STATE OF WISCONSIN

CLEAN ENERGY PLAN

Progress Report

Prepared by the Wisconsin Office of Sustainability and Clean Energy

September 2025

ACCELERATING THE BENEFITS OF A CLEAN ENERGY ECONOMY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Dear Reader,

The Office of Sustainability and Clean Energy (OSCE) is proud to share the third annual Clean Energy Plan Progress Report. After a year marked by both promising progress and continued challenges in fighting climate change, it's vital to reflect on the collective accomplishments we've achieved. Throughout this report, you'll find examples of how the state of Wisconsin keeps moving toward its goal of 100 percent carbon-free electricity by 2050, a key priority set by Governor Tony Evers.

In his annual State of the State address, Governor Evers declared 2025 the Year of the Kid, emphasizing the importance of investing in future generations. In that spirit, the biennial 2025-27 budget included bold commitments to public education, childcare, and community wellness. The OSCE shares this future-focused vision. We're working closely with local organizations, governments, industry partners, and subject matter experts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, eliminate environmental pollutants, and ensure Wisconsin communities have the infrastructure and resources needed to thrive in a changing climate. During the Year of the Kid, our efforts are guided by the simple truth that the choices we make today shape the world our kids will inherit.

Additionally, this year, the OSCE was excited to start awarding funding through the Wisconsin Climate Action Navigators (WI CAN) network—an initiative that supports innovative, community-led climate and clean energy efforts. These awards empower grassroots organizations and local leaders to launch projects addressing their communities' specific priorities, thereby creating a more resilient, equitable, and sustainable Wisconsin while guiding the state's long-term climate action strategy.

We're also excited to share highlights from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' updated Wisconsin Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory in this year's progress report. This comprehensive data analysis provides a clear picture of where emissions are produced across the state and helps track the impact of our climate and clean energy efforts over time. These reports ensure that our work is data-driven, informing future policies, measuring progress, and identifying opportunities for deeper reductions across all sectors. We're grateful to Wisconsin DNR for their continued leadership and partnership in this critical work.

Even amid challenges at the federal level, the OSCE remains rooted in our core values of justice, equity, and collective action. As you read this report, we hope you see how those principles continue to guide our efforts—shaping our vision for a clean energy future that benefits all Wisconsinites.

Respectfully,

Maria Redmond

Director, Office of Sustainability and Clean Energy

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WISCONSIN'S CLEAN ENERGY PLAN

Published on April 19, 2022, the state of Wisconsin's first-ever Clean Energy Plan (CEP), developed under Gov. Tony Evers and the Evers Administration, serves as a blueprint to protect our planet from the effects of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and to maximize the benefits of transitioning to a clean energy economy.

The Office of Sustainability and Clean Energy (OSCE) created the CEP as a living document, designed to be comprehensive yet flexible and adaptable to technological, social, and market changes. The CEP intentionally emphasizes strategies related to environmental justice, multi-sector deep decarbonization, and a thriving clean energy economy that supports a diverse workforce and encourages technological innovation. Implementing the CEP is expected to lower energy bills, reduce reliance on out-of-state energy sources, accelerate job and apprenticeship training opportunities, and create over 40,000 jobs by 2030. This report provides a snapshot of various efforts to involve Wisconsinites in our shared clean energy progress, to understand the status of strategies and progress toward goals, to highlight work by stakeholders and agency partners, and to offer an overview of Wisconsin's evolving clean energy ecosystem.

BACKGROUND

In August 2019, Gov. Evers issued Executive Order #38, directing the OSCE to develop a comprehensive CEP. Recognizing the current conditions in Wisconsin and the role the state plays in regional and national emissions reduction efforts, the plan aims to accomplish the following objectives:

- Putting Wisconsin on course for all electricity used in the state to be 100 percent carbon-free by 2050.
- Ensuring that Wisconsin is meeting the carbon reduction targets of the Paris Climate Agreement.[i]
- Enhancing the reliability and affordability of the energy system.
- Reducing the unequal impacts of energy generation and use on low-income communities and communities of color.
- Maximizing equitable opportunities for clean energy jobs, economic development, stimulus, and energy investment dollars retention in Wisconsin.
- Strengthening the clean energy workforce through training and education while retraining workers impacted by the shift from fossil fuels to clean energy sources.
- Protecting human and environmental health by reducing pollution in ecosystems caused by fossil fuels.

The CEP represents a portion of the action needed to address climate change by targeting an expeditious transition to a clean energy economy. The strategies in the CEP act as a roadmap for Wisconsin to achieve its goal of a carbon-neutral power sector and reduce other energy-related emissions. The plan also aims to provide environmental justice groups, non-governmental organizations, advocacy groups, policymakers, utilities, businesses, state and Tribal governments, local authorities, educators, and residents with a practical roadmap to transform Wisconsin into a resilient and affordable clean energy economy.

This report is a Clean Energy Plan, which is different from a Climate Action Plan because it does not include strategies for reducing non-energy-related GHG emissions, carbon sequestration, or adaptation. Gov. Evers formed a Task Force on Climate Change and is committed to implementing the recommendations from its final report, which are broader than those outlined in the Clean Energy Plan.[ii] The state plans to release its first comprehensive climate action plan by the end of 2025, which will also include measures related to land use, land-use change, and forestry (LULUCF).

CLEAN ENERGY TRANSITION VALUES

As Wisconsin shifts to a clean energy economy, the state continues to promote and encourage others to adopt three core values: justice, equity, and collective action. These values will not only ensure that communities most affected by climate change benefit from the transition but also guarantee that all Wisconsin communities benefit. Wisconsin will be stronger and more prosperous when every community has access to a clean environment and opportunities for economic growth. Additionally, implementing the work outlined in the CEP requires a collective effort. Government, industry, the private sector, non-profit organizations, and other large entities all share responsibility for this work.

WISCONSIN'S EMISSIONS PROFILE UPDATE

The “Wisconsin Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory Report (1990-2021)”, published by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), recently updated Wisconsin's emissions profile by economic sector. Table 1 displays Wisconsin’s GHG emissions by sector for 1990, 2005, and 2021, showing the progress over time. Overall, GHG emissions decreased by 11 percent from 2005 to 2021. The electricity sector experienced the largest drop in emissions, declining 28 percent. During that period, industrial emissions fell by 25 percent, while the transportation, natural gas, oil, and waste sectors showed modest decreases. Between 2005 and 2021, agricultural emissions increased by 20 percent (primarily methane and nitrous oxide), marking the highest increase among all sectors.

Another factor in emissions reductions is land use, land-use change, and forestry (LULUCF), which are also classified as GHG inventory sectors because these natural and working lands can either add or remove carbon dioxide (CO2) from the atmosphere and are crucial in addressing climate change. The “Wisconsin Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory Report (1900-2021)” provides estimates of carbon storage from natural and working lands. In 2021, the LULUCF sector sequestered or stored 19.0 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MMTCO2e). Storing that amount of carbon is roughly equivalent to removing emissions from just over 4.4 million passenger vehicles operated over a year.

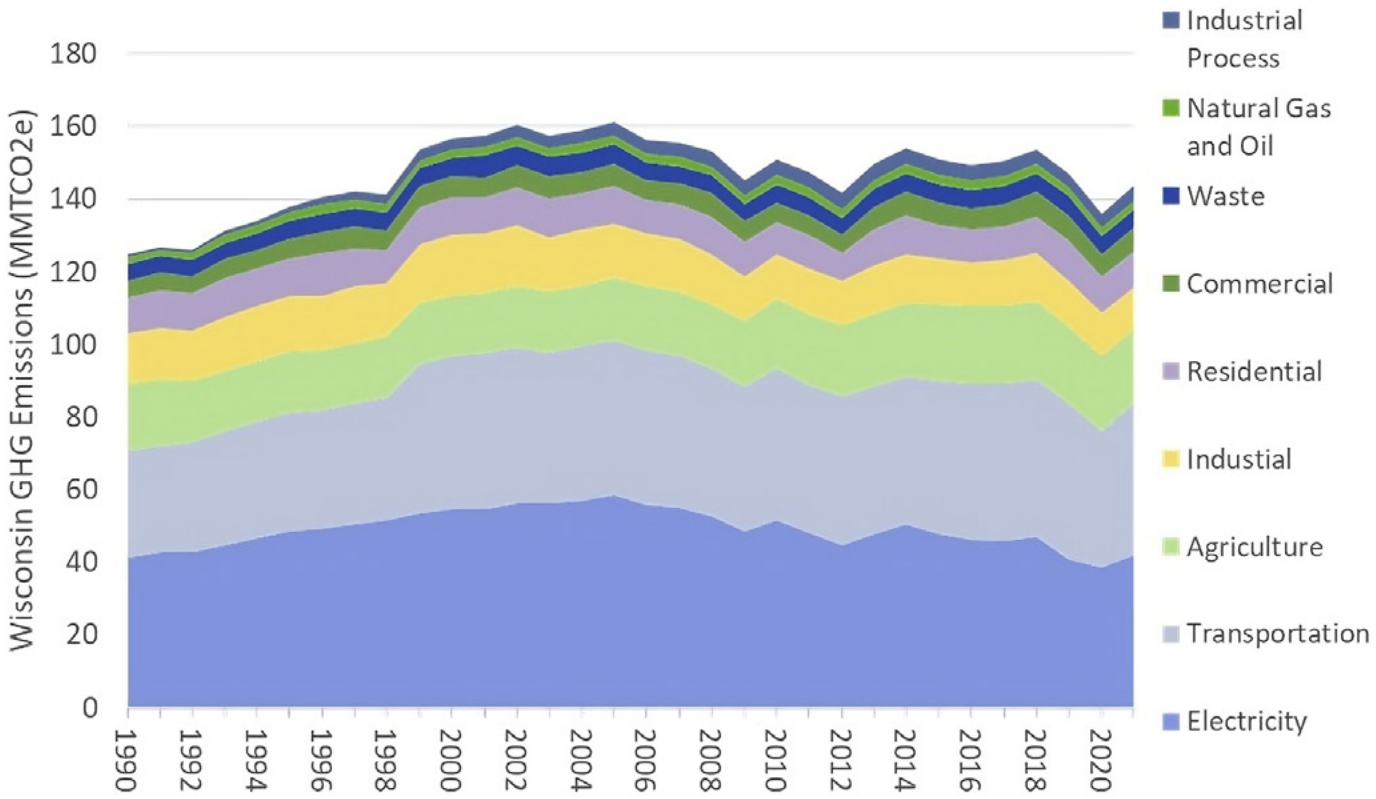
Table 1. Total Emissions by Sector

Economic Sector	1990	2005	2021	Change 2005-2021	
				Amount	Percent
Agriculture	18.6	17.1	20.5	3.5	20%
Transportation	29.4	42.7	41.7	-1.0	-2%
Electricity	41.3	58.6	42.1	-16.5	-28%
Production	33.4	49.4	35.2	-14.3	-29%
Consumption	41.3	58.6	42.1	-16.5	-28%
Imported Electricity	8.0	9.2	6.9	-2.2	-24%
Residential, Commercial, Industrial	28.4	31.6	27.9	-3.7	-12%
Residential	9.6	10.2	9.8	-0.4	-4%
Commercial	4.9	6.3	6.7	0.4	7%
Industrial	13.9	15.1	11.4	-3.7	-25%
Natural Gas and Oil	2.0	2.4	2.4	0.0*	-0.4%
Industrial Process	0.8	3.7	4.2	0.5	14%
Waste	4.5	5.2	5.0	-0.3	-5%
Solid Waste	4.0	4.7	4.4	-0.3	-6%
Wastewater	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.0*	-2%
Gross Emissions	**125.0**	**161.3**	**143.8**	**-17.5**	**-11%**
LULUCF	-21.5	-20.7	-19.0	1.7	-8%
Net Emissions	**103.5**	**140.5**	**124.8**	**-15.8**	**-11%**

Note: Totals may not be summed up due to independent rounding. The numbers indicated by an asterisk (*) were non-zero values that were rounded to zero. See full report for additional details.

