

TOPIC 4: Closing of Program year Before May 31st Each Year

Background

The Program will be operating on an annual cadence that, as it stands now, means closing the Program on May 31st each year and opening a new Program year immediately after on June 1st. This leaves a very short turnaround time for many programmatic activities required to both close out one program year and open another, including but not limited to portal software updates and uncontracted capacity calculations.

Please note, when mentioning “closing of the Program” here, the Agency merely means the closing of the Program for new project applications. Other activities such as AV application renewals, invoicing, REC contract quarterly reporting, Disclosure Form creation, etc. will continue during any downtime contemplated here.

Questions

1. What is the impact to AVs and Designees if the program year closes before May 31st?

Closing the program year for applications can cause delays with the expected timeline for future payouts, though we understand the need for the Program to have time to implement new Program Year changes. We believe that closing the Program Year (at any point) is acceptable and reasonable, as long as these closes are fully communicated (preferably months ahead of time) with Approved Vendors, this communication is echoed in any Program Administrator responses to customer, and the information is clearly visible to anyone who may visit the Illinois Shines Website (preferably on the front page).

We do also believe that the program year closing during what is arguably the busiest time for Solar sales, could be readdressed, though we understand that’s not specifically what’s being asked for here.

2. What do other annual incentive solar programs do in terms of program opening and closing timelines?

N/A

3. What amount of time between the close of one Program year to the opening of the next Program year would ensure the best administration possible while causing minimal disruption to Program participants?

Less than one month is preferable. One to two weeks causes very little distress to our application process and is an easy enough timeline to communicate with customers that may be signing installation contracts around that expected time.

4. Alternatively, would it be best to close the Program on May 31st and then reopen the

Program sometime after June 1st? If so, what period of time would ensure the best

administration possible while causing minimal disruption to Program participants?

If the choice was between closing the program earlier in the summer vs re-opening later in the summer, we believe that re-opening later would be preferable. The recent ILSFA Program Year close of June 1st- June 26th has not been particularly detrimental to our application process, and allowed us to ensure that many of the recent "Summer sales" were applied for and submitted to the process prior to the closing of the program.