



Adjustable Block Program
Project Information Release Protocols
19 JUNE 2019

This document constitutes Project Information Release Protocols (“Protocols”) governing the Illinois Power Agency’s ongoing release of information about applicant projects submitted into the Adjustable Block Program. These Protocols will begin being implemented as of this publishing date, and will be adopted into the ABP Guidebook upon its next revision.

BACKGROUND

The opening of the Adjustable Block Program demonstrated an unprecedented amount of interest in photovoltaic project development in Illinois. Over 6,000 project applications were received within the first months after program opening. Since then, the Agency has received inquiries seeking information about project applications from media, legislative offices, industry participants, stakeholder organizations, everyday citizens, and others curious about which photovoltaic projects will be developed, at what size, and where across Illinois they will be sited.

The ABP website’s dashboard has provided daily updates about project applications received, reviewed, and approved by the Program Administrator—but only in aggregated form. The IPA’s Lottery Guidelines did require releasing individually-identifying project information for those Group/Category combinations receiving application levels sufficient to trigger a lottery, but similar guidelines have not been developed for other Group/Category combinations (or for applications received after the lottery window). Additionally, lottery project information was published only for projects designated by the Program Administrator to qualify for selection; no guidelines have been developed to govern what information, if any, is published about project applications *received*, prior to review and approval.

Rather than address inquiries on a piecemeal basis (or only in response to Freedom of Information Act requests), the IPA would prefer instead to make select project information publicly available with updates offered across regular intervals. After a stakeholder comment process, the IPA has drafted these Project Information Release Protocols to govern what information about applicant and approved projects will be made publicly available, including the form of such disclosures and the intervals for updates.

OBJECTIVE

These Protocols seek to balance the strong public interest in and need for project information with protecting any commercially sensitive or private information (such as personal addresses) contained in project applications. Additionally, these Protocols have been developed with an eye toward information that will ultimately be publicly available regardless of the IPA’s disclosure—whether through GATS or M-RETS tracking system listings, DG Certified Installer annual reports, local permitting information, satellite views through online maps, or visual observation.



INFORMATION DISCLOSURE

Project Applications Received

Form: Downloadable spreadsheet from illinoisabp.com website

Updates: Daily (automated update)

Project Fields: Application ID number; Approved Vendor name, application submission date; project size (AC); project size (DC); zip code; group; category; application status (Part 1 complete, program administrator reviewed, additional information required, submitted to ICC for approval).¹

Project Applications Approved by the ICC without Part 2 Completed

Form: Downloadable spreadsheet from illinoisabp.com website

Updates: Within 2 business days after Commission approval of new contracts/batches

Project Fields: Application ID number; Approved Vendor name; ICC approval date; contract effective date; counterparty utility; application submission date; project size (AC); project size (DC); zip code; city; block; category.

Part 2 of Project Application Complete

Form: Downloadable spreadsheet from illinoisabp.com website

Updates: Daily (automated update)

Additional Fields: Project Address (if system is above 25 kW in size);² REC tracking system utilized; tracking system project ