

ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAM

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

THE ECOLOGY ACTION CENTER HAS COMPLETED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS DURING CALENDAR YEAR 2020 IN FULFILLMENT OF THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAM AGREEMENT OF MAY 1, 2018.



2020 TOTAL REACH: 519,918 INTERACTIONS

DIRECT (PROGRAMS, EVENTS, PHONE INQUIRIES): 465

MEDIA (NEWSPAPER, RADIO, SOCIAL MEDIA, WEB): 519,453

ENERGY ASSESSMENTS

The EAC continued the BN Energy Bright Program with low-cost energy audits – resulting in increased energy efficiency literacy and energy savings. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the EAC moved to offer virtual energy audit services during the second quarter of 2020.

- Completed 67 home energy consultations for Bloomington and Normal residents
 - Conducted 10 home energy audits – 6 in Bloomington and 4 in Normal
 - One household took advantage of additional blower door air leak testing.
 - Provided detailed energy efficiency consultations via phone and email for an additional 57 households.

Community Impact

- Based on figures from the Department of Energy, if residents implement the majority of the easier to accomplish efficiency recommendations (sealing air leaks, setting thermostat back 7-10° for 8 hours a day, replacing frequently used light fixtures with LED bulbs, lower water heating temperature, insulating hot water pipes and the heater tank) they can save a low estimate of **\$555 annually** on energy costs. Using these figures, participating households will cumulatively save as much as \$5,550 in the first year after implementation of recommended energy saving measures.
- The average Illinois household uses 129 million BTUs of energy per year. Based on the energy equivalents of the monetary savings estimates above, implementing the basic efficiency recommendations means a **savings of 34.6 million BTU per household.**
- This is the equivalent to **removing 3.7 metric tons of greenhouse gas** emissions per household.

PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS AND EXPANSION

The EAC continues to leverage its energy efficiency program and expertise to create partnerships that expand efficiency and renewable energy services to the community.

- Illinois Solar for All Grassroots Education Program Year 2019-2020
 - In the summer of 2019 the Ecology Action Center was selected as one of ten non-profits across the state to be the first cohort of grassroots educators for the Illinois Solar for All program – a program within the state's Future Energy Jobs Act (FEJA) designed to increase access to solar energy for low-income and environmental justice communities.
 - The Ecology Action Center hosted a tabling event at the Habitat ReStore in February to talk to residents about the Illinois Solar for All program, solar options in general, and energy rights. Talked with 32 individuals.
 - Marketed the program through Pantagraph ads, radio advertisements, and through social media platforms.
 - EAC received notification in June that four area non-profits had their ILSFA project proposals accepted. As a direct result of the EAC's grassroots education efforts for ILSFA, the Habitat ReStore, Normal Township Activity and Recreation Center, Wayman AME Baptist Church, and Christ Church will all receive solar installations in 2021 at no upfront cost to them, with monthly payments that cannot exceed 50% of the energy's value - these projects total over 356kW of new solar added to the Bloomington-Normal community.

- Illinois Solar for All Grassroots Education Program Year 2020-2021
 - In the spring the EAC submitted a proposal for the second round of grassroots education for the ILSFA program. The EAC was selected for a second time to serve as one of ten non-profits across the state
 - EAC conducted outreach to non-profits and churches on the west side, and to other non-profits in the community that likely serve income qualifying residents (80% AMI)
 - Heartland Headstart sent a flyer detailing ILSFA program options and the Ameren-Nicor program – sent to 120 families
 - Habitat for Humanity McLean County Newsletter article promoting the ReStore's ILSFA-funded project and benefits of the program available to residents – sent to 7,500 residents

- Ameren-Nicor Pilot Program

- EAC was selected to help with community outreach to promote this program which aims to provide free energy efficiency kits to 600 low-income (80% AMI) households in Bloomington-Normal that are serviced by Ameren and Nicor, and to provide full weatherization services for 80 eligible homes.
 - Qualified customers reached: 35
 - Energy Savings Kits distributed: 20
 - Home Energy Assessments: 13
 - Homes that received weatherization retrofit work after assessment: 11
 - Homes that received health and safety improvements (including sealing gas leaks) after assessment: 10

ENERGY EFFICIENCY MARKETING, OUTREACH, EDUCATION

Throughout 2020, the EAC continued to promote the BN Energy Bright program and related energy programs to increase community awareness about the benefits of energy efficiency through diverse methods of outreach and promotion.

- Social media advertising and promotion
 - Weekly Facebook #EnergyTipTuesday energy posts promoting energy audits and useful Do-It-Yourself energy efficiency tips received 45,844 impressions.
 - Weekly Twitter #EnergyTipTuesday energy posts promoting energy audits and useful Do-It-Yourself energy efficiency tips received 19,839 impressions.
 - Multiple paid promotions on Facebook encouraging people to register for home and then virtual energy audits 7,234 impressions.
 - Multiple paid promotions on Facebook for Illinois Solar for All information events held early in 2020 received 26,703 impressions.



- Radio promotions
 - WGLT
 - Ran two separate advertisements promoting home and small business energy audits reaching 50,000 listeners.
 - Advertised on Earth Day promoting the EAC's energy efficiency services reaching 25,000 listeners.
 - Radio Bloomington – WJBC, WBNQ, WBWN
 - Advertised home energy audits for a week in Quarter I on WJBC, WBNQ, and WBWN reaching a cumulative of 78,900 listeners.
 - Advertised Illinois Solar for All tabling events in at the ReStore and West Bloomington Revitalization Project held in Quarter I on WJBC, WBNQ, and WBWN reaching a cumulative of 78,900 listeners.
 - EAC staff interviewed with Marc Strauss on WJBC in Quarter I about residential energy choices and community solar, reaching approximately 1,000 listeners.
 - EAC staff interviewed by Marc Strauss on WJBC in Quarter II about Earth Day 50th Anniversary online programming that included a panel discussion about energy, reaching an approximate 1,000 listeners.

