

# Clean energy report shows job losses in 2020

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A new report from the Clean Energy Trust and Environmental Entrepreneurs shows Wisconsin's clean energy industries lost more than 7,000 jobs over the course of last year.

The majority of 2020 job losses were in the energy efficiency sector, which employs more workers than the rest of Wisconsin's clean energy sectors combined. The Clean Jobs Midwest report also highlights how these industries have begun to bounce back, driven by employment growth in electric and hybrid vehicle manufacturing and wind energy.

"The industry is rebounding and grew faster than the overall economy in the second half of the year," said Ian Adams, managing director for the nonprofit Clean Energy Trust, during a call with reporters yesterday. "We're excited about the potential of the clean energy industry going forward, and the potential for innovative clean energy businesses to really grow this sector and be an engine of economic opportunity in the region."

Wisconsin's clean energy industries employed 69,343 people at the end of 2020, which is 9.6 percent lower than in 2019.

Grid and storage businesses saw a decline of 4.3 percent last year with 2,081 jobs at the end of 2020, while clean fuels jobs decreased 5.8 percent to 347. And though energy efficiency lost 7,583 jobs last year for a decrease of 11.9 percent of that sector's workforce, those job losses were offset somewhat by increases in other

areas. A total of 55,986 people were employed in the energy efficiency sector at the end of last year.

Hybrid vehicle manufacturing jobs in the state increased 7.2 percent over 2020 to reach 2,281 workers. And electric vehicle jobs increased 9.7 percent over the same period, reaching 1,176 employees at the end of 2020. Meanwhile, wind energy jobs grew 11 percent to reach 1,797 workers.

“While the industry took a hit along with the rest of the economy, the good news is this industry is poised for growth like we’ve never seen before,” said McKayla Preskill, Midwest states advocate at Environmental Entrepreneurs. “The economics are in our favor. Clean energy is now the cheapest energy available in most parts of the world, and we’re seeing record investment in clean energy companies.”

The report shows the state’s clean energy jobs are largely clustered in metropolitan areas. Milwaukee and Madison continue to dominate, with 18,574 and 8,081 clean energy jobs, respectively. But more than 17,600 of these jobs are spread across rural areas of the state.

It also highlights the role that small businesses play in these industries, as employers with fewer than 20 workers make up 62 percent of Wisconsin’s clean energy companies.

See the full report here: <https://www.cleanjobsmidwest.com/>

*-By Alex Moe*