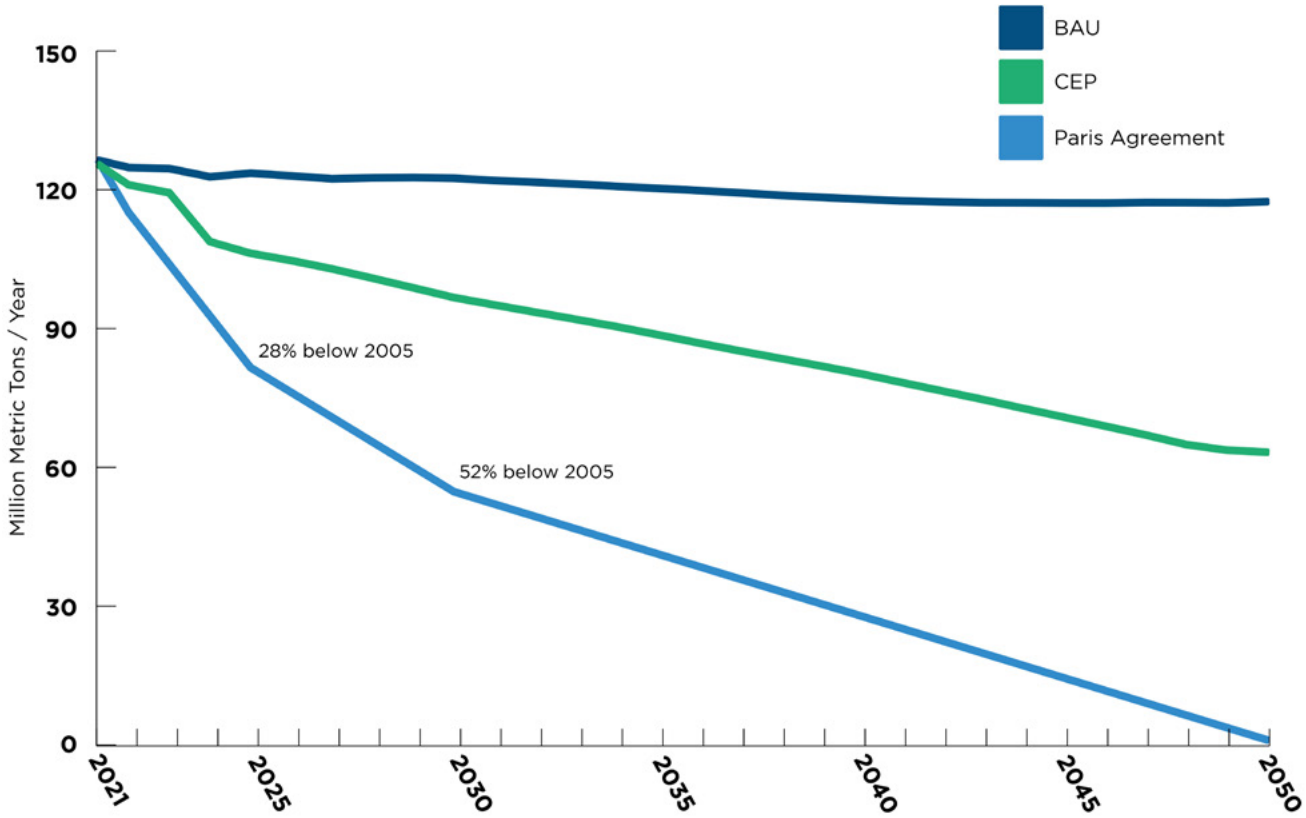
From 1990 to 2005, GHG emissions increased each year except in 1992, 1998, and 2003. GHG emissions peaked in Wisconsin in 2005 at a total of 140.5 MMTCO2e. Emissions declined from 2006 to 2009 and fluctuated between 2010 and 2019. There was a significant drop in emissions in 2020, reaching their lowest level since 1995. Emissions then rebounded in 2021. Figure 1 shows the change in cumulative emissions from 1990 through 2021.

Figure 1 - Wisconsin GHG Emission Trends 1990-2021



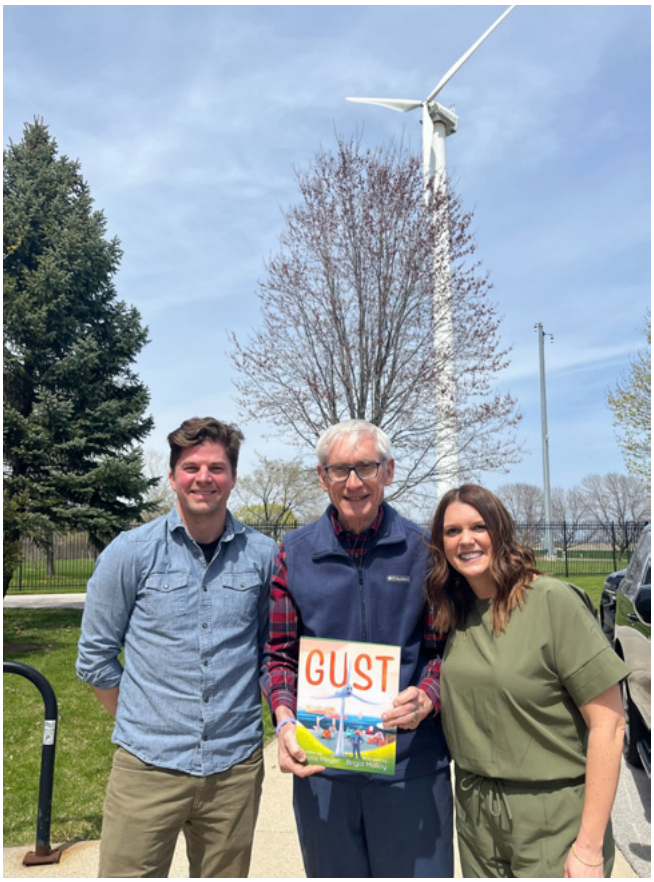
Due to the delay of available economic data, much of the impact of implementing the CEP is not present in the "Wisconsin Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory Report (1990-2021)". The state is seeing progress toward emissions reductions, but more data will be needed to confirm this progress as the pathways in the CEP are further deployed and put into action. As a reminder, the CEP released in April 2022 considers Wisconsin's carbon budget, which is the total allowable carbon emissions needed to prevent ongoing global temperature increases, along with strategies that will make significant progress toward decarbonization. Figure 2 shows the business-as-usual case versus the impact of deploying the CEP energy strategies and compares those trends to the Paris Agreement goals.

Figure 2 - Wisconsin Energy Emission Reductions



The modeled emissions reductions linked to the strategies included in the CEP serve as a roadmap to help Wisconsin achieve its goal of a carbon-neutral power sector and reduce various other energy-related emissions. In the figure above, the emissions under the green line include those beyond the scope of the CEP as outlined in Executive Order #38. Also included are energy-related emissions that face significant technical and implementation challenges (e.g., electrification of air travel and specific industrial processes, and behavior change).

CLEAN ENERGY PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS



As Wisconsin works toward a clean, reliable, and affordable energy future, the CEP emphasizes four main pathways to build momentum and drive action toward these goals.

- **Accelerate clean energy technology deployment** by increasing project funding options, investing in infrastructure, setting new emissions goals, expanding state energy resources for future generations, promoting technological innovation, equitably expanding clean energy access, and leveraging existing policies and programs.
- **Maximize energy efficiency** by strengthening standards and programs to cut energy waste, create jobs, and help consumers save money on energy costs.
- **Modernize buildings and industry** by updating building codes, promoting electrification, expanding funding opportunities for efficiency and renewable projects, and assisting industry and businesses in their transition
- **Innovate transportation** by promoting the shift to low- and zero-emission vehicles, expanding refueling options, and improving planning and options for moving people around.

Additional ways the CEP ensures an inclusive transition include:

- Prioritizing health equity, environmental justice, and fair economic growth.
- Accelerating workforce development and ensuring a just transition.
- Accelerating government-led initiatives (Lead-by-Example).

Since 2021, support and investments from philanthropic partners and the federal government have played a large role in helping accelerate clean energy in Wisconsin. However, obstruction from the current federal government threatens this important work. The state, with the support of philanthropy and local partners, remains committed to deploying clean energy and combating climate change. With these changing dynamics at the federal level, the CEP continues to offer a practical way forward, and this report highlights the progress Wisconsin continues to make to maximize its achievements.

CLIMATE & CLEAN ENERGY SUCCESS STORIES: CHIPPEWA FALLS GREEN TEAM AND CAMP NAWAKWA

Source: Chippewa High School Green Team

At Chippewa Falls High School, students Zoey Eckwright, Chloe Johnson, and Ellie Crosby have come together as the Chippewa Falls Green Team to promote a more sustainable future for their school and community. In addition to their regular coursework, they have completed numerous large projects, including the installation of multiple solar panels in nearby communities.

In September 2024, the Green Team was contacted by Camp Nawakwa, a local youth camp, for assistance in obtaining solar panels. The team accepted and began working. First, they helped the camp complete an energy audit, which revealed that their main building lacked insulation, modern appliances, and had outdated HVAC systems. Their goal was to install 44 solar panels and improve the energy efficiency of the camp buildings.

Throughout this partnership, the high schoolers attended state conferences and lobbied state and federal representatives to advocate for the project. By May 2025, they had gained the attention of Governor Evers, who invited them to meet with his office. Following that meeting, Governor Evers created a video for them to use in the Solstock Storytelling competition and Moonshot grant application. So far, the team has secured a $10,000 donation from OneEnergy, along with 10 solar panels from Solstock, and is awaiting confirmation from Moonshot. These awards will bring the total they can spend at Camp Nawakwa to $32,000!

Now the project is underway at Camp Nawakwa, and the girls are planning to teach classes on environmental topics, including renewable energy and wind turbines to campers. They continue to find opportunities to bring more sustainable projects to their community and engage other high schoolers along the way.

Photo Credit: Public Service Commission of Wisconsin Office of Energy Innovation

ACCELERATE CLEAN ENERGY TECHNOLOGY DEPLOYMENT

Background

Wisconsin's goal of achieving 100 percent carbon-free electricity consumed by 2050 is outlined in Executive Order #38, issued by Gov. Evers in 2019. As buildings, transportation, and industry become more electrified, decarbonizing the power sector will be essential to support economy-wide reductions. Deploying clean energy requires a collaborative effort from various stakeholders, including Wisconsin utilities, renewable energy developers, governments, and other partners.

Accomplishments

Expanded support, resources, and incentives to promote the deployment of clean energy technology occurred through the following:

- Wisconsin utilities are still on track to achieve significant emissions reductions from electricity generation, projecting a 72 percent decrease by 2030, a notable increase from the 40 percent reduction accomplished as of 2020. A major factor driving these emissions cuts is the plan to retire three of the seven utility-scale coal plants in Wisconsin, which together have nearly 2,800 megawatts (MW) of capacity. These retirements will cut coal's share of Wisconsin's electric generation from 31 percent to 16 percent. In addition to retiring coal plants, utilities plan to add more than 4,200 MW of new solar capacity, nearly 1,200 MW of wind capacity, and 900 MW of battery storage, much of which will be paired with solar installations. In 2023, Wisconsin had nearly 17,800 customer-owned renewable energy systems in operation.
- In accordance with Gov. Evers' Executive Order #195, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) collaborated with the Governor's Green Ribbon Commission on Clean Energy and Environmental Innovation to establish the state's first green bank – The Green Innovation Fund (GIF) to finance clean energy and other projects.[iii]

- With guidance from the Green Ribbon Commission and support from GIF consultants, WEDC developed a business plan for the fund. The plan outlines the strategy, target clients, messaging, and capitalization approach to build a successful green bank—one that prioritizes equity, geographic diversity, efficient GHG reductions, and rapid deployment.
- The GIF issued its first Request for Information to gauge interest in financing clean energy projects aligned with the federal Environmental Protection Agency's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) goals and to assemble a portfolio of fundable clean energy and climate resilience initiatives. Responses from nonprofits, developers, and local governments revealed strong demand, resulting in a portfolio of 91 projects representing $340 million in potential infrastructure investments. This portfolio captures just a fraction of Wisconsin's clean energy and climate resilience potential, highlighting GIF's vital role in mobilizing capital, removing financing barriers, and driving the state's transition to a clean energy future. It also underscores the Fund's critical role in advancing energy security and reducing energy costs. By leveraging private capital and supporting market-driven solutions, the Fund is helping to build a more affordable, reliable, and secure energy future for Wisconsin.
- The GIF became a founding member of the U.S. Green Bank 50 (GB 50), a member-founded and member-driven coalition of Green Banks from across the country. GB 50 supports regional, state, and local mission-driven Green Banks by providing financing and technical assistance for clean energy and climate solutions. The coalition empowers its members to accelerate clean energy project development that delivers economic, health, and environmental benefits to communities nationwide. The GIF also joined the American Green Bank Consortium, which connects Green Banks, investors, developers, and clean energy advocates from across the country to advance shared goals and expand impact.
- The GIF began collaborating with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) to establish Wisconsin's Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Program, funded by the U.S. Department of Energy (U.S. DOE) through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). The PSC released the program design for public comment, received positive feedback, and is now taking steps to launch the program once funding becomes available.

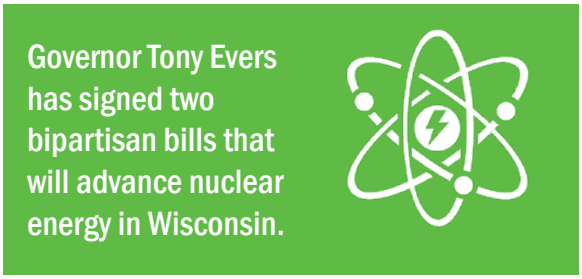
- The DNR Office of Energy is working to encourage developers to site renewable energy projects in the best possible locations to foster successful projects. This work includes assisting the University of Wisconsin (UW)-Madison Division of Extension in developing the solar and wind power guidance and technical resources required by the recent federal Renewable Energy Siting Through Technical Engagement and Planning Grant. Staff are also updating DNR's wind power website, online map, and best management practices document. Similar work for solar power is planned as well.
- The DNR Waste and Materials Management program created guidance, "Managing Used Solar Panels and Component Guidance for Solar Panel Collection, Storage, Transportation, Recycling and Disposal", for handling used solar panels, which can be refurbished and reused, dismantled for recycling, or sent for disposal without recycling.[iv] Solar panels contain various recyclable metals, plastics, and glass. Proper management is essential because panels may also include metals like lead and cadmium in concentrations high enough to be classified as hazardous waste.

- The OSCE continues work on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) program. The OSCE leads this effort to effectively reduce climate impacts, improve workforce opportunities, and address environmental justice for disadvantaged communities. The team is working on the development of the state's first comprehensive climate action plan that includes an overview and analysis of existing related state planning efforts; energy and emissions benchmarking and scenario summaries; and tracking of outputs and impacts such as community benefits, emissions reductions, and workforce buildout.
- Federal Grid Resilience State and Tribal Formula Grants are designed to strengthen and modernize America's power grid against wildfires, extreme weather, and other natural disasters that are exacerbated by the climate crisis. Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians received funding of $393,056 to support hardening of power lines, facilities, substations, or other systems.
- The PSC's Office of Energy Innovations (OEI), Wisconsin's federally designated State Energy Office, received federal approval of new programs funded by the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and the BIL, and made awards under two new programs:
  - Through the Grid Resilience Program, the OEI awarded 19 projects totaling $8.5 million to improve the resilience and reliability of the electric grid, with an emphasis on projects to support small utilities and improve service in rural areas. The OEI plans to make available additional Grid Resilience funding in future grant rounds.
  - The Rural Energy Startup Program, funded with Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant funds (EECBG), awarded more than $1 million in 2024 to support rural local governments in implementing comprehensive energy planning, renewable resource planning, and energy efficiency audits and projects. The PSC awarded an additional $1 million in August 2025 to support additional projects in 10 communities across the state.
- Joining the City of Kaukauna and Xcel Energy Services Inc. as awardees in the U.S. DOE's Grid Deployment Office (GDO) - Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships (GRIP) program, Alliant Energy received a $50 million Smart Grid Grant. Additionally, Dairyland Cooperative was part of the Georgia Transmission Corporation's project for Grid Resilience Utility and Industry Grants, receiving just over $97 million. These projects will accelerate the deployment of innovative initiatives that help ensure the reliability of the power sector's infrastructure and provide Wisconsin communities with access to affordable, reliable electricity.
- UW-Madison received an award from the U.S. DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy to address challenges facing marine and ocean renewable energy industries and spur innovation and development. Marine energy refers to power harnessed from waves, tides, ocean and river currents, and even from differences in ocean salt levels, temperatures, and pressure. Their prize of $500,000 will support undergraduate senior design and/or research projects in marine energy.
- In 2024, the federal government invested in projects to improve the state's hydroelectric facilities, enhance dam safety, mitigate fish and wildlife impacts, and expand access to affordable, carbon-free electricity. Administered by the U.S. DOE GDO and funded by the BIL, the following awards were made to Wisconsin facilities.

Table 2 - Maintaining and Enhancing Hydroelectricity Incentives

Facility	Project	Award Amount
Wisconsin Power & Light Company	Prairie du Sac Spillway Tainter Gate Rehabilitation	$5,000,000.00
City Of Kaukauna	Kaukauna City Plant Tailrace and Forebay Wall	$116,695.00
City Of Kaukauna	Little Chute Plant Bulkhead Wall	$180,750.00
Oconto Electric Cooperative	Stiles Public Safety Project	$642,294.00
Domtar Aw LLC	Nekoosa Dam – Structural Repair Program	$163,500.00
Domtar Aw LLC	Port Edwards Dam – Powerhouse Repair Program	$142,500.00
Domtar Aw LLC	Centralia Dam – Retrofit Program	$516,900.00
Wisconsin Public Service Corporation	Sandstone Rapids Gate Rehabilitation	$382,087.00
Wisconsin Public Service Corporation	Otter Rapids Dam Safety Improvements	$34,397.00
Wisconsin Public Service Corporation	Tomahawk Electrical Rehabilitation	$650,343.00
Eagle Creek Renewable Energy Holdings, LLC	Park Mill Spillway Gates #1 - #7 and Bay Concrete Rehab	$161,640.00
Wisconsin Valley Improvement Company	Rice Development (FERC License No. 2113-19) Dam Safety Improvements	$2,084,966.00

- Gov. Evers signed two bipartisan bills focused on the advancement of nuclear energy in Wisconsin. The bills are focused on the following:
  - Senate Bill 124 uplifts the state's nuclear energy innovation by creating a Nuclear Power Summit Board to organize, promote, and host a Wisconsin nuclear power summit in the city of Madison to advance nuclear power and fusion energy technology and development, and to showcase Wisconsin's leadership and innovation in the nuclear industry.



  - Senate Bill 125 Enhances state knowledge of nuclear energy potential by requiring the PSC to conduct a nuclear power siting study to meet the state's growing need for carbon-free energy, including but not limited to:
    - Evaluating existing nuclear energy opportunities as part of the state's energy portfolio; and
    - Identifying sites for the development and demonstration of nuclear power and fusion.
    - $2,000,000 GPR has been included in the 2025-27 budget to fund the study.

Utility Scale, Community & Residential Solar:

- Community Solar:
  - Wisconsin's Inclusive Solar Community Offering, in partnership with the PSC's Office of Energy Innovation (OEI), involved cooperative and community action program agencies, has now completed two projects, Energize Wisconsin and Trenton Solar.
  - The PSC approved a revised community solar tariff for Manitowoc Public Utilities in 2023 and a new community solar tariff for Madison Gas and Electric (MGE) in 2025. An application related to expanded community solar offerings by Alliant Energy is currently under review at the Commission.
- PSC staff in the Office of Environmental Analysis are partnering with researchers at UW-Madison and other research institutions examining the effects of large-scale solar energy projects on wildlife, pollinators, soil, and water quality, and the potential use of agrivoltaics. PSC staff can share new topics of interest during regulatory review with research teams to initiate evaluation of these topics and identify the impacts and benefits of such projects.
- WEDC is preparing to launch PowerUp Wisconsin, a statewide initiative funded by a $62.4 million Solar for All grant from the U.S. EPA. The program will expand access to clean, affordable energy through solar installations on single-family homes, multifamily buildings, and community solar projects—adding 25 MW of locally generated clean energy and reducing participating households' energy bills by an average of $500 annually. Designed to serve more than 7,460 low-income households, PowerUp also promotes housing affordability, long-term homeownership, and financial stability. Beyond energy deployment, the program will foster partnerships with community-based organizations and nonprofits to advance outreach, education, and workforce development. Its design and implementation are guided by a stakeholder advisory group and its working groups, including a Tribal advisory group focused on collaboration with Native Nations.

CLEAN ENERGY MILESTONE: Wisconsin's Largest Solar Energy Project Approved

In December 2024, the PSC approved Wisconsin's largest solar energy project, Vista Sands Solar, LLC, a subsidiary of Doral Renewables. This $2 billion project is expected to generate enough electricity to power over 200,000 homes. The projected generation from the site exceeds 1,300MW and will include 300 MW of energy storage. Due to concerns about the impact on the Greater Prairie Chicken, with the proposed location in Portage County, the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation and Vista Sands Solar, LLC reached a mutual agreement in June 2025 that includes acreage set asides and investment in natural grassland restoration. This project, along with collaboration with local conservation efforts, is a win-win for the state, demonstrating that energy progress and environmental stewardship can go hand in hand.

- The Midwest Tribal Energy Resources Association (MTERA) is also a recipient of the U.S. EPA's Solar for All grant program. The organization is scheduled to receive $62.3 million to distribute to Tribal Nations in Minnesota, Michigan, and Wisconsin. MTERA offers the following services, which are available to all federally recognized Tribes in Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin: direct funding of up to $1.15 million to develop a Tribally owned solar project, pre-construction technical assistance, project deployment support, and workforce development opportunities.
- Chippewa Sun, a 5 MW solar array in the town of Hallie, came online in spring 2025. UW-Eau Claire is the largest subscriber to the Chippewa Sun, and the energy generated at the solar array will offset 100 percent of the electricity used at The Sonnentag, a new recreational center.

Energy Storage:

- There has been significant growth in utility-scale energy storage deployments. Since 2019, the PSC has authorized 1,663 MW of utility-scale lithium-ion battery storage and is reviewing another 600 MW of similar battery storage, with more anticipated. Edgewater Storage (99 MW) was the first stand-alone project approved. In June 2025, the PSC approved a separate stand-alone Columbia Energy Storage Project, or Energy Dome, that does not use batteries (18 MW).[v]

Since 2019, the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin has authorized 1,663 MW of utility-scale lithium-ion battery storage and is reviewing another 600 MW of similar battery storage.

- The U.S. DOE Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations is supporting two grants under the Long-Duration Energy Storage Demonstrations Program in Wisconsin.
  - The Front-of-the-meter Utilization of Zinc Bromide Energy Storage project, located in Manitowoc County, aims to develop several 10-hour battery energy storage systems using aqueous zinc technology for front-of-the-meter applications at multiple existing renewable energy sites.
  - The Columbia Energy Storage Project, located in Pacific, Wisconsin, aims to demonstrate a closed-loop CO2-based energy storage system at a commercial scale and could validate the technology for widespread deployment across the United States.
- Dairyland Power Cooperative received a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Powering Affordable Clean Energy program award for two solar and energy storage projects in western Wisconsin. The first project is a 2 MW solar and battery storage system, served by Jackson Electric Cooperative near the Ho-Chunk Nation in Black River Falls. The second project is a 2 MW solar and battery storage system, served by Jump River Electric Cooperative near the Lac Courte Oreilles, Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe Reservation. The projects can supply power to more than 1,000 homes.

Regulatory Updates:

- In mid-2024, the PSC received approval from the Joint Finance Committee to add 23 more positions to support a thorough, effective, and timely review of all application submissions for construction authorization, including renewable energy projects. By Q3 2025, PSC has approved 7,319 MW of solar expected to be built, with an additional 1,573 MW of solar and 118 MW of wind still under review.

