will not be known until May 19, 2023.

Illinois Power Agency Launches Electricity Procurement Landing Page

The IPA recently launched a new [Electricity Procurement landing page](#) on its website. The page serves as a resource to learn about the IPA's competitive electricity procurement processes, national and statewide electricity prices, electricity supply options for customers in Illinois, and a municipal aggregation program for Illinois municipalities.

(1) everyone has an opportunity to access the growing clean energy economy; and (2) the clean energy workforce is made up of at least a minimum level of equity-eligible persons. The MES landing page will provide key updates on the MES requirements applicable to the IPA's programs and procurements.

Illinois Power Agency Announces Rebrand of Illinois Shines

On April 14, 2023, the IPA began the rollout of a refreshed rebranding of Illinois Shines, the IPA's largest solar incentive program. The continued growth of the program—which has also been known under the legislatively-defined name of the Adjustable Block Program—provides the opportunity to unify all branding under the simpler and more evocative name Illinois Shines.



The brand refresh will be rolled out gradually over the coming months. A new tagline, *Building Our Solar Future*, and a new logo with the sun shining on a stylized solar panel together renew and reflect the program's promise for the growth of a modern, equitable, clean energy economy throughout Illinois.

The brand refresh will combine the program's two current, public-facing websites into a single site to better share program information. The new, all-inclusive website will become official at www.IllinoisShines.com in advance of the 2023-24 program year, which commences on June 1, 2023.

The IPA recently announced that the Illinois Solar for All (IPA's income-eligible program) Residential Solar Pilot will be implemented in three communities across Illinois for the upcoming program year (2023-2024). The selected locations are West Garfield Park in Chicago, the city of Waukegan, and the Carbondale-Marion Micropolitan Statistical Area. The pilot will address barriers preventing income-eligible households from participating in Illinois Solar for All. The IPA looks forward to working within these communities in the Residential Solar Pilot to expand access to household solar installations.

For more information, visit the [ILSFA website](#).

Illinois Power Agency Seeks Feedback on Equity Eligible Contractor Qualification Criteria

CEJA established the concept of Equity Eligible Contractors in IPA programs and procurements. Equity Eligible Contractors can receive financial resources and pre-development capital to develop renewable energy projects in Illinois, enabling them to overcome barriers that prevent underserved communities from accessing the clean energy economy. Equity Eligible Contractors also benefit from dedicated capacity within the Illinois Shines program.

To ensure that the spirit of CEJA's equity requirements are being met, the IPA issued a [Request for Stakeholder Feedback](#) on potential strategies to tighten the criteria for qualifying as an Equity Eligible Contractor and for receiving incentives under the Equity Eligible Contractor category of Illinois Shines. This feedback will help the IPA consider whether new qualifying requirements are appropriate and address any potential disconnects between statutory qualification criteria and equity objectives.

Illinois Power Agency Approves First Participants in the Self-direct Program

The IPA recently announced the approval of Goldframe LLC (Meta) and Verizon for the 2023-24 inaugural year of the Large Customer Self-direct Renewable Portfolio Standard Compliance Program (Self-direct Program).

The Agency established a maximum program size of three million RECs for the 2023-24 program year. As discussed in the [self-direct FAQ](#), since there are only two participants this year, the Agency is releasing a range of REC quantities to protect the confidentiality of individual REC retirement quantities. The expected aggregated REC quantity for the participants in 2023-24 ranges between 500,000 and one million RECs.

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

Did You Know?

Did you know that the IPA recently launched a [DEI landing page](#) to share key information on how the Agency is meeting DEI targets for its programs and procurements? The DEI section of the IPA website also houses a new data center

featuring accessible data on workforce diversity and job training graduate hiring.



Illinois Power Agency Posts Public Schools Carbon-Free Assessments

Under the Public Utilities Act, ComEd and Ameren Illinois must offer Public Schools Carbon-Free Assessments (“PSCFAs”) to all public schools and districts within their territories, and complete them by December 31, 2029.

