



Wind turbines in Illinois. Credit: Tom Shockey via Flickr, CC BY 2.0

It's time for Illinois to transform the way we produce and consume energy

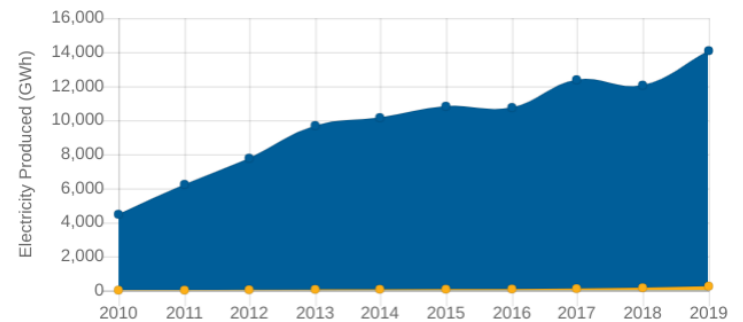
We have a choice. We can continue powering our lives by burning fossil fuels, destroying wild places, clean water, our health and the climate. Or, we can decide to take a different path.

Today, we can harness clean, abundant energy from the sun and wind more efficiently -- and cheaply -- than ever before, tapping into power that doesn't pollute or make us sick. Yet, Illinois still primarily produces and consumes energy from fossil fuels. It doesn't make sense to frack for gas near schools instead of putting solar panels on their roofs; drill for oil near beaches instead of harnessing the winds that blow offshore; or burn coal, oil, and gas instead of powering our homes, cars and lives with clean, renewable energy. It's time to break free.

We can have healthier communities right now, and a livable future for generations to come—but to get there, we need to transform the way we produce and consume energy.

Our vision: 100 percent renewable energy

In a future run on 100 percent renewable energy, everything we need power for in our lives-- our lights, our chargers, our refrigerators, our heating and cooling, our transportation -- would run on energy sources that don't pollute our air and water or harm the climate. That means a healthier, cleaner and safer future.



Solar energy progress in Illinois, 2010 to 2019:

Illinois saw a 13-fold, or 233 GWh, increase in annual solar generation (yellow) and a 3-fold, or 9,377 GWh, increase in annual wind generation (blue).

Renewable energy is ready for primetime

Renewable energy has reached a tipping point in the U.S. and here in Illinois, enabling Illinoisans to envision a future powered by 100 percent renewable energy. America produces almost four times as much renewable electricity from the sun and wind as it did in 2010. Right here in Illinois, solar energy generation has increased 13-fold and our wind power production by 3-fold since 2010.

Plummeting prices and advancements in clean energy technologies, in combination with a state renewable energy target and net metering program that helps more Illinoisans go solar, have helped drive clean, renewable energy progress so far. But, Illinois is falling behind our current goal of 25 percent renewable by 2025, and we can do much more to tap our vast clean energy potential.

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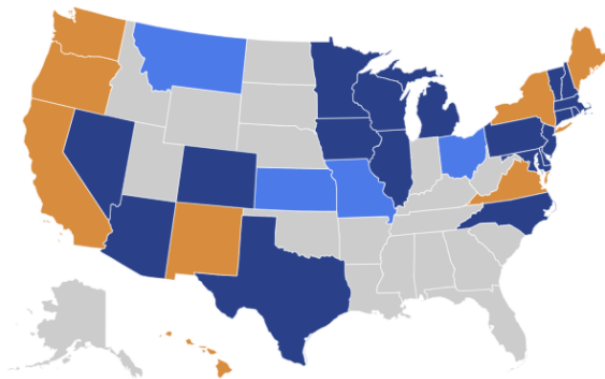




Illinois should commit to 100 percent renewable energy

While clean, renewable energy is growing rapidly, fully replacing fossil fuels will require additional commitment and action. A legislative commitment to 100 percent renewable energy, including timely targets and benchmarks, can act as an enforceable tool to help us make the transition. Eight states have already passed such commitments to 100 percent clean or renewable electricity, and Illinois should join their ranks.

Environment Illinois is advocating for a statewide commitment to 100 percent renewable energy by 2050, in addition to strong policies to help achieve that goal.



- states with renewable energy requirements.
- states that have increased their goals.
- states that have committed to 100%.



A growing movement

Just as a growing number of states are setting their sights on 100 percent renewable energy, so are cities, towns and leading institutions. With over 170 cities and towns across the country -- including Chicago and Evanston -- already on board, one in three Americans now lives in a community committed to 100 percent clean or renewable power. And businesses, utilities and college campuses are taking action too. For example, the student organization Illinois PIRG Students is calling on nine campuses across the state to go 100 percent renewable this spring.

100 percent renewable commitments are taking off because it's an idea everyone can get behind. Most Americans support a commitment to 100 percent renewable energy. Clean energy technologies like solar enjoy broad support across party lines. And, most importantly, Illinoisans want a renewable energy future.

Now is the time to build on that momentum and public support, and pass legislation committing to 100 percent renewable energy for a cleaner, healthier Illinois.

To learn more about our campaign and for additional resources, visit:

environmentillinois.org/feature/ile/100-renewable