- In November 2024, the PSC issued an order defining beneficial electrification to fulfill the Commission's previous directive for Focus on Energy® to play a larger role in promoting beneficial electrification. As part of that updated definition, the PSC clarified that energy reduction should be considered in terms of source energy rather than site-based energy, stated that Focus on Energy® should explore options to incorporate source energy considerations into program operations, and specified that this exploration should include opportunities for supporting Combined Heat and Power.[vi]
- In August 2024, the PSC issued an order establishing a Communities of Focus framework to identify areas in the state where customers are underserved by Focus on Energy®. This framework considers several factors associated with underservice, such as localities with high energy burdens, a high percentage of low-to-moderate income customers, and a high proportion of renters. Focus on Energy® is running pilot programs to serve previously underserved communities better, focusing on specific areas identified by the framework. It will use insights from this pilot to improve its broader approach to serving Communities of Focus in the future.
- Through the Roadmap to Zero Carbon Investigation, the PSC continues evaluating performance-based regulation (PBR). Before taking further steps on PBR, the PSC commissioned an Energy Burden Metrics Report and an Action Study, both completed in late 2024 and early 2025, respectively.[vii] [viii] These reports offer detailed analysis and recommendations related to energy burden and affordability metrics. The review is also ongoing of other goals, outcomes, and metrics of interest, including energy efficiency, demand response, decarbonization, and reliability.
- In February 2025, the Energy Markets and Policy team at Berkeley Lab conducted a literature review on value of solar studies. The result, A Review of Value of Solar Studies in Theory and In Practice, was posted to the Investigation of Parallel Generation Purchase Rates docket.[ix] [x] The PSC continues its investigation of parallel generation purchase rates and updated the scope of the investigation in mid-2025.
- In the fall of 2024, the PSC released the Strategic Energy Assessment 2024-2030. This report provides further updates on the revised emissions targets established by utilities, progress toward achieving those targets, and projected future advancements through 2030.
- The Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), the Midwest grid operator, approved a Long-Range Transmission Planning (LRTP) Tranche 2.1 plan for 24 transmission lines that will enable access to at least 6.6 gigawatts of wind and solar power. Six of these projects will be located entirely or partially in Wisconsin. MISO estimates that for every dollar invested in these projects in our state, there will be $2.20 to $5.40 in benefits. These benefits include improved reliability, reduced risks from extreme weather, and access to low-cost energy from wind farms in Minnesota and the Dakotas. The projects are also expected to generate approximately 24,000 total construction and local jobs in Wisconsin, along with a total economic output of $4.5 billion. Three applications for LRTP projects are currently under review by the Commission.

MAXIMIZE ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Background

To simultaneously meet the state's clean energy, economic, and carbon goals, Wisconsin needs to drastically increase energy efficiency, which will require a significant ramp-up in investment. Not only are considerably higher levels of energy efficiency critical to reaching these goals, but they are also necessary to keep costs as low as possible in a future where energy needs are met with high levels of clean, renewable energy generation. Energy efficiency is one of the only strategies that holds the potential to significantly decrease energy burdens among homeowners, renters, and businesses.

Accomplishments

Expanded support, resources, and incentives to maximize energy efficiency occurred through the following:

- The Focus on Energy® program continued collaboration with the DOA's Division of Energy Housing and Community Resources team to implement the multi-family solar and heat pump program. Projects must incorporate solar and air-source heat pumps to be eligible for the program.
- Focus on Energy® launched a Planning Study, to understand and maximize the benefits of energy efficiency and electrification incentives and offerings for their customers. This includes an extensive stakeholder engagement process. Further steps in the Quadrennial Planning Process IV began in 2025 and will offer multiple opportunities for public input and participation.
- Wisconsin quickly launched the Home Energy Rebate (HER) Programs through Focus on Energy®. As of July 2025, Wisconsin was one of only five states in the country that had opened both the Home Efficiency Rebate (HOMES) and Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates (HEAR) programs for customer participation. The IRA HER programs are administered by Focus on Energy® to utilize existing resources and systems and ensure efficient and prompt program delivery.

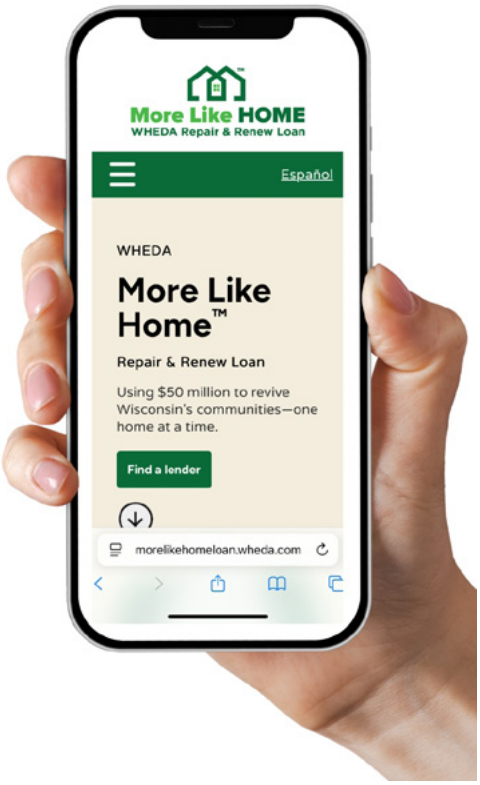
- In August 2024, Gov. Evers, along with U.S. DOE and PSC, announced the launch of the HOMES Program. Wisconsin was the first state in the nation to launch the HOMES Program, which delivers rebates to households undertaking whole-home, energy-saving improvements. HOMES provides rebates of up to $10,000 to eligible single-family and multifamily homes to reduce the cost of whole-home energy-saving projects, such as the installation of insulation and efficient heating/cooling equipment.[xi]
- In December 2024, Wisconsin launched the HEAR Program, which will provide instant discounts of up to $14,000 to eligible households that install energy-efficient electric equipment and appliances, including heat pumps and electric stoves.[xii]

- The 2024 Focus on Energy® Evaluation findings illustrate that businesses and residents work together to install cost-effective energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, upgrade our infrastructure, and improve the environment. Focus on Energy's® successful partnership with Wisconsin's utilities continues to reduce energy waste, strengthen our economy, and make progress toward a sustainable energy future for our state. The key findings from 2024 include:
  - Focus on Energy® returns $4.17 to Wisconsin's economy for every $1 invested.
  - Focus on Energy® helped businesses and residents save 7.7 billion lifecycle kilowatt hours (kWh) and more than 297 million lifecycle therms, providing nearly $1 billion in energy bill savings over project lifetimes.
  - Participant overall satisfaction (residential and nonresidential) was 9.4 out of 10, a metric that has demonstrated consistently high satisfaction over the past several years.

Focus on Energy® returns $4.17 to Wisconsin's economy for every $1 invested and has helped businesses and residents save 7.7 billion lifecycle kilowatt hours.

- In addition to the traditional Focus on Energy® offerings, the PSC OEI continued to provide support for improving efficiency in the agriculture sector for the deployment of technologies that utilize high-carbon fuels, focusing on heaters, grain dryers, and other high-efficiency equipment. Through the U.S. DOE State Energy Program funding, the Rural and Agriculture Propane program continues to see high demand.
- Focus on Energy® continues to issue annual Energy Efficiency Excellence awards to Wisconsin businesses, schools, farmers, government entities, and contractors. Award winners are working above and beyond essential energy efficiency solutions. 2025 Awardees and locations include:
  - Ahlstrom-Thilmany Mill (Kaukauna)
  - Emerson-Appleton Group, LLC (South Milwaukee)
  - City of Altoona (Altoona)
  - Wisconsin Center District (Milwaukee)
  - Eppstein Uhen Architects, Inc. (Milwaukee)
  - Finger Family Farm (Peshtigo)
  - Monona Grove School District (Monona)
  - Auer Steel & Heating Supply, Co. (Milwaukee)
  - Riley Electrical Supply (Fond du Lac)
  - McKinstry (Madison)
  - Red Cliff Chippewa Housing Authority (Bayfield)

- Gov. Evers, together with the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA), announced the 2025-2026 Qualified Allocation Plan, which administers federal and state tax credits that finance low- to moderate-income housing and establishes parameters and priorities for awarding the coming years' housing tax credits.[xiii] The plan provides greater consideration for the unique needs of our rural communities, promotes sustainability, and encourages housing options for veterans, working families, and those needing supportive services.
- WHEDA launched the More Like Home™ Repair and Renew Loan program to help owners of older homes make critical repairs and improvements that increase energy efficiency, safety, and security. This is the fourth and final program to emerge from the historic $525 million housing legislation signed into law by Gov. Evers last year, one of the largest investments in workforce housing in state history.[xiv]



MODERNIZE BUILDINGS AND INDUSTRY

Background

Direct emissions from commercial and residential buildings mainly come from space heating and cooling, water heating, electronics, lighting, and other needs. These direct emissions are different from indirect emissions linked to the electric generation needed to power buildings. After electric generation, transportation, and agriculture, buildings are Wisconsin's fourth-largest source of emissions.

Accomplishments

Expanded support, resources, and incentives to modernize building and industry occurred through the following:

- State agencies worked to support Wisconsin wood product utilization and protect Wisconsin forests:
  - The DNR Forest Products Services program provides technical assistance and training to businesses interested in using and marketing sustainable forestry products. In 2024, the Forest Products Services program hosted local use dimension lumber courses that certified 71 individuals to mill, grade, and sell dimension lumber. This unique program enables Wisconsin sawmills to produce structural framing lumber for residential construction from native species without requiring a grade stamp. The certification program supports markets for locally produced wood products that aim to increase carbon sequestration through the use of wood products, industry growth, and sustainable forest management.
  - An ongoing study for the DNR Forest Products Services program examines the feasibility of using Eastern white pine in cross-laminated timber panels. The lumber, sawn by Krueger Lumber, was delivered to Michigan Tech University, where panels will be built following industry standards. Once the panels are ready, testing will be conducted at Michigan Tech University and the USDA Forest Service's Forest Products Lab in Madison to assess their potential for commercial applications.

- The DNR Sustainability and Business Support program, along with the Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts Community Sustainability Working Group, supports independent energy audits for businesses and assists local governments in improving their climate literacy. The working group created a climate change glossary tailored for this audience and is sharing the resources through network organizations.
- The Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) anticipates completion of the guidebook related to design and permitting (Tall) Mass Timber Buildings in the fall of 2025.
- The DSPS will implement an updated Commercial Building Code in fall 2025 that includes the 2021 International Code Council standards, incorporating updates to various standards focused on energy efficiency, resource conservation, and the environmental impact of energy use.
- The DSPS is finalizing a project to correct inconsistencies between the current plumbing code, other department rules, and adopted national standards. Additionally, this project will address updates in federal standards regarding the use of lead in plumbing materials. The project will modify the code language to improve clarity for stakeholders.
- The DSPS Wisconsin Advisory Council on Building Sustainability met four times in 2024, and twice so far in 2025. Topics for consideration and discussion included the following:
  - Energy code adoption status and impact nationally and in Wisconsin
  - Key residential energy code changes
  - Pacific Northwest National Lab Wisconsin Code Analysis
  - Current resources on Wisconsin code adoption and key code changes
  - Wisconsin Energy Code Technical Advisor Program, which assists in the implementation of SPS 322 and SPS 363
- The DSPS is also facilitating future code updates:
  - A preliminary public hearing was held on Scope Statement SS 11-025 in March 2025 for the Uniform Dwelling Code Council (UDCC). The UDCC will begin updating the Wisconsin Uniform Dwelling Code in 2025.
  - A comprehensive review and update of Chapter 318 and other relevant code chapters began in 2025 for the Conveyance Safety Code Council.
  - The Electrical Code Advisory Committee has concluded its recommendations to DSPS to update Wisconsin's Electrical Code to the National Electrical Code 2023 standards.
  - Scope development began in 2025 for the Fire Prevention Safety and Health Code Advisory Council.
- DSPS remains an active partner on the Resilient and Efficient Codes Implementation grant project funded by the U.S. DOE to update the state's commercial and residential building codes. The Wisconsin Advisory Council on Building Sustainability is a key resource for the rulemaking projects, including the Uniform Dwelling Code Council, and will continue to meet throughout 2025.
- The DSPS collaborates annually with the Wisconsin Building Inspectors Association across the State of Wisconsin to provide Winter/Spring Commercial Building Code Updates, which involves a full day of commercial building code discussions. Training was held this year in Eau Claire, Green Bay, Oak Creek, and Lake Delton on February 11, 20, and 27, and March 20, respectively. The training was offered to the 650 licensed Wisconsin commercial building inspectors, as well as design professionals and contractors, based on availability.

- The DSPS partnered this year with the building inspector's associations and the UW's continuing education department to commission a comprehensive deep dive into heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) and energy code requirements and functionality. All three offerings were filled (50 each for 150 attendees total), and each had a waiting list. Reviews of the course were overwhelmingly positive.
- To date, the University of Wisconsin – Stout Manufacturing Outreach Center and Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership Manufacturing Solutions have supported 14 small- and medium-sized manufacturers in implementing advanced manufacturing measures through the Advanced Manufacturing Grant Program. These grants have enabled equipment purchases aimed at increasing productivity and have collectively leveraged over $3.5 million in private investment from participating manufacturers.
- From October 2023 through December 2024, the U.S. DOE Industrial Training and Assessment Center Implementation Grant Program awarded small- and medium-sized manufacturers to implement improvements at facilities that will save energy and reduce climate pollution.

