

ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAM

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

THE ECOLOGY ACTION CENTER COMPLETED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS DURING CALENDAR YEAR 2022 IN FULFILLMENT OF THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAM AGREEMENT OF MAY 1, 2020 – APRIL 30, 2022 AND MAY 1, 2022 – APRIL 30, 2025.



2022 TOTAL REACH: 207,842 INTERACTIONS

DIRECT (PROGRAMS, EVENTS, PHONE INQUIRIES): 470

MEDIA (NEWSPAPER, RADIO, SOCIAL MEDIA, WEB): 207,208

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 offered a combination of virtual energy audits and in-person audits.

- Conducted 36 home energy consultations for Bloomington and Normal residents; 17 in Normal and 19 in Bloomington.
- Provided detailed energy efficiency and solar consultations via phone and email to an additional 26 Bloomington-Normal residents, the Bloomington Public Library, and the Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington-Normal.

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 \$19,980 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.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY MARKETING, OUTREACH, EDUCATION

Throughout 2022, 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 energy efficiency tips received 53,760 impressions.
 - Weekly Twitter #EnergyTipTuesday energy posts promoting energy audits and useful energy efficiency tips received 3,225 impressions.
- Radio promotions
 - Radio Bloomington
 - Ran spots on WJBC, WBNQ to 22,300 listeners promoting energy audit services.
 - Interviewed by Todd Weinburner on WJBC about rising energy costs and municipal aggregation reaching an average of 1,000 daily listeners.
 - Interview with Todd Weinburner at WJBC about the importance of home energy efficiency reaching 1,000 daily listeners.
- 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 12,664 visits.
- Ecology Action Center Newsletters
 - The January e-newsletter was sent to 1,532 households and contained an article about energy audit services.
 - The February e-newsletter was sent to 1,524 households and contained an article about the Illinois Solar for All and Ameren-Nicor income-qualifying energy programs.
 - The December member newsletter was mailed to 115 households and contained an article promoting home energy audit services using diagnostic equipment.
 - The May e-newsletter was sent to 1,504 households and contained an article about rising energy costs, municipal aggregation, energy

efficiency, and income-qualifying programs to increase efficiency and solar adoption.

- The EAC October e-newsletter was sent to 1,499 households and featured articles on the EAC's energy efficiency program and income-qualifying energy programs.
- The December member newsletter was mailed to 275 households and contained an article promoting the EAC's home energy audit services.
- A special EAC New Year's Resolutions newsletter was sent to 1,489 households and featured a list of resolutions people could try for 2023 including increasing energy efficiency with the EAC's help.

Community engagement and outreach

- Direct Inquires
 - Responded to 91 phone calls, emails and visitor inquiries about energy efficiency and renewable energy issues.
- Energy Efficiency presentations and informational booths
 - Participated in a panel discussion for Youth on a Mission about jobs in the energy field and the importance of energy efficiency. Spoke to 16 youth participants.
 - Participated in a webinar hosted by StraightUp Solar titled "Put Your Home on an Energy Diet". There were 17 webinar participants.
 - Spoke at New Covenant to 42 congregants about engagement opportunities, including details on the energy efficiency program.
 - Spoke to 15 attendees at the quarterly gathering of the Interfaith Green Team about rising energy prices, municipal aggregation, and opportunities for residents to save energy.
 - Offered two separate webinars for Habitat for Humanity McLean County residents about rising energy prices, municipal aggregation, and opportunities for residents to save energy, including income-qualifying programs through Ameren and Nicor, and Illinois Solar for All. Spoke with 13 residents in total.
 - Presented to 10 residents at the Normal Township Activity and Recreation Center about rising energy prices, municipal aggregation, energy efficiency, and income-qualifying programs like Illinois Solar for All and the Ameren-Nicor energy efficiency program.
 - Spoke with 15 residents about energy efficiency and solar opportunities for their homes at the Sweet Corn Circus.
 - Spoke with 7 residents about energy efficiency and solar options for their homes at the Glorious Garden Festival.
 - Spoke with 8 residents about energy efficiency and solar options for their homes at the Sugar Grove Nature Trails Day event.

- Presented to 12 residents at the Immigration Project about rising energy prices, municipal aggregation, energy efficiency, and income-qualifying programs like Illinois Solar for All and the Ameren-Nicor energy efficiency program.
- Presented to 12 students about energy efficiency and solar principles in Chris Miller's Sustainability and Renewable Energy class at Heartland Community College

PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS

The EAC continues to leverage its energy efficiency program and energy expertise to promote energy efficiency through other programs, and expand renewable energy adoption in the county.

- Illinois Solar for All Grassroots Education (ILSFA)
 - In 2022, the Ecology Action Center finished the second half of its third year and was awarded a contract to begin a fourth year as a grassroots educator. The Ecology Action Center is one of ten non-profits in the state to serve as grassroots educators for the Illinois Solar for All (ILSFA) program. ILSFA is part of the state's Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) designed to increase access to solar energy for income-qualifying residents, environmental justice communities, and non-profits and public facilities that serve low-income communities. Grassroots education program years run from June through May.
 - The EAC gave informational presentations about ILSFA to Habitat residents, for people served by the Immigration Project, for residents of the Bloomington Housing Authority, to residents at the Normal Township Activity and Recreation Center, to the Bloomington-Normal Water Reclamation District, to the Bloomington Public Library, and had 52 individual conversations with residents interested in the program.
- Nicor-Ameren Pilot Program
 - EAC was selected to help with community outreach to promote the Ameren-Nicor pilot 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.
 - During the 1st quarter, the EAC continued to connect residents with the opportunity, including 2 of the residents who received an energy audit through the EAC energy program. The utilities anticipate 2022 program services to begin April 1.

- During the 2nd quarter, the EAC connected 34 residents to this program, and 12 received energy efficiency retrofits with added insulation and air-sealing.
- During the 3rd quarter, the EAC connected 43 residents to this program to receive energy efficiency retrofits with added insulation and air-sealing.
- During the 4th quarter, the EAC connected 42 residents to this program to receive energy efficiency retrofits with added insulation and air-sealing.
- According to program managers, the EAC is the leading pipeline for this program.