The goal of these PSCFAs is to help Illinois public schools increase their energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions, and achieve carbon-free energy usage by 2030. As they complete the PSCFAs, ComEd and Ameren Illinois must provide copies of the assessments to the IPA within three months. The Agency will then post them for public review on its website.

The IPA has now posted the first set of PSCFAs which include assessments of the following districts:

- East St. Louis School District 189
- Thornton Township School District 205
- Byron Community School District 226
- Chicago Public School District 299

Visit the [Public School Carbon-Free Reports page](#) on the IPA website to access these reports.

External Events Featuring IPA Speakers

Illinois Solar for All Program Manager Presents at Advancing Renewables Conference

On April 12, 2023, Illinois Solar for All Program Manager Jennifer Schmidt presented at the **Advancing Renewables Conference** at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Jennifer’s presentation highlighted how Illinois is working to ensure equitable access to the benefits of the state’s solar growth.



Illinois Power Agency Presents at Workforce Wednesday

Webinar

On April 12, 2023, IPA Deputy Legal Counsel Sarah Duffy and DEI Outreach Associate Kina Askew presented at the Illinois-State Workforce Webinar in partnership with the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DECO). Their **presentation** focused on the Energy Workforce Equity Portal (the portal connects clean energy companies with Equity Eligible Persons seeking jobs) and highlighted the clean energy jobs that are currently available on the portal.

Illinois Power Agency Presents, Hosts Outreach at Public Construction Summit



IPA Deputy Legal Counsel Sarah Duffy (left) and IPA DEI Outreach Associate Kina Askew at the Public Construction Summit, organized by III FFC, in Lisle, Illinois.

On April 6, 2023, IPA Deputy Legal Counsel Sarah Duffy and DEI Outreach Associate Kina Askew presented at the Public Construction Summit hosted by the Indiana, Illinois, Iowa Foundation for Fair Contracting (III FFC) in Lisle, Illinois. Their presentation focused on the IPA's renewable energy incentive programs and procurements, and key initiatives that prioritize equity and Prevailing Wage Act requirements in the clean energy industry in Illinois. In addition, the IPA hosted an outreach table at the event and handed out educational materials on its solar incentive programs to attendees.

Illinois Power Agency Discusses Incentives at Solar Farm Summit



On March 14, 2023, IPA Deputy Legal Counsel Sarah Duffy presented at the Agrivoltaics Expo at the Solar Farm Summit in Chicago. During the Expo, Sarah discussed the IPA solar programs and considerations for Agrivoltaics incentives for community solar.

Illinois Power Agency Staff Presents at Solar Boot Camps Throughout Illinois



IPA Planning and Procurement Chief Anthony Star at the Mid-America Carpenters Regional Council Joint Apprenticeship & Training Program in Pekin, Illinois.

The IPA staff presented at the following solar boot camps across Illinois, in Belleville, Elgin, Pekin, Rockford, and Elk Grove Village:

- On March 23, 2023, IPA Chief Legal Counsel Kelly Turner presented at the Mid-America Carpenters Apprentice & Training Center in Elk Grove Village, Illinois.
- On March 16, 2023, Illinois Solar for All Manager Jennifer Schmidt presented at the Mid-America Carpenters Regional Council Southern Illinois Apprenticeship & Training Center in Belleville, Illinois.
- On February 23, 2023, IPA Chief of Planning and Procurement Anthony Star presented at the Mid-America Carpenters Regional Council Joint Apprenticeship & Training Program in Pekin, Illinois.
- On January 26, 2023, IPA Deputy Legal Counsel Sarah Duffy presented at the Mid-America Carpenters Regional Council Union Solar Bootcamp in Rockford, Illinois.