Table 3. U.S. DOE Industrial Training and Assessment Center Implementation Grant Program

Awardee	Project Location - City	Federal Award	Applicant Cost Share	Types of Projects
City of Janesville Wastewater Treatment Plant	Janesville	$300,000	$300,000	Onsite Power
Dynamic Lifecycle Innovations, Inc.	Onalaska	$177,050	$177,050	Power Factor Upgrades
Madison-Kipp	Sun Prairie	$300,000	$419,096	HVAC-Furnace-Boiler-Thermostat Installation, Onsite Power, Installation of Variable Frequency Drives (VFDs)
Kirsh Foundry Inc	Beaver Dam	$300,000	$30,860	Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs), Installation of VFDs, Heavy Machinery Upgrades
Vergent Power Solutions on behalf of the City of Janesville Wastewater Treatment Plant	Janesville	$250,000	$250,000	Onsite Power
Watertown Water and Wastewater Utility	Watertown	$100,000	$100,000	Onsite Power
Plastics Engineering Company	Sheboygan	$111,350	$111,350	LEDs, Installation of VFDs, Other Ancillary Upgrades
Unit Drop Forge Co., Inc.	West Allis	$31,114	$31,114	LEDs

- On Jan. 8, 2025, the U.S. DOE announced awards for projects to support research and development of transformational technologies essential for reducing energy demand and enhancing American productivity in key industrial subsectors. The University of Wisconsin – Madison, in partnership with California State University-Chico and Michigan Technological University, aims to develop an innovative technology that applies tribology principles to asphalt mixture design, production, and placement—transforming asphalt paving into a low-carbon industry with more sustainable and durable pavement. The proposed technology could conserve virgin materials, significantly reduce carbon emissions during asphalt production and placement, and improve the mechanical performance of asphalt pavements, requiring less maintenance and rehabilitation. The project intends to cut CO2 emissions by over 50 percent and extend pavement longevity by at least 10 percent.
- UW-Madison provides data and construction site access for an external research team (Slipstream, Inc.) that is observing statewide practices related to energy performance to identify where further education or training might be needed.

CLIMATE & CLEAN ENERGY SUCCESS STORIES: YOUTH-DRIVEN CLIMATE RESILIENCE IN THE COMMUNITY

Source: City of Madison

Aakash Paneru grew up in Madison and loves the city's natural beauty. As a child, he enjoyed spending time at the Arboretum, walking along Lake Wingra, and exploring Curtis Prairie. Aakash is now studying Computer Science at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and remains passionate about the environment. He says he became involved in youth climate advocacy because of the personal changes he saw in Madison.

"I couldn't help but notice how intense storms had been getting and how many smoke events we were experiencing since I started at the UW. In high school, things seemed more distant. Fire was in California, for example," says Aaskash. Now, though, especially this past August, it was hard to walk around without wildfire smoke reminding me that even Madison is vulnerable," said Aaskash when asked about how he got involved with youth climate advocacy.

In 2025, the City of Madison received philanthropic funding to support youth-led projects addressing climate change. Aaskash and fellow UW-Madison student Pranab Adhikari were both interested in participating after seeing a social media post about the Youth Climate Action Fund. They reached out to their friend Pallav Regmi, a technology mentor and business owner in Madison, for help with coming up with an idea. Pallav quickly helped them organize into a team and determine what actions they could take. They called their new organization PlanetPatch.

PlanetPatch, alongside organizations like Sustain Dane, the Madison Chapter of Links, and Kennedy Heights Community Center were awarded grant funding to implement projects. PlanetPatch settled on two projects, one to build climate resiliency by planting rain gardens throughout Madison and another to raise awareness about greenhouse gas emissions by creating a program displaying how much of a household's electricity was generated by renewable energy.

Ultimately, they built 10 rain gardens with the help of Nepali youth throughout the community, including one at the Madison Senior Center. Pallav says that working with Nepali youth on climate resilience and education has made him more optimistic about the future.

"We have had Nepali high school and college students involved in something they didn't know was an option before we had this opportunity," says Pallav. "I can see them becoming more hopeful, and it has really energized me."

INNOVATE TRANSPORTATION

Background

Emissions from the transportation sector result directly from burning fossil fuels to power vehicles. Cars, buses, trucks, off-road vehicles, commercial aircraft, boats, and trains all contribute to transportation-related emissions. Strategies that reduce or eliminate the state's reliance on fossil fuels are essential for building a clean, resilient transportation system and directly addressing climate change in Wisconsin.

Accomplishments

Expanded support, resources, and incentives to innovate transportation occurred through the following:

- On September 4, 2025, Gov. Evers announced Wisconsin's joining the US Climate Alliance's Affordable Clean Cars Coalition, joining 12 states focused on helping America transition to cleaner and more affordable cars, supporting U.S. automotive manufacturers and workers, and improving air quality for everyone.
- State agencies and partners are working to support the transition to electric vehicles (EVs) statewide:
  - The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) oversees the Wisconsin Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (WEVI) Program, which funds the design, construction, acquisition, installation, operation, and maintenance of electric vehicle charging stations throughout Wisconsin. This program is financed by the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program. The solicitation for proposals for Round 1 of the program opened on January 2, 2024, and closed on April 1, 2024. On May 23, 2024, WisDOT announced conditional grant awards for 53 projects totaling approximately $23.3 million in NEVI funding. The WEVI Program Round 1.5 RFP application process, which has been on hold since February 2025, has now resumed. Applications were accepted through September 5, 2025. The focus of Round 1.5 is to fill all remaining gaps on Wisconsin's Alternative Fuel Corridor network. As of August 2025, WisDOT installed fast-charging electric vehicle charging stations as part of the WEVI program in Ashland, Menomonie, Chippewa Falls, and Mount Horeb.

- Through the Pavement Recycling Program, WisDOT recycles construction materials on projects to reduce waste and conserve resources, with no impact on the new product. Materials engineers ensure recycled material products are high-quality and comparable – if not better — than products made with new materials. In 2024, WisDOT recycled 1.75 million tons of material, also saving the department an estimated $29.8 million.

Last year, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation recycled 1.75 million tons of construction materials through the Pavement Recycling Program.

- In November 2024, WisDOT received $32 million from the federal FHWA's Low-Carbon Transportation Materials (LCTM) Grants Program. The program will initiate a pilot to establish sustainability benchmarks for contracts on state projects, aiming to accelerate efforts to develop an environmentally sustainable infrastructure program that promotes transportation projects using materials that lower greenhouse gas emissions.[xv]
- Dane County and the City of Milwaukee received funding through the FHWA's Charging and Fueling Infrastructure program, with $13.1 million and $14.9 million, respectively. Both were granted Community Charging and Alternative Fueling Grants to set up EV charging and alternative fuel stations in locations on public roads, schools, parks, and publicly accessible parking areas. Dane County is expected to have 92 Level 2 and DC Fast Charging EV stations, while the City of Milwaukee can anticipate 53 EV charging stations soon.
- In February 2025, the DOA announced $11.8 million in grants from the State of Wisconsin Transit Capital Grant Program (funded by VW Settlement dollars) for the purchase of 15 public transit buses serving Janesville, Wausau, Green Bay, and Beloit. These new, clean diesel, hybrid, and battery-electric buses will provide reliable rides to employment and shopping for Wisconsin residents and visitors. They will also help make communities healthier by removing older, dirtier diesel engines from operation.
- The Borealis daily Amtrak intercity rail service connecting St. Paul, Minnesota, and Chicago, Illinois, via Milwaukee, Wisconsin, opened on May 21, 2024. The Borealis passenger rail service continues to have strong ridership, with 246,690 passengers boarding from its launch in May 2024 through the end of June 2025. It serves as an alternative travel option between Chicago, Milwaukee, and the Twin Cities, with eight stops in Wisconsin.
- In October 2024, WisDOT received a $72.8 million federal grant from the Federal Railroad Administration's Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Program to enhance freight and passenger rail services in Wisconsin. The Muskego Freight Rail Yard Bypass Project will reconfigure existing tracks and yard facilities along the Canadian Pacific Kansas City railway corridor in Milwaukee. The project establishes a new double-track mainline through Muskego Yard, allowing freight trains to bypass the Milwaukee Intermodal Station, reducing passenger train delays and freeing up track capacity to keep goods moving safely and efficiently throughout the state.

PRIORITIZE HEALTH EQUITY, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, AND EQUITABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Background

Many communities have been left out of discussions about transforming our country's energy system and moving to clean energy. To mitigate the impact of climate change, these communities must be involved in decisions regarding clean energy technologies, job creation, and the associated economic and health implications. For example, increasing energy efficiency helps reduce energy costs for individuals, families, and communities with low to moderate incomes, ensuring they benefit from Wisconsin's shift to clean energy. Moreover, technology deployment must be affordable and accessible to all residents and communities.

Accomplishments

Expanded support, resources, and incentives to prioritize health equity, environmental justice, and equitable economic development occurred through the following:

- In June 2024, DOA hired a director for the state's first-ever Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ). The OEJ was created by Gov. Evers via Executive Order #161 and is tasked with developing a framework and strategy for environmental justice work across the administration.
- With support from the U.S. EPA CPRG program, the OSCE launched the Wisconsin Climate Action Navigators (WI CAN) Network. With more than 230 participants, WI CAN has increased meaningful engagement by leveraging its network of stakeholders to address and reduce climate impacts. This engagement extends beyond typical virtual listening sessions or online public comment efforts. The goal is to expand the network, reach deeper into communities, and empower them to share their needs, projects, and challenges to implementation. In 2025, the CPRG program awarded just over $400,000 to partners to boost community involvement and gather local input on the state's comprehensive climate action plan.
- In 2024 and 2025, OSCE staff continued to promote clean energy and sustainability outreach efforts across the state. They presented on the CEP and related initiatives, meetings, and events, reaching audiences that included state agency personnel, environmental and justice groups, labor organizations, utility representatives, nonprofits, businesses, Tribal Nations, and local governments. The estimated total reach at these events was roughly 3,500 individual stakeholders.

- The OSCE serves as a central source for information on funding and incentives for clean energy and sustainability efforts by stakeholders. The OSCE established an approach to provide one-on-one meetings with as many stakeholders as possible. The OSCE can gather specific information about projects and help identify needs and gaps, providing timely information on incentives, resources, or connections to other organizations to help them move their projects forward.
- OEJ released an RFP seeking a consultant to craft a statewide resilience plan to assist state offices and Wisconsin communities in planning for potential environmental or economic disasters. The plan is scheduled to be completed in Q4 2026.
- The DNR Urban Forestry Program awarded federal IRA funding to support projects that positively impact trees and people within disadvantaged communities in Wisconsin. Awardees include:

Table 4. DNR Urban Forestry IRA awards

Awardee	Federal Award	Type of Projects
Marathon County Parks	$498,482.08	City of Wausau Tree Planting and Private Ash Mitigation Project
Ho Chunk Nation	$497,630.00	Ho Chunk Urban Forest Regeneration Program
Milwaukee Water Commons	$494,372.00	Branch Out Milwaukee: Metcalfe Park
City of Eau Claire	$486,000.00	Greening Urban Spaces in Disadvantaged Eau Claire Neighborhoods
City of Racine	$453,450.00	Ash Removal/Replacement and Pruning in Parks and Bilingual Outreach in Neighborhoods
Urban Tree Alliance	$450,062.00	Neighborhood Forest Project
Operation Fresh Start	$388,834.00	Urban Forestry Empowerment Initiative for Disadvantaged Communities
Bad River Band of Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians	$188,722.23	Bad River Greenspace Improvement Project
City of Rhinelander	$182,000.00	Rhinelander Urban Forest Recovery and Revitalization
City of Sheboygan	$174,616.42	Reforestation and Retention of Trees in the City of Sheboygan to Improve Air Quality
City of Stevens Point	$105,500.00	Shading and Feeding Stevens Point
City of Colby	$47,900.00	To Make the City of Colby Green
City of Schofield	$32,431.08	Tree Canopy Addition at the Community Connector Trail

- On Earth Day 2024, Gov. Evers signed Executive Order #221 and announced that the state is increasing its Trillion Trees Pledge to 100 million trees by 2030.[xvi] In 2024, more than 119,000 trees were planted in urban areas, and another 10.5 million trees were planted in rural areas, bringing the total of trees planted to 42.7 million. Almost 43 percent of the state's goals were achieved in the first four years.
- A multi-program working group, facilitated by DNR's environmental justice policy advisor, developed and launched the DNR Environmental Justice Framework & Toolkit for Program and Project Planning. This resource establishes recommended guiding principles and best practices for all agency programs to identify communities disproportionately affected by climate and environmental issues and develop action steps to engage with these communities and address disparities related to both climate and environmental justice.

