

# RENEW Wisconsin: City of Madison and Dane County launch 2021 solar programs

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On Tuesday, April 27, 2021, the City of Madison and Dane County announced the start of this year's MadiSUN Solar Energy Programs. The MadiSun programs aim to expand access to local renewable energy and include initiatives and grants that assist residents, businesses, and nonprofit organizations with onsite solar electric installations.

The MadiSUN Solar Group Buy is for Dane County homeowners looking to install solar on their rooftops. The Solar for Business program provides project grants and consulting services for Madison businesses interested in installing solar electric systems. And the Backyard Solar program offers up to \$10,000 in grants for affordable housing providers and nonprofit organizations seeking to install solar electric systems at their facilities in the City of Madison.

The Group Buy program, now in its sixth year, will expand this year to offer solar installations to homeowners across Dane County. The Group Buy has spurred approximately \$2.38 million in clean energy investments since 2016 and has added over 800 kilowatts of renewable electricity to the community's electric grid. To date, nearly 200 local homes have gone solar through MadiSUN.

"Now in its sixth year, the MadiSUN program offers a way for residents, businesses, nonprofits, and affordable housing providers to go solar," said Stacie Reece, the Sustainability Program Coordinator for the City of Madison. "Every rooftop solar installation contributes to the City of Madison's goal of 100% renewable energy and

helps reduce carbon emissions.”

In addition to expanding the Group Buy to all of Dane County, the program will also expand the number of solar contractors. MadiSUN has partnered with Full Spectrum Solar, Midwest Solar Power, and Arch Electric to ensure residents have access to reputable, experienced contractors for their solar installations.

“With the program’s expansion this year, we wanted to ensure that homeowners throughout the county had multiple options when it came to solar,” stated Sam Dunaiski, Program Director for MadiSUN. “Residents in rural portions of Dane County have different needs than residents in urban or suburban areas. Homeowners will now have access to more solar contractors and the different materials and services they provide.”

The Group Buy will also provide multiple options for homeowners looking to finance their solar systems. Low-interest loans for solar arrays will be available through greenpenny bank and Clean Energy Credit Union.

“We can offer Dane County residents fast, easy, and affordable financing for their solar projects,” said Jason MacDuff, Vice President of greenpenny. “Whether the appeal of solar is its climate stewardship, its economic benefits, or both, greenpenny’s mission is to finance a sustainable tomorrow.”

The Solar for Business program, currently in its fourth year, will offer grants to Madison-based businesses choosing to install onsite solar arrays. The program has facilitated solar on 16 businesses across the city for a total capacity of more than 750 kilowatts of renewable energy.

The Backyard Solar program will continue to offer grants for solar projects with affordable housing providers and nonprofit organizations in Madison. The program approved seven grants during its first two years of operation. These seven projects will result in nearly 550 kilowatts of solar energy, enough to power roughly 100 households.

Movin' Out, an affordable housing provider based in Madison, won a Backyard grant in 2020 to install a 100-kilowatt solar array at the Ace Apartments. The facility will provide affordable housing access to children, veterans, the disabled, and their families.

“The opportunity to participate in MadiSUN’s Backyard Solar program helps us achieve our goals for green building to provide the healthiest possible environments for the people and communities we serve,” said Kathyne Auerback, Executive Director of Movin’ Out. “The more we are able to invest in renewable energy and environmentally sustainable building now, the greater the returns will be in the long run.”

Residents can receive a complimentary solar assessment by visiting [madisunsolar.com](http://madisunsolar.com) and filling out the “I’m Interested” form. Applications for the Group Buy program must be submitted by August 31, 2021. The application deadline for the Backyard Solar Grant is September 1, 2021, and applications for the Solar for Business grant are open until December 31, 2021.

### **About MadiSUN**

***MadiSUN** facilitates solar power installation for residents, businesses, and nonprofits located within the City of Madison. Promotional videos can be accessed by visiting [MadiSUN's YouTube](#) channel. More can be found at [www.madisunsolar.com](http://www.madisunsolar.com).*

### **About RENEW Wisconsin**

***RENEW Wisconsin** is a nonprofit organization that promotes solar power, wind power, biogas, local hydropower, geothermal energy, and electric vehicles in Wisconsin. RENEW Wisconsin is contracted by the City of Madison to administer the MadiSUN programs. More information can be found at [www.renewwisconsin.org](http://www.renewwisconsin.org).*