

Governor Quinn Announces Illinois is First in the Nation in Renewable Energy Use

Written by Katie Hickey

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New Report says 91 Illinois Communities Have Achieved 100 Percent Renewable Electricity

CHICAGO – Governor Pat Quinn today announced that a new report has found Illinois leads the nation in the number of communities using renewable electricity. The report shows 91 Illinois communities have achieved 100 percent renewable electricity, far more than any other state. Today's announcement is part of Governor Quinn's agenda to protect our natural resources and ensure a clean and healthy environment for future generations.

"Renewable energy benefits everyone, from energy customers to Illinois farmers to anyone who breathes our air," Governor Quinn said. "This new study confirms that people around the world can look to Illinois as an example of what can be done with renewable energy."

The report was released today by the Environmental Law & Policy Center, Sierra Club, World Wildlife Fund, LEAN Energy US, the Illinois Solar Energy Association and George Washington University Solar Institute.

"This report shows the strong public demand for renewable energy across Illinois, and the potential for solar energy and wind power to drive sustainable development in communities from Carbondale to Evanston," Howard A. Learner, Executive Director of the Environmental Law & Policy Center said.

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The 91 communities that have transitioned to 100 percent renewable electricity represent more than 1.7 million individuals. According to the report, demand for renewable energy from the state is more than six terawatt hours, a reduction in greenhouse gas comparable to taking more than one million cars off the road.

A 2009 Illinois law allows communities to buy their own electricity and more than 600 have done so, including the 91 who buy renewable energy directly or buy credits to help fund renewable energy development. Renewable energy includes such sources as solar, wind and biofuels.

The 91 Illinois communities that use 100 percent renewable electricity are Alton, Arlington Heights, Aurora, Bartonville, Beecher, Bethalto, Bolingbrook, Braidwood, Brimfield, Buffalo Grove, Carbondale, Cary, Champaign County, Channahon, Charleston, Coal City, Columbia, Crete, Creve Coeur, Decatur, Deer Creek, Dunlap, East Peoria, Easton, Edwardsville, Elwood, Evanston, Forest City, Frankfort, Glen Carbon, Glendale Heights, Godfrey, Granite City, Hanna City, Hartford, Havana, Henry, Homer Glen, Hopewell, Jacksonville, Kenilworth, Kilbourne, Lake Forest, Lemont, Lisle, Mackinaw, Manito, Marion, Marquette Heights, Marshall County, Mason County, McLean, Monticello, Morton, Normal, Norridge, North Pekin, Oak Park, Paris, Park Forest, Pekin, Peoria, Peoria County, Peoria Heights, Peotone, Plainfield, Riverside, Roanoke, Rockdale, Rolling Meadows, Romeoville, Roxana, San Jose, Shorewood, South Barrington, South Pekin, South Roxana, Sparland, Stanford, Stark County, Tazewell County, Toluca, Topeka, Urbana, Warrenville, Washburn, Washington, West Frankfort, West Peoria, Westmont and Woodridge.

To view the full report, visit gocleangolocal.org/illinoisreport/.

According to the Energy Information Administration, Illinois is fifth in the nation for the generation of electricity from wind power with more than seven million megawatt-hours in 2012.

According to a study by the Center for Renewable Energy at Illinois State University, the state's 23 largest wind farms created approximately 19,047 full-time equivalent jobs and supported approximately 814 permanent jobs in rural Illinois.

The Quinn administration has taken the lead in the use of renewable fuels, converting much of the state's vehicle fleet to Flex Fuel Vehicles and providing incentives for retailers to dispense

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biofuels. The state also offers an Alternative Fuel Vehicle rebate program, providing rebates for nearly 12,500 vehicle purchases since the program began in 1999.

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