

# ENERGY EFFICIENCY TRUST FUND GRANT PROGRAM

## Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) FAQs

### What is an energy efficiency assessment and how do I obtain one?

An energy efficiency assessment is a report produced by a professional energy assessor that reviews a property's current energy usage and makes recommendations to reduce energy consumption. Common recommendations include adding insulation to attics or walls, sealing and insulating ducts in unconditioned spaces or installing efficient technologies like smart thermostats or ENERGY STAR appliances. Local utilities may conduct energy efficiency assessments or help you identify a local company with qualified assessors. An energy efficiency assessment must be completed prior to application for the EE Trust Fund Grant Program. A copy of the assessment report is a required part of the application materials submitted to Illinois EPA Office of Energy. Review the Notice of Funding Opportunity for more detailed information.

### How do I determine if my property is in an area of environmental justice concern?

Prospective applicants should visit the [Illinois EPA EJ Start](https://illinois-epa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=f154845da68a4a3f837cd3b880b0233c) mapping tool and search for the project property's address. The mapping tool may be accessed by clicking on the hyperlink above or copying and pasting the following address into a web browser: <https://illinois-epa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=f154845da68a4a3f837cd3b880b0233c>

Users can type an address into the search box located at the top left corner of the mapping tool (Figure 1.).



Figure 1

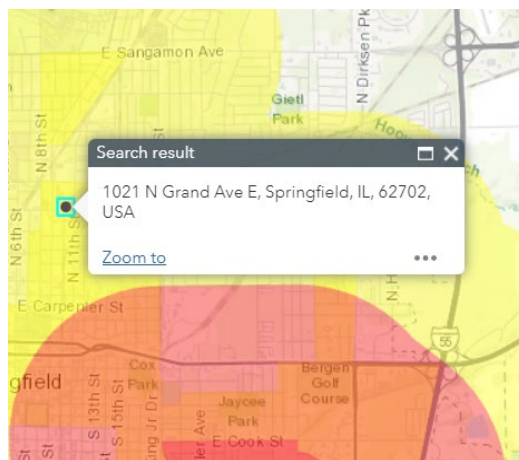


Figure 2

Property addresses that are located in blue, yellow and red shaded geographical areas (Figure 2) are part of an area of environmental justice concern. These areas are determined by using statistical data from the U.S. Census to identify low income and minority communities that may experience a disproportionate share of adverse environmental impacts. For purposes of documenting the property environmental justice status within your application you must provide the EJ status category (Blue shaded = minority populations, yellow shaded = low-income communities and red shaded = both

minority and low-income communities) written as part of your narrative OR provide a screenshot of the mapping tool similar to Figure 2 above.

**My property is in an area served by ComEd or Ameren. Is my property eligible to participate in this grant program?**

There are no restrictions for properties inside any particular utility's service area. All properties meeting the eligibility criteria may apply for funds. The Illinois EPA Office of Energy encourages applicants to check with their utility provider for utility rebate opportunities to increase efficiency or to obtain an energy efficiency assessment.

**I am a homeowner that receives housing assistance through a local, state or federal program. I want to make energy efficiency improvements in my home. Am I eligible to receive these funds?**

No. Only public housing authorities, units of local government or nonprofit organizations are eligible to receive funds through the Energy Efficiency Trust Fund Grant program.

Under the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) the Illinois EPA Office of Energy will administer two programs focused on home efficiency rebates and home electrification and appliance rebates. These programs are not yet operational as funding from the U.S. Department of Energy is still being processed. Details about these programs will be published to the [Energy Rebates webpage](#). Homeowners are encouraged to visit the webpage to sign up for the Illinois IRA Home Energy Rebates listserv to receive email updates as these programs become available.

**I am a landlord that accepts section 8 housing vouchers for my single-family properties. Am I eligible to receive these funds?**

No. Only public housing authorities, units of local government or nonprofit organizations are eligible to receive funds through this grant program.

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**How are funds distributed for this grant program?**

Grantees will retain contractors to perform work for the proposed project. Grantees will then submit detailed invoices from the retained contractor to Illinois EPA Office of Energy once a month for payment directly to the grantee. The grantee will then use these funds to pay contractors. Proof of payment from

the grantee to the contractor must be submitted to Illinois EPA. Proof of payment may include a canceled check or similar documentation from the grantee's financial institution.

**What is the “communication plan” requested as part of the application?**

Applicants are asked to provide a structured plan for communicating with residents about the proposed project. Communication plans should outline how you intend to inform residents about the project, what benefits residents will receive as a result of completion of the project, what is required of residents and when project activities will take place. Communication methods may include holding an in-person meeting, posting flyers on doors or sending recorded phone messages to residents alerting them of impending construction or limited use of parts of the property. It is suggested that grantees utilize multiple methods of communication at documented intervals to ensure all residents are aware of the project and its impact.

**I have additional questions about the application process or eligible projects.**

Contact Rebecca Luke with the Illinois EPA Office of Energy at 217-558-8145 or via email at [Rebecca.j.luke@illinois.gov](mailto:Rebecca.j.luke@illinois.gov).