- The IT GIS Section developed the DNR Environmental Justice Mapping Tool, an internal web application with geospatial data on environmental impacts and socioeconomic factors impacting social determinants of health. The tool can be used by department programs to identify impacted communities in rural and urban areas.
- The DNR's Wildlife Management program supports the coordination of the Climate Healthy Equity Training Series for teachers in Milwaukee Public Schools, in partnership with school district staff and with support from the Medical College of Wisconsin. DNR staff are also helping the school district develop a climate curriculum and incorporate DNR resources into the Wisconsin Climate Education Hub online.
- Focus on Energy® continues to hold the annual Tribal Energy Symposium, a two-day event designed to facilitate an exchange between Tribal Nations and energy resource providers. It features insightful sessions, expert discussions, and valuable networking opportunities with statewide tribal leaders. The 2025 event covered IRA HOMES and HEAR updates, the MTERA HEAR program, OEI technical assistance, support from OSCE, developing a strategic energy plan, and enhancing grid resilience.
- All agencies in the state continue to hold annual tribal consultations to address the full range of issues under their jurisdiction.
- Through their Thrive Rural WI program, WEDC has been working with Vernon County Energy District, the only energy district in Wisconsin. The goal is to promote IRA HER programs with people in rural and low-income communities.
- To expand the conversation on climate solutions, a group of public health and climate professionals teamed up to create Wisconsin Climate & Health Action Together (CHAT) to:
  - Build knowledge about ways climate change harms health.
  - Spur local actions that protect health and reduce climate pollution.
  - Speak with a unified voice through local partners using the same message themes.
  - Bring community members together to make their own climate and health action plan.
- Dane County launched the Home Energy Guides program to help underserved communities access energy efficiency and electrification opportunities. By partnering with community-based organizations, the initiative aims to lower energy costs and enhance home comfort and safety for historically marginalized populations.
- UW-Milwaukee's School of Architecture and Urban Planning is a partner in a $3.4 million grant awarded to the City of Milwaukee for a net-zero energy home project supporting 25 net-zero homes being built in historically underserved communities.
- UW-River Falls included Climate Equity and Community Engagement in the Climate Action and Resiliency Plan as a key theme applicable to all goals in the plan.
- Free Food Alert and Food Recovery programs were initiated at UW-Eau Claire, with 600+ meals repackaged for the food pantry.

Photo Credit: Green Homeowners United

FAST-TRACKING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND A JUST TRANSITION

Background

Wisconsin must build an inclusive and fair clean energy workforce by systematically training and preparing workers to shift to clean energy. The CEP intentionally aims to provide clean energy job opportunities for those excluded from the traditional energy economy. Opportunities should include training, apprenticeships, and high-paying jobs for workers. This may also require businesses benefiting from state clean energy policies and incentives to have a workforce that reflects the regional demographics of the state.

Accomplishments

Expanded support, resources, and incentives to fast-track workforce development and a just transition occurred through the following:

- In 2024, the OSCE, in partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD), started developing and implementing a clean energy workforce inventory, funded by a philanthropic grant. The OSCE chairs a workgroup that includes DWD and the Universities of Wisconsin, supporting the project's goal: to create an inventory of clean energy, climate, and conservation jobs to promote workforce training in energy and conservation, as well as equitable economic development and workforce growth, as outlined in Executive Orders #38 and 52. This work focuses on the following:
  - Collect and report data, including but not limited to, apprenticeship standards, pay rates, demographics, skill and training requirements in the climate and clean energy sectors.
  - Coordinate with other internal project partners to gather and organize data.

- Mapping employers that make up the clean energy sector in Wisconsin, many of which are small and may not yet be members of professional associations. This mapping should identify clean energy and conservation/climate resilience opportunities (such as job opportunities, pay rates, businesses, and startups) and recommend ways to promote them to underrepresented communities.
- Coordinated outreach and engagement activities.

- Employ Milwaukee, Inc., the local Workforce Development Board for the Milwaukee Workforce Development Area, is a partner with the City of Milwaukee, which developed and approved a community-informed Climate & Equity Plan that includes 10 Big Ideas, one of which is a Green Jobs Accelerator.[xvii] The Green Jobs Accelerator aims to:
  - Build excitement for green jobs and careers.
  - Clarify training pathways.
  - Build skills through subsidized training.
  - Identify transitional jobs with career ladders.
  - Identify and create community benefits agreements for public projects.
  - Promote Black and Brown-owned business development.
- Clean energy programs continue to be eligible to apply for the DWD Wisconsin Fast Forward funding under the Industry Sectors Worker Training Grants program. A sampling of training to date from the DWD Wisconsin Fast Forward-funded projects is below:

  - University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee promoted and coordinated paid internships in Wisconsin's high-demand sectors of green energy and clean water. UW-Milwaukee established partnerships with industries, such as battery and water treatment companies, and connected with recruiting agencies to provide employment information for interns. As of June 2025, 45 internships have been completed or are in progress. Employment placement partners have expanded since 2023 to include Rockwell Automation, RPI, Inc., Arch Solar, Clarios, A.O. Smith, The Water Council, Advanced Ionics, Sentry Equipment, Ingeteam, Generac, Franklin Energy, Evoqua, Graef, Badger Meter, and Pentair.
  - Southwest Technical College and Wisconsin Battery LLC continue coordinating training to employ at least 251 individuals being laid off by Energizer's recently announced closures, which resulted in the loss of 600 Wisconsin jobs. As they open new facilities in Fennimore and Portage, Wisconsin Battery LLC will continue production of alkaline, zinc-air, and silver oxide batteries at these new plants while transitioning to electric vehicle and green battery production. A sample of occupations to be trained includes electrical engineering technicians, electro-mechanical technicians, heating and air conditioning mechanics and installers, maintenance and repair workers, machinists, and tool and die makers.

- The DWD also supports clean energy via its Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL) (see Appendix I). There are currently 10 unique programs listed on the ETPL that directly address clean energy:
  - Building Science & Energy Management
  - Environmental Health & Water Quality Technology
  - Greenhouse Operations (FVTC)
  - Greenhouse Operations (GTC)
  - MSSC Green Production
  - Renewable Energy
  - Renewable Energy Technician
  - Solar Energy Technology Associate Degree
  - Solar Installation Technician
  - Sustainable Food and Agriculture Systems

Additionally, the ETPL includes training programs such as Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration (HVAC/R), which incorporate "green" principles in their more standard curriculum.

- Gov. Evers' Workforce Solutions Initiative, via the Worker Advancement Initiative (WAI) and the Workforce Innovation Grant (WIG) program, has also supported clean energy training:
  - The Boys & Girls Club of Dane County is using its $3.5 million WIG award to educate youth about apprenticeship opportunities in skilled trades, including construction, HVAC, and electrical work that embrace "green" principles.
  - Operation Fresh Start is utilizing its $3.3 million WIG award to establish the "Build Academy," which will train youth for careers in skilled trades and construction.
  - Through the WAI award, the Workforce Development Board of South-Central Wisconsin has provided carpentry pre-apprenticeship and other skilled trades training to incarcerated individuals nearing re-entry.
  - The North Central Workforce Development Board initially included renewable energy in its construction trades program for WAI. However, students did not choose that career path, and no students were hired in the Clean Energy field.
  - Employ Milwaukee WAI program had one participant who was hired by Green Homeowners United (GHU) through their Skillful Transitions program. GHU helps residents upgrade their homes to become more energy efficient. The participant's background was in carpentry and home repair, but needed additional training in energy-efficient projects. The participants were able to gain that education through on-the-job training (OJT) with Skillful Transitions. After completing the program, the participants increased their wage by $2 per hour.
- UW-Milwaukee's College of Engineering & Applied Science received a $5.7 million grant to be one of the U.S. DOE's Clean Energy and Manufacturing Workforce Consortia lead institutions, supporting training centers at community colleges where students and workers learn about clean energy technologies. At the University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire, new courses in the College of Business are to be offered, including in corporate sustainability. LEED training is free to students, faculty, and staff. UW-Eau Claire students can now select from 10 internships at the university focused on sustainability.

ACCELERATING GOVERNMENT-LED EFFORTS (LEAD-BY-EXAMPLE)

Background

Drawing from the lived experiences, expertise, and knowledge of Tribal Nations, local government representatives, and state agency employees, governments can serve as leaders in efforts to reduce emissions, conserve energy, and adopt new technologies. These initiatives are often called “Lead-by-Example” (LBE), where government entities analyze and transition their facilities and fleets to achieve significant cost savings, lower GHG emissions, diversify energy sources, build resilience, and procure more sustainable products.

Accomplishments

"[As] co-chair of the Alliance, I will fight like hell to build the cleaner, healthier future our kids and grandkids deserve here in Wisconsin and across America."

Governor Tony Evers

In May 2025, Gov. Evers was appointed Co-chair of the U.S. Climate Alliance (USCA), along with California Gov. Newsom. The USCA is a bipartisan coalition of 24 governors representing approximately 60 percent of the U.S. economy and 55 percent of the U.S. population. Gov. Evers is the first Midwest governor to serve in this role. Further, this appointment solidifies the administration’s commitment to efforts that help advance equitable solutions to environmental challenges facing the state and nation, build a transformed, more resilient, clean-energy economy, and ensure a more sustainable future for all. The Alliance is committed to securing a net-zero future in America by advancing state-led, high-impact climate action solutions and collectively achieving the goals of the 2015 Paris Agreement to combat climate change.

Tribal Nations

Tribal Nations throughout the state focused on efforts to reduce emissions, conserve energy, and transition to new technologies. Below are some highlights:

- With increased emissions reduction, climate, and energy-related projects on Tribal Lands, the OSCE, along with the OEJ, visited Tribal Nations throughout the state. Both the OEJ and OSCE aim to continue building relationships, aligning initiatives, optimizing resources for Tribal communities, and creating a trusted network to help local community members access funding, green job opportunities, and effective channels for participation in decision-making.
- The Resilience and Prosperity in Rural Northern Wisconsin project plans to use just over $12 million in funds ($9.7 million federal share and $2.5 million local match) to install microgrids in the state's northernmost area. The project is led by the OSCE, in partnership with the WEDC's Office of Rural Prosperity, the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Bayfield County, Cheq Bay Renewables, muGrid Analytics, and Slipstream, Inc. It will deploy microgrids featuring solar power, battery storage, and smart controls to enable islanding and electric vehicle charging stations. This initiative aims to expand clean energy access in 28 rural communities across Wisconsin, creating projects that serve as scalable models to enhance energy resilience, promote clean energy adoption, and generate green jobs for rural areas throughout the state.
- The Mashkiiziibii Minigrid plans to implement a hybrid minigrid, larger than a microgrid, to boost energy resilience in communities along Lake Superior's shores that frequently face severe weather and power outages. The Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, also known as Mashkiiziibii in Ojibwemowin, will lead this project to deploy 5 MW of solar power and eight megawatt-hours of battery storage. The initiative aims to achieve several key objectives: reducing utility bills by 10 percent, increasing financial benefits for Tribal citizens, creating job opportunities and workforce training for Tribal members, and ensuring that 50 percent of the workforce consists of Tribal community members.

Local Governments

Local governments accelerated efforts to deploy and implement energy efficiency, renewable energy, and climate action initiatives. Many Wisconsin cities and communities are initiating climate action and clean energy plans and strategies. Below is a sampling of work done by local governments across the state.

Renewable Energy

- In early 2025, the City of Sun Prairie achieved 100 percent renewable electricity for all municipal operations, meeting a goal set initially in 2022.
- In 2024, the Village of McFarland completed a $4 million Public Safety Center with solar and geothermal energy, supported by Focus on Energy®. The project anticipates receiving a $1 million tax credit through the federal Elective Pay tax credit, which will cover 26 percent of its clean energy costs.
- The City of La Crosse expanded its municipal solar installations in 2024 to include Fire Stations #2 and #4 and a new 200-kilowatt (kW) array at the La Crosse Center. These projects are part of a multi-phase Sustainability Project that aims to increase energy efficiency and on-site renewable energy use for municipal buildings.