DEI Outreach Associate Kina Askew (left) with Safer Quest Program Supervisor Jasmine Love

In the Community

During the month of April, IPA DEI Outreach Associate Kina Askew attended the following community events to promote the **Energy Workforce Equity Portal** (an online database that connects clean energy companies with Equity Eligible Persons seeking employment opportunities in the clean energy space) and increase outreach to potential Equity-Eligible Persons/Contractors, employers, and Minority-Business Enterprises that would benefit from information in the portal.

- 4/14/2023 - Portal & Workforce

- 4/18/2023 - DHS SNAP E & T

Coordination Resource Program with DuPage County

- 4/16/2023 - Safer Foundation - 2nd Chance Program event, geared towards Returning Residents/Justice Impacted individuals in workforce*

*Outreach events located in Environmental Justice Community areas

Resource Meeting (Roseland, Englewood, Woodlawn, Auburn Gresham, Gage Park, and South Eastside Chicago)*

- 4/21/2023 - DCEO-FEJA TA Meeting
- 4/28/2023 - NAACP & IPA Collaborative(West Garfield Park location)*

Power Hour Recap

IPA Power Hour 3: Agrivoltaics- *How Can Solar Energy and Agriculture Work With Each Other?*



Agrivoltaics: *How Can Solar Energy and Agriculture Work With Each Other?*

April 28, 2023

On April 28, 2023, the IPA hosted its third Power Hour webinar of the year on ***Agrivoltaics- How can Solar Energy and Agriculture Work With Each Other?*** Speakers for the webinar included American Farmland Trust Midwest Solar Specialist Joel Tatum, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Agroecosystem Sustainability Center (ASC) Founding Director and Blue Waters Professor Kaiyu Guan, and IPA Deputy Legal Counsel Sarah Duffy.

The speakers discussed market drivers and barriers for Agrivoltaics in the United States. Furthermore, the speakers looked at state and federal policy incentives to encourage the adoption of Agrivoltaics systems.

IPA Power Hour 2: On-site Solar Development in Illinois: From Ideation to Implementation

IPA Power Hour 1: Equitable Solar Workforce Development: Challenges and Opportunities

On March 31, 2023, the IPA hosted its second Power Hour webinar of the year on ***On-Site Solar Project Development in Illinois***. Speakers for the webinar included Solar Energy Association (ISEA) Board Member Lisa Albrecht, Senior Program Manager of IPA's Illinois Shines Audrey Steinbach, and Program Manager of IPA's Illinois Solar for All Jennifer Schmidt.

The speakers discussed the framework of on-site residential solar project development in Illinois, from planning to implementation. Additionally, they highlighted how state incentives support the development of new solar generation in Illinois.

On February 24, 2023, the IPA hosted its first Power Hour webinar of the year on ***Equitable Solar Workforce Development***. Speakers for the webinar included Elevate Chief Operating Officer Delmar Gillus Jr., WeSolar Founder and CEO Kristal Hansley, IPA Deputy Legal Counsel Sarah Duffy, and Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Policy Manager Lisa Jones.

The speakers discussed federal and state policies and programs that advance equity in solar workforce development. Furthermore, the speakers looked at challenges and opportunities to build a talent pipeline in the clean energy industry of Illinois, including the role of workforce development to build an equitable and sustainable robust solar workforce.

Register for Upcoming Power Hour Webinars



ILLINOIS POWER AGENCY PRESENTS

IPA Power Hour 4: *From Brownfield to Brightfield: The Impact of Brownfield Redevelopment on Communities*



IPA Power Hour 4:

From Brownfield to Brightfield: The Impact of Brownfield Redevelopment on Communities

Friday, May 26, 12:00PM-1PM CT

REGISTER HERE

IPA Power Hour 5:

The Impacts of Wind and Solar Projects to the Local Economy

Friday, June 30, 12:00PM-1PM CT

REGISTER HERE

The Illinois Power Agency is Hiring!

The IPA is currently hiring for the following positions:

- **Executive Assistant**
- **Human Resources Associate**
- **Renewable Development Advisor**



We Are Hiring!

<https://ipa.illinois.gov/about-ipa/current-open-positions.html>

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