- Print advertisements

- Advertised in the Bloomington Pantagraph in February to promote the Illinois Solar for All tabling events at the Habitat ReStore and West Bloomington Revitalization Project reaching 81,000 readers.
- Advertised in the Bloomington Pantagraph in April to promote the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day, and the EAC's energy programs reaching approximately 81,000 readers.

- Television

- WYZZ requested an interview with the EAC about the Illinois Solar for All program and the EAC's integral role in educating four area non-profits organizations about the program which resulted in



Solar with NO upfront costs!

Income-qualifying residents, non-profits and public facilities that serve low-income residents can access solar energy through the state's Illinois Solar for All (ILSFA) program.

ILSFA was created under the state's larger renewable energy legislation, the Future Energy Jobs Act, and aims to provide greater access to solar for low-income communities through incentives that make solar installations more affordable and result in lower energy costs for participants.



The Ecology Action Center will have information tables at the Habitat ReStore and West Bloomington Revitalization Project (see dates below). Come out and talk to the EAC, Approved Vendors, and other energy professionals about:

- Understanding your energy bill
- How solar works
- Site considerations for your home or business
- How to participate in ILSFA

Join us and learn more!

Saturday, February 22 from 10am—1pm at the Habitat ReStore—1402 W. Washington St., Bloomington

Saturday, March 14 from 10am—noon at the West Bloomington Revitalization Project—724 W. Washington St., Bloomington

For more information or questions contact the Ecology Action Center
bnenergybright.org/illinois-solar-for-all



approved solar projects at the Habitat ReStore, Normal Township Activity and Recreation Center, Christ Church in Normal and the Wayman AME Church in Bloomington. The WYZZ story featured the Normal Township ARC.

- Website traffic
 - The BNenergyBright.org website pages which contain the energy audit sign-up form, energy efficiency information, and resources for people interested in solar received 5,867 visits.

- EAC newsletters
 - EAC's January electronic newsletter featured an article about predatory energy supply offers from Alternative Energy Retail Suppliers and community solar providers, encouraging residents to be wary and contact the EAC if they are unsure about any offers they receive. The e-newsletter was sent to 863 households.
 - EAC's March electronic newsletter featured an article with working from home energy efficiency tips, and an article about avoiding scams regarding having your ducts cleaned to prevent COVID-19 sent to 859 households.
 - EAC's April electronic newsletter featured an article about the City and the Town's new municipal aggregation agreements. The e-newsletter was sent to 857 households.
 - EAC's special Earth Day electronic newsletter featured an article announcing virtual energy audit services. The e-newsletter was sent to 854 households.
 - EAC's May electronic newsletter featured an article about community solar. The e-newsletter was sent to 854 households.
 - EAC's June member newsletter featured an article about DIY energy efficiency and virtual energy audit services. The member newsletter was sent to 145 households.
 - EAC's July electronic newsletter featured an article about virtual energy audit services. The e-newsletter was sent to 854 households.
 - EAC's August electronic newsletter featured an article about virtual energy audit services and community solar options for McLean County residents. The e-newsletter was sent to 851 households.
 - EAC's October electronic newsletter featured an article about community solar options. The e-newsletter was sent to 848 households.
 - EAC's November electronic newsletter featured an article about Illinois Solar for All and Energy Efficiency. The e-newsletter was sent to 848 households.
 - EAC's December member newsletter featured an article on energy efficiency over the holidays. The e-newsletter was sent to 113 households.

- Direct Inquires
 - Responded to 57 phone calls, emails and visitor inquiries about energy efficiency and renewable energy issues
- Organizational involvement
 - Energy Program Coordinator served as an at-large board member at bi-monthly Central Illinois Association of Professional Energy Consultants educational meetings
- Energy Efficiency presentations and informational booths
 - Hosted an information table at the Habitat for Humanity ReStore to share information about Illinois Solar for All, other solar options, and energy supply rights. Spoke with 32 individuals.
 - Spoke to the Dreams Are Possible class about Illinois Solar for All options available, reaching six students.
 - Met with attendees of the Bloomington Hindu Temple to talk to them about solar options for their facility reaching 9 people.
 - Presented about the importance of energy efficiency and solar to a class of 6th grade students at the Challenger Learning Center reaching 36 students.
 - McLean County State of the Environment Webinar which featured multiple guest speakers, including energy professionals. 52 attendees participated in real time, with 654 views of the video after the live event.
 - EAC Earth Day Live event promoting all EAC programs including energy efficiency. 132 participants attended in real time via Facebook Live and YouTube with over 1,800 views in the days the followed the event.
 - Presented on the EAC's energy efficiency program, solar group purchasing program success at an Earth Day webinar hosted by StraightUp Solar with 33 attendees.
 - May Elementary Online Wonder Ears program read a story called "Power Up to Fight Pollution" that teaches kids ways to save energy and reduce trash with 4 attendees.
 - June Elementary Online Wonder Ears program about energy conservation with 2 attendees.
 - EAC staff gave presentation about solar basics to statewide Grassroots Educator cohort for Illinois Solar for All – 23 attendees.
 - Staff gave presentation to Bloomington-Normal Interfaith Green Team on Environmental Justice Communities in McLean County and EAC's ILSFA efforts to increase solar access to solar to those areas and beyond – 16 attendees.
 - EAC participated in IWU Senior Seminar class and talked with students about Environmental Justice and energy efficiency and solar – 12 attendees.
 - EAC staff gave presentation about energy and environmental justice to the First United Methodist Church Green Team – 6 attendees.