- The City of Eau Claire subscribed to 1.3 MW of a new 5 MW commercial community solar array built in a neighboring community. This subscription enables the city to offset electricity use at municipal buildings, such as City Hall, that are not well-suited for on-site solar installations.
- In October 2024, the City of Racine began construction on the Lincoln-King Community and Health Care Center, designed to be the city's first net-zero building with a parking solar canopy, permeable pavement, underground detention, geothermal system, rooftop solar, rooftop rainwater harvesting, and bio-retention. Primarily funded by the American Rescue Plan Act, the 75,000-square-foot center will provide health and community services while advancing the city's climate and equity goals.
- The City of Wauwatosa significantly expanded existing rooftop solar on the Department of Public Works building and City Hall with new installations at the Police Station, the Potter Road Water Utility Pumping Station, the Muellner Building at Hart Park, and Firefly Grove Park. With these new installations, Wauwatosa is on track to generate more than 25 percent of all electricity used across municipal operations from on-site renewable solar energy.
- The City of Appleton Wastewater Treatment Plant installed two waste-heat-to-power generators in 2024. Instead of releasing methane produced via treatment processes, these generators will utilize the excess methane to generate electricity for the plant. The amount of electricity produced would be equivalent to powering 46 homes for a year. Over 95 percent of the project cost is covered by state and federal incentives, bringing the payback period down to 1.26 years.
- La Crosse County installed 740kw of solar at six county-owned sites, including the Administration Building, Law Enforcement Center, Lakeview Senior Care Center, and the Health and Human Services Building. The installations utilized the Elective Pay tax credits and covered about 15 percent of the County's building energy use.
- September 2024, Milwaukee County initiated a comprehensive solar feasibility study to assess the potential for installing solar photovoltaic (PV) systems across its facilities. This study aims to identify cost-effective opportunities for solar energy deployment, contributing to the county's goal of reducing emissions from operations by at least 50 percent by 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2050.

Electric Vehicles/Charging

- In 2024, La Crosse County acquired a Ford Lightning electric truck for use by the Facilities Department as part of its transition to cleaner fleet vehicles. The County leveraged tax credits to support the purchase. While planning for additional EV adoption, the County has encountered barriers to installing electric vehicle chargers in surface parking lots, highlighting infrastructure challenges in the public sector.
- In July 2024, the City of Green Bay Police Department introduced its first EVs into its fleet (a Tesla and a Toyota RAV4). The IRA funded the purchase. Additionally, Green Bay Metro Transit purchased an electric bus that will join its fleet in 2025. The City is also working on the installation of new traffic signals and traffic controls that will reduce carbon emissions from idling by increasing transportation efficiency. The City is implementing the Safe Walk & Bike Plan, which reduces carbon emissions by making walking and biking safer. Green Bay has 37 miles of bike lanes and 48 rectangular rapid flashing beacons.

- In September 2024, the City of Madison became the first city in Wisconsin to introduce all-electric trash collection trucks into its fleet. The purchase of these heavy-duty electric vehicles, including a rear loader and an automated side loader, is part of the city's Climate Forward Agenda to reduce emissions and promote sustainable municipal operations.
- The City of Sun Prairie adopted a resolution to achieve a 50 percent fully electric light-duty municipal fleet by 2035. It incorporated the city's first two EVs into its police fleet (a detective vehicle and an evidence van).

Community Engagement

- The City of Green Bay, utilizing EECBG funding, hired a Clean Energy Connector in May 2024 to create and execute a public clean energy campaign. The Energize Green Bay (EGB) brand was created along with its website. The Clean Energy Connector organizes and presents informational sessions, provides "helpline" services, implements a social media strategy, appears on local television stations and other media, and increases partnerships with community-based organizations, including some working with environmental justice communities. In December 2024, the City of Green Bay launched EGB, a public outreach campaign aimed at assisting residents, small business owners, and nonprofits in enhancing energy efficiency and adopting clean energy solutions. The initiative offers resources on available tax credits, rebates, and incentives, and includes community events and informational sessions to promote sustainable practices.
- The Lighting Jobs Program launched by Milwaukee County in 2024 aims to improve energy efficiency in county buildings while creating career pathways in the skilled trades. The program specifically focuses on training and employing local high school students from low- to moderate-income households, as well as women and members of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities.
- The City of Wauwatosa hired its first Sustainability Manager in the Department of Public Works to advance sustainability initiatives across the community. In the past year, the Wauwatosa Sustainability Committee hosted tables at four community events, engaging with over 230 residents. The Committee also hosted a sustainable family movie screening, attended by over 40 families, and provided a Waste Wizard workshop during intermission to educate residents on proper recycling and special disposal.

State Agencies

State agencies collaborated to address climate change, transition to clean energy, and reduce GHG emissions. Below are examples of this work:

Planning & Research

- With support from the U.S. Climate Alliance, the OSCE continues to run the Lead by Example Technical Advisory Teams—composed of dedicated subject matter experts from state agencies and UW campuses. By modeling leadership in sustainability and clean energy, the state enterprise can serve as a trailblazer for others to follow.
- UW-Milwaukee supported the OSCE CPRG through data collection and synthesis of state-wide climate action planning efforts.
- As part of a Climate Action & Resiliency Planning process, UW-River Falls conducted a literature review, which included state policies and publications.

Supporting clean energy and energy efficiency projects

- The Facilities and Lands program at the Wisconsin DNR is piloting the U.S. EPA's Energy Star Portfolio Manager system to prioritize DNR buildings for energy efficiency improvements, and modified DNR's internal asset management system to add existing alternative energy features to building records.
- DOA Division of Facilities Development requires all capital projects delivered by the Division to follow the "Division of Facilities Development - Sustainability Guidelines for Capital Projects", updated in July 2024. These guidelines require:
  - Major new construction, tenant improvement, site/civil, and equipment replacement projects have a Commissioning Agent who tracks utilities 6, 12, and 18 months after substantial completion.
  - A minimum of 1 percent of annual energy consumption from on-site renewable energy sources (or clean energy). Eligible sources may include PV solar panels, solar collectors, or solar thermal systems for heating water.
  - Major new construction and remodeling projects must perform a Life Cycle Assessment that tracks embodied carbon with the intent of selecting options that reduce carbon footprint.
  - All projects are to make informed materials selections to achieve durable, safe, and healthy projects that minimize possible negative impacts on the planet.
  - All tenant improvement projects must use a minimum of 10 products with Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs), and all new construction and major renovation projects must use a minimum of 20 products with EPDs.
  - In addition, all projects are encouraged to use the following products responsibly: steel, concrete, architectural insulation, and wood sourcing. The guidelines emphasize the use of local and regional materials/products.
- The construction stage of the Department of Corrections (DOC) solar project at the Wisconsin Secure Program Facility in Boscobel is complete. The project was originally expected to be in service by late 2024, but due to delays, it is now expected to become operational by late 2025. The solar array is a 700 KW and will provide 28 percent of the total energy required to operate the facility. The project is funded with Energy Conservation Bonding and supplemented by a 30 percent Inflation Reduction Act Direct Payment. The project has an anticipated simple payback of 15.9 years. The DOC is also completing a large lighting upgrade to conserve energy.
- The Wisconsin Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA) is implementing two capital projects to realize significant reductions in energy consumption at the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King by replacing all of the metal halide and high pressure sodium bulbs, tunnel and stairwell lighting with energy efficient LED light fixtures and partnering with Focus on Energy® on funding incentives for upgrading the existing chillers and chiller controls with high efficiency components. DVA is also participating in the DOA's efforts to modernize and right-size the state's real estate footprint and reduce associated energy consumption by reducing its office space footprint by over 9,000 square feet through consolidation, relocation, and hybrid work environments.
- The Universities of Wisconsin adopted Sustainable Building Guidelines for all Major New Construction & Renovation projects that include strong energy efficiency and renewable energy requirements.

- UW-Stevens Point is completing two new buildings, a 150,000 gross square feet (gsf) Library and a 55,000 gsf Student Health and Wellness Center, that are far more energy efficient than state energy codes. Both buildings are “right-sized” to meet campus-specific needs and reduce excess square footage. The new library will have a large 390kW solar PV array.
- UW-River Falls has a written Climate Action & Resiliency Plan that is currently going through the approval channels. If approved, there are goals in place for achieving net-zero GHG emissions by 2045, which include improving energy efficiency across campus and transitioning to 100 percent renewable electricity. This transition will hopefully include increasing solar generation on campus. The Climate Action and Resiliency Plan process concluded in March 2025, following 1.5 years of research and stakeholder engagement activities.
- UW-Madison has executed energy savings projects that secured nearly $250,000 in incentives from the Focus on Energy program and is now preparing to launch a planning effort to design an internal retro-commissioning team to support efficient facility tune-ups. The university has also advanced sustainable materials management through programs such as Oscar Sort and the Zero-Waste Compass, both of which aim to improve campus waste diversion and reduce scope three emissions. In addition, several new facilities in planning and construction, including Morgridge Hall, Levy Hall, Engineering Hall, and the Camp Randall Sports Center Replacement, incorporate energy-efficient design and rooftop solar installations. UW–Madison recently completed construction of the Kegonsa Research Campus Agrivoltaics Field, which is actively generating electricity and providing research opportunities for students; this award-winning solar array was also recognized at the National Solar Farm Summit in Chicago.
- UW-Eau Claire opened the Sonnentag Center, a recreational facility that is net energy neutral and LEED Gold certified, and has begun the process of converting the heating system of its North Campus buildings to ground-source heat pumps. The university also received a $75,000 Rural Energy Startup Program grant to support energy audits of five campus buildings, and it is investigating opportunities for energy savings that can be addressed through the DOA’s Energy Saving Performance Contracting program.
- UW-Stout continues to invest in electric snow blowers and leaf blowers and will be incorporating solar PV panels as part of the renovation of Heritage Hall. In 2024, the university was one of ten Wisconsin government entities and businesses recognized with an Energy Efficiency Excellence Award from Focus on Energy, the state’s energy efficiency program, and it was also named a Green Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education in recognition of its sustainability efforts in both operations and education.
- UW-Superior has a 440-kW solar PV array that is under construction.
- The Wisconsin Department of Transportation is completing construction of a new facility that will use a geothermal heat pump system for all its heating and cooling needs, and it is also completing a multi-facility lighting retrofit to upgrade from fluorescent to LED lighting.

- The PSC initiated a planning and engagement process starting in 2024 to review its current approach to the Energy Use in State Facilities report and identify potential modifications that can help future reports provide as much value as possible, including (but not limited to) supporting Lead by Example initiatives.

Transitioning the state's vehicle fleet to clean fuels and zero-emission vehicles:

- The DNR Facilities and Lands program continues to help the department minimize emissions from DNR vehicles. According to the online dashboard developed by staff, DNR fleet vehicle emissions have dropped significantly, with emissions at their lowest level since tracking began in 2018. The department currently has 53 hybrid vehicles, 16 compressed natural gas trucks, and 12 electric vehicles. Telework reduced staff commuting vehicle emissions by approximately 51 percent, according to an October 2021 telework survey.
- DOA DFD requires all capital projects delivered by the Division to follow the "Division of Facilities Development - Sustainability Guidelines for Capital Projects", updated in July 2024, which encourages all projects to use the Federal Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Projection Tool Lite to determine the quantity of electric vehicle charging stations that the project will provide.
- DOA Department of Facilities and Transportation recently renewed leases on several State Office charging stations.
- UW-Madison:
  - Completed an EV charging infrastructure study that identified priority areas for installing charging infrastructure to support fleet electrification.
  - Purchased two new low-speed EV vehicles (GEM e4s) and completed contracts with low-speed vehicle vendors that include EV vehicles and are available for state-wide use (UWMSN-2024-1914, 1915, 1916, and 1917).
  - Is working with MGE on potentially locating public fast-charging EV infrastructure at institutional property.
- UW-Green Bay installed two ChargePoint Level 2 electric vehicle charging stations on campus, with one near a new residence hall and one near the Weidner Center for the Performing Arts.
- Five EV chargers have been installed at The Sonnentag Center on the UW-Eau Claire campus.
- EV Chargers have been installed at UW-Stout.

