

# Dane County Executive Parisi: EPA recognizes Dane County among nation's leading green power users

Posted on Thursday, May 20, 2021

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County Executive Joe Parisi announced today that Dane County has joined the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Green Power Partnership. Dane County is using nearly 21 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) of green power annually, which is enough green electricity to power 45% of county-owned facilities. By choosing green power, Dane County is helping lead the transition to a clean energy future.

Dane County applied to join the EPA program after the 9 megawatt (MW) solar energy project at the Dane County Airport went online in late 2020. The airport project, a partnership between Dane County and MGE, supplies about 40% of the renewable energy used for county operations.

"This is a huge honor, and we are proud to be recognized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency," said Dane County Executive Joe Parisi. "Using green power cuts our operating costs while reducing our emissions. It also sends a message to others across the country that green power is an affordable, accessible choice."

By moving the needle in the voluntary green power market, Dane County and other Green Power Partners are helping to reduce the negative health impacts of air emissions, including those related to ozone, fine particles, acid rain, and regional haze. According to the U.S. EPA, Dane County's green power use is equivalent to the electricity use of nearly 2,000 average American homes annually.

In addition to the 9 MW Dane County/MGE Airport solar project that began operating late last year, Dane County owns more solar systems than any other county in the state, generating more than 800 kW of power at 16 county facilities. These projects

generate enough carbon-free electricity to provide Dane County with 45% of the energy used by all county-owned facilities.

Last fall, Dane County announced a new partnership with Alliant Energy to develop a 16 MW solar project on 140 acres of county-owned land in the Town of Cottage Grove. When the 16 MW project is completed, Dane County will get 100% of the electricity for its operations from renewable energy sources.

In addition to the environmental benefits and cost savings, solar systems also create local jobs. According to the Solar Jobs Census, solar employment in Wisconsin saw a slight improvement from last year, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Jobs were up from 2,871 in 2019 to 2,910 in 2020. The solar industry is projected to reach 400,000 solar jobs nationally by 2030, but employment will need to exceed 900,000 workers by 2035 to reach the 100% clean electricity goal set by President Biden, according to the Solar Energy Industries Association.

“The solar project at the airport created family-supporting local jobs at the height of the pandemic. Solar jobs will continue to play a part in our local economy as more pursue clean, green energy projects and commit themselves to becoming 100% renewable,” Parisi said. “Being an EPA Green Power Partner is another way we can showcase our leadership on renewable energy.”