



ILLINOIS POWER AGENCY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

State Solar Incentive Program Illinois Shines Opens for Ninth Year Offering to Support 1,000 MW

The program saw significantly increased capacity in 2025-26, doubling in size from 800 MW to over 1600 MW

CHICAGO, IL, June 4, 2026 — Illinois Shines opened this week for the 2026-27 Program Year, offering 1,000 MW of capacity across six project categories. The state-administered solar incentive program, implemented by the Illinois Power Agency (IPA), supports new home and community solar development across Illinois with a focus on equity and consumer protections.

Since its establishment under the 2017 Future Energy Jobs Act and significant expansion by the 2021 Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, Illinois Shines has grown into a cornerstone of Illinois' clean energy economy. Over its lifetime, the Program has supported development of over 100,000 energized projects representing 1,932 MW — enough energy to power 230,000 homes — with total Renewable Energy Credit (REC) contract values exceeding \$3 billion. Additionally, Illinois Shines has more than 13,000 projects in the pipeline representing 2,264 MW.

“As Illinois Shines enters its ninth year, the IPA is proud to reflect on another successful year of helping bring renewable energy to homes, schools, and communities across the state,” said Andrea O’Shea, Illinois Shines Program Manager. “Solar energy is a growing piece of Illinois’ clean energy economy, and the Agency is excited to continue supporting that progress through Illinois Shines.”

Program Year 2026-27 builds on many successes of the previous 2025-26 year. The re-opening of the IPA’s 2024 Long-Term Plan added over 800 MW of capacity across all program categories to an initial 800 MW program size. Of that added capacity, 414 MW of capacity was reallocated toward Program waitlists, resulting in 149 new contracts for Traditional Community Solar, Community-Driven Community Solar, and Equity Eligible Contractor Community Solar projects.

Other Program Year 2025-26 highlights include expanded support for the Public Schools category through a new [Solar for Schools webpage](#), increased outreach to school administrators statewide, and targeted digital marketing efforts to increase category awareness. The Illinois Shines [Mentorship Program](#), which offers targeted support and educational resources to solar companies certified as Equity Eligible Contractors and/or are minority-owned, woman-owned, veteran-owned, disability-owned, or are considered small businesses, expanded to two annual cohorts and celebrated 37 graduating mentees. Illinois Shines also strengthened consumer support through new initiatives and programmatic resources.

“Energy Solutions is enthusiastic about kicking off another Illinois Shines Program Year and working with IPA and key stakeholders to continue supporting increased solar adoption, while advancing equity efforts throughout the state,” said Patrice Flynn, Senior Director of Illinois Shines at Energy Solutions.



Program Year 2026-27 will bring exciting updates driven by the landmark Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability Act or CRGA, including an increase in the Community Solar maximum project size from 5 to 10 MW, a new Small and Emerging Business designation for qualifying solar companies, new REC adders, and more.

More information is available at [IllinoisShines.com](https://illinoisshines.com).

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About the Illinois Power Agency

The Illinois Power Agency (IPA) is an independent state agency established under Illinois law in 2007. It is charged with the development and implementation of energy procurement plans for residential and small commercial customers of Illinois electric utilities. The IPA is also responsible for the development and implementation of other procurement plans, including those to support new renewable energy development and the continued operation of nuclear plants. The IPA administers incentive programs and conducts procurements to promote renewable and zero-carbon energy generation to benefit all Illinoisans. Learn more at ipa.illinois.gov.

About Energy Solutions

Energy Solutions is a mission-driven climate change mitigation services firm that focuses on market transformation. For 30 years, the company has been pioneering end-to-end, market-based solutions that deliver reliable, large-scale and cost-effective resource impacts to our utility, government, and private sector clients across North America. Learn more at energy-solution.com.