Reducing Water Consumption

- DOA DFD requires all capital projects delivered by the Division to follow the "Division of Facilities Development - Sustainability Guidelines for Capital Projects", updated in July 2024, which include the following requirements:
  - The Architect or Engineer of Record is to predict and reduce indoor water use in the design. For typical buildings, there is a 25 percent reduction in water use compared to flow rates in the Energy Policy Act of 1992. The aggregate expected building usage, as specified in the DFD master plumbing specifications, exceeds this requirement. For major new construction and tenant improvement projects with high-process usage (such as pools, on-site chillers, or commercial kitchens): document best practices, model water usage, and exceed 10 percent savings.
- UW-Milwaukee participates in a water stewardship program through The Water Council.

- UW-Stevens Point has implemented low-flow fixtures in new construction projects across campus (including major state projects) and minimizes irrigation through landscape design.
- UW-River Falls has a goal in the Climate Action and Resiliency Plan focused on water conservation and efficiency.

Sustainable Procurement

- UW-Madison, in collaboration with Brailsford & Dunlavey through a pro bono program organized by Second Nature, will identify pathways to reduce emissions associated with purchased goods and services. Scope 3 emissions (indirect emissions related to the University's value chain) represent a category with many unknowns both for UW–Madison as well as the higher education sector in general, and are a key factor in UW–Madison's target of Net Zero emissions by 2048. The project team includes staff from the University of Wisconsin Administration, allowing for the application of data review and data collection process improvement opportunities across the UW system. Pathways for emissions reductions will ideally have the potential for broad applicability across the higher education sector.
- The DOA State Bureau of Procurement is exploring ways to expand sustainable options in state-mandated contracts and improve reporting processes to understand the use of eco-labeled products better.

Wisconsin is well-positioned to continue advancing toward a clean energy economy, workforce, and state built for the 21st century. This movement will improve public health, provide reliable energy resources, lower family costs, and create thousands of new, family-supporting jobs.

CLIMATE & CLEAN ENERGY SUCCESS STORIES: STUDENT LEADERSHIP DRIVES HABITAT'S RENEW THE BLOCK PROJECT

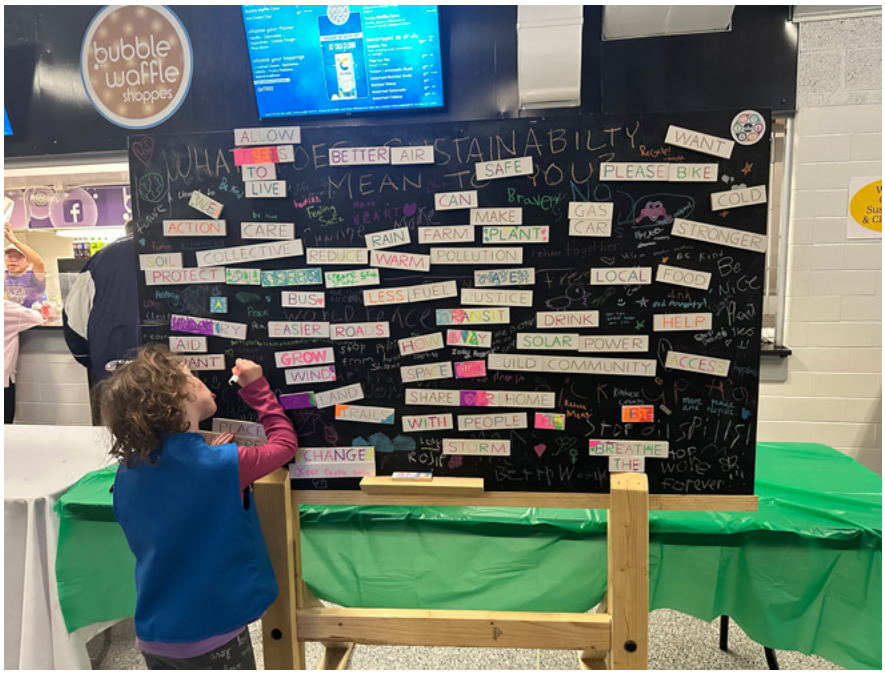
Source: Habitat for Humanity of the Greater La Crosse Region

ReNew the Block is a groundbreaking neighborhood revitalization effort led by Habitat for Humanity of the Greater La Crosse Region thats transforming outdoor spaces into sustainable, community-driven areas. Focused on the Logan North Side Neighborhood, the project combines stormwater management, essential home repairs, community education, and urban agriculture into one initiative. What makes this project unique is the central role of students. From middle school through college, young people gain hands-on experience in sustainable design, environmental stewardship, and directly shaping the neighborhood where they live.

At Logan Middle School, more than 416 students have contributed over 1,200 hours planting 1,275 native plants and 15 trees, building a 740-square-foot rain garden, and helping install an outdoor classroom. Art classes collaborated with a local muralist to design a permanent mural for the school, while music classes performed at community events celebrating the project's progress. The work continues in classrooms as well, where science, math, art, and technology courses now incorporate ReNew the Block into lessons ranging from rain garden design to creating signage and outdoor learning spaces.

Partnerships with higher education institutions have increased the project's reach. Western Technical College landscape students are training to lead planting and green infrastructure installations, gaining real-world workforce skills while mentoring younger students. University of Wisconsin–La Crosse students contribute through grant writing and fundraising projects. Together, these collaborations are creating a model for how schools, nonprofits, and communities can work side by side to reduce stormwater runoff, enhance biodiversity, and prepare students for future careers in sustainability. ReNew the Block shows how community building and climate resilience can start with education and grow into sustainable change.

CONTINUING PROGRESS



Advancing the CEP and its implementation is dependent on three main elements: (1) ongoing stakeholder engagement; (2) measuring and verifying strategies; and (3) an annual progress report that includes continuous data collection, synthesis, and analysis, all of which are accurate and relevant for understanding Wisconsin's evolving clean energy ecosystem and the progress of CEP implementation.

Wisconsin's CEP continues to offer a framework to ensure that Wisconsin businesses, communities, and residents are well-positioned to share in the work and benefits of this plan. The OSCE will maintain its role in implementing the CEP, seeking input on strategies and securing additional resources to help the state transition to a clean energy economy. The OSCE will also continue to consider and advise on the status of Wisconsin's energy generation and use, emissions, affordability, and social factors that may influence the pathways.

In contrast with current and recent federal actions and reports that undermine broadly accepted and science-based reality, the state continues to recognize that human-caused climate impacts persist and will continue to harm people, communities, and ecosystems unless these impacts are tackled head-on and solutions are implemented. The OSCE and its partners focus on adaptation, mitigation efforts, system-wide changes, and a just transition, which are essential for building climate resilience. However, significantly more support is needed to effectively expand solutions across multiple sectors. Doing nothing in Wisconsin would impose enormous costs on our communities—especially low-income and disadvantaged groups facing the worst effects of climate change—our agricultural sectors, statewide infrastructure, and our economy. Therefore, inaction is not an option. Thankfully, as detailed in this report, Wisconsin continues to make meaningful progress in our shared shift toward a clean energy economy.

APPENDIX I DWD ELIGIBLE TRAINING PROVIDERS LIST

Program Name	Institution Name	Program Description
Greenhouse Operations	Fox Valley Technical College	In the fast-growing and ever-changing field of horticulture, the Greenhouse Operations associate degree is a great opportunity to become a valuable member of the horticulture industry. This degree will prepare you for a variety of careers in the greenhouse field. You'll apply the latest hands-on technologies in an environmentally friendly and sustainable practice. Your training will include propagating and growing plants, learning hydroponic food production, working in outdoor settings, diagnosing pest issues, and designing a greenhouse growing operation. Instruction covers a wide array of plant types.
MSSC Green Production	INNOVATIVE EDUCATIONAL SOLUTIONS INSTITUTE INC	Green Production training outlines the steps required to implement a company's Green Production Program. 1. Describe green manufacturing, 2. Describe why environmental training should include information on the latest technological advancements in manufacturing, 3. Train workers in Environmental Issues, 4. Conduct Environmental Incident and Hazard Investigations, 5. Conduct Preventive Environmental Inspections, and 6. Implement & Promote Environmental Programs, Projects, Policies, or Procedures
Greenhouse Operations	Gateway Technical College	The Greenhouse Operations program trains students in greenhouse growing and operations, hydroponics, and retail garden center and floral shop management. Hands-on experience in a commercial greenhouse, ornamental gardens, and an operating urban farm are part of the learning experience. Plant identification, care, and culture are key elements of the program, as are technical and graphic skills, sustainable methods for plant care, and creative approaches to problem-solving and landscape design. Students can gain a specialized skill set in landscape design, which emphasizes sustainable landscape management, landscape estimating, and business operations. Students engage in various industry visits to enhance their learning experience.
Renewable Energy	Chippewa Valley Technical College	This Embedded Technical Diploma prepares students with the skills necessary for basic geothermal, solar photovoltaic, solar thermal, and wind services. After successful completion, students can apply these credits to the Air Conditioning, Heating, Refrigeration, and Renewable Technology 1-year technical diploma and the 2-year associate degree.

Program Name	Institution Name	Program Description
Renewable Energy Technician	Mid-State Technical College	The only program of its kind in the Wisconsin Technical College System, Mid-State's Renewable Energy Technician program prepares students to design an integrated portfolio of renewable and traditional energy-producing systems. Graduates develop a working knowledge of green building concepts and energy-efficient design principles as well as the foundation needed for an entry-level position in the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) fields. In this program, you will learn to perform site assessments and recommend appropriate renewable energy technologies, sell and market renewable energy technologies, and manage renewable energy installation projects. Mid-State's unique facilities, a variety of brands of equipment and software for training, experienced faculty, and off-campus design opportunities make this program one-of-a-kind.
Solar Installation Technician	Western Technical College	Solar energy is a growing industry in western Wisconsin. The Solar Installation Technician certificate is designed to address the needs of regional utility power suppliers that offer renewable energy options, as well as private companies that provide solar solutions for residential, commercial, non-profit, and government sectors. Western has several solar panel systems that not only provide power to buildings but also offer the perfect, real-life training opportunity.
Building Science & Energy Management	Western Technical College	In the United States, buildings represent one of our biggest energy consumers. As a result, buildings have been targeted for energy reduction strategies to reduce cost and dependence on carbon-based fuels. Building Science and Energy Management will examine the built environment and its relationship to energy, utilizing the latest research, tools, and technology available. You will gain hands-on experience working with community projects and in living laboratories in Western state-of-the-art facilities. Study topics include energy auditing, energy management, renewable energy systems, and integrated design. The focus of the program is to prepare you for entry-level work in the growing renewable energy, energy efficiency, and building systems industry. Having these unique skills will give you a leg up in a competitive job market.
Energy Management Technology	Northeast Wisconsin Technical College	Energy expenses make up a part of every business's bottom line. Employers are seeking individuals skilled in monitoring energy consumption who can detect and evaluate energy efficiency opportunities. Graduates of the Energy Management Technology associate degree program are equipped to lead businesses' energy management initiatives. Energy managers work within a variety of business sectors: utility companies, energy equipment companies, government agencies, and heating, ventilating, air conditioning, and refrigeration contractors. Graduates may also find careers as energy auditors, energy management consultants, or energy program coordinators.

Program Name	Institution Name	Program Description
Solar Energy Technology Associate Degree	Northeast Wisconsin Technical College	The Solar Energy Technology program provides installers, designers, and technical sales personnel with the skills to assess sites, design systems, and install, operate, and maintain solar electric and solar thermal systems for residential and commercial applications in the growing renewable energy industry. Potential employment opportunities will be available with existing solar, electrical, and mechanical contractors to help expand their offerings of solar energy technologies. Other possible areas of employment include energy consulting firms, design firms, and utilities. With additional education and experience, graduates can expand their careers to energy analyst, journeyperson electrician/plumber, project manager, energy engineer, and environmental consultant.
Sustainable Food and Agriculture Systems	Northeast Wisconsin Technical College	As a graduate of the Sustainable Food and Agriculture Systems associate degree program, you're ready for careers in sustainable gardening, field crop production, livestock operations, and emerging areas like aquaponics. You will have the necessary knowledge to run your own successful food-related business and add value to your farm products or be qualified for employment in a variety of positions associated with sustainable agriculture, including commercial gardens, livestock operations, farmer support, and local food system efforts.

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