



# ILLINOIS EPA *Impact*

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*Message from*

## ACTING DIRECTOR JAMES JENNINGS



Happy Earth Day! First celebrated in 1970, Earth Day was created to raise public awareness about environmental issues and mobilize support for environmental protection. The Illinois EPA was founded the same year and in the nearly six decades since, we have made significant strides in accelerating environmental progress in our state.

That progress continues today. Last year alone, Illinois EPA funded more than \$1 billion in drinking water, wastewater, emerging contaminant reduction, and lead service line replacement projects from Williamson to Lake County. These investments both protect our residents and drive economic growth. In fact, each dollar of water infrastructure funding generates roughly three dollars in long-term community investment. Through these programs, we supported upgrading treatment technologies, replacing lead service lines, and ensuring families have safe, clean drinking water in their homes, schools, and businesses. We are also prioritizing unsewered communities, areas where outdated or nonexistent wastewater systems threaten public health and deter development, by providing financial and planning support to help build the modern infrastructure they deserve.

At the same time, Illinois is tackling climate change head on. Our electric vehicle rebate program continues to accelerate the transition to clean transportation, with EV registrations increasing by more than 20 percent last year. Our energy efficiency programs have supported \$140 million in residential and commercial installations, lowering utility costs while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Looking ahead, we will deploy more than \$400 million over the next five years to expand clean transportation and freight, scale climate-smart agriculture, and advance industrial decarbonization. These investments will strengthen workforce development while cutting emissions in half.

Although numerous challenges remain, our Agency is well positioned to ensure Illinois' air, land, and water continue to be protected.





## DISPOSE OF UNWANTED PAINT PRODUCTS WITH PAINTCARE ILLINOIS

Under the recently implemented Paint Stewardship Act, Illinois residents can now drop off leftover paint and similar products at over 300 year-round collection locations, offered by PaintCare, Illinois. PaintCare sites accept architectural coating including primers, stains, sealers, shellac, and varnish. The [PaintCare Illinois website](#) provides all information related to the Illinois program. For questions not answered by the PaintCare website or the [Illinois EPA Paint disposal webpage](#), please contact the Illinois EPA Materials Management Section at [epa.recycling@illinois.gov](mailto:epa.recycling@illinois.gov).

## FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY UPGRADES AT PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY FACILITIES

The Illinois EPA's Office of Energy is offering up to \$1.5 million in grant funding to support energy efficiency projects at publicly owned public water supply facilities, commonly referred to as drinking water treatment plants. Awarded projects will range from \$50,000 to \$500,000 with a match requirement based on geographic location. Eligible projects must be based on recommendations from a third-party energy efficiency assessment and may include pump and motor equipment upgrades, installment of variable frequency drives, energy demand management enhancements, or HVAC and lighting improvements. Application materials are available at our [PWS Energy Efficiency Grant Program webpage](#). The application period closes at 5:00 pm on May 4, 2026. For more information about Office of Energy programming, including the PWSEE Grant Program, please visit our [Office of Energy webpage](#) or call 217-785-8841.

## NEW DRAGONFLY IDENTIFIED IN ILLINOIS

Illinois EPA staff in the Southern Monitoring Unit (SMU) of the Surface Water Section identified a new dragonfly (Stylogomphus) in the State of Illinois. After checking Illinois EPA's historic data and the Illinois Natural History Survey (IHNS) collection records, there are no current records for this dragonfly. The dragonfly identification was verified by other Illinois EPA macroinvertebrate taxonomists and INHS by sharing photos of key characteristics. INHS shared the photos with the author of the Dragonfly Nymphs of North America who further confirmed the identification. INHS is now interested in looking for adult and older juvenile forms of the dragonfly to confirm the dragonfly's presence in Illinois. The collection of this specimen is an expansion of the known range and highlights the cooperation between state agencies, and the importance of the work we do with surface water monitoring.





## DON'T TRASH YOUR BATTERIES, RECYCLE THEM!

Following the signing of the Illinois Portable and Medium-Format Battery Stewardship Act, producers selling batteries in Illinois are now required to participate in an approved Battery Stewardship Plan to expand battery disposal options for all Illinois residents. Ensuring the proper management, handling, recycling and end of life management of used portable and medium-format batteries will prevent the release of toxic materials into the environment and will aid in removing materials from the waste stream that, if mishandled, may present safety concerns to workers, such as fires at solid waste handling facilities.

Illinois EPA has issued plan approval to The Battery Network (formerly Call2Recycle). To properly dispose of household batteries and to find a drop-off location near you, please visit [The Battery Network website](#).



## COAL COMBUSTION RESIDUAL SURFACE IMPOUNDMENT PERMIT DENIED

In March 2026, Illinois EPA denied the operating permit application submitted by Midwest Generation LLC for the operation of Joliet 9 Generating Station coal combustion residual (CCR) surface impoundment, also referred to as the Lincoln Stone Quarry. The determination was made because the application did not demonstrate compliance with all applicable requirements. Specifically, the application did not provide an acceptable groundwater monitoring program and did not adequately address groundwater exceedances. Illinois EPA is also seeking additional information regarding closure and post-closure care cost estimates and the surface impoundment's ability to meet closure performance standards. The applicant has 90 days to submit an updated application. The complete Responsiveness Summary is available on the [Illinois EPA website](#).

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Illinois EPA routinely announces funding opportunities for various Agency programs. The following programs have funding available to eligible applicants:

- Resilient Energy for Wastewater Infrastructure Grant Program
- Public Water Supply Energy Efficiency Grant Program
- Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities Grants
- Unsewered Communities Planning Grant Program
- Lead Service Line Inventory Grant Program
- Energy Efficiency Trust Fund Grant Program
- Wastewater/Stormwater and Drinking Water Loan Programs

All current funding opportunities can be viewed on our [Grants and Loans webpage](#)





## SEARCH ILLINOIS EPA RECORDS

To improve access to highly sought Agency records, the Illinois EPA makes certain documents available for viewing and downloading in PDF format through our online [Document Explorer](#) tool. These include:

- Air permits (construction and operating)
- National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits
- Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) technical documents
- Site Remediation Program (SRP) technical documents
- State Response Action technical documents
- Final Compliance Commitment Agreements since January 1, 2014

For documents that are not available through the online tool, individuals may submit a [Freedom of Information Request](#).



## NEED TO REPORT A POLLUTION COMPLAINT?

Illinois EPA is committed to responding to complaints as quickly as possible. The quickest and easiest way to submit a complaint to Illinois EPA is through the [online complaint form](#). Individuals can also contact the closest [Illinois EPA Regional Office](#). If you need to report an environmental emergency, please contact the Illinois Emergency Management Agency directly at 800-782-7860.



## SIGN-UP TO RECEIVE NEWS AND INFORMATION

Illinois EPA has mailing lists to provide regular updates for several of our programs. To receive the monthly *Illinois EPA Impact* newsletter or receive updates about Electric Vehicles, Energy Programs, Environmental Justice news, and more, please submit your information through our subscription signups at: <https://epa.illinois.gov/about-us/contact-us/lists.html>



## JOIN OUR TEAM

At Illinois EPA, we strive to identify and hire a diverse team of professionals to help advance the mission of the Agency. There are many different job classifications defined by Central Management Services (CMS). The Illinois EPA has a variety of technical and professional staff positions, including specialists, geologists, engineers, biologists, chemists, as well as positions involved with legal and administrative services. View current postings [on our website](#).

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## CONNECT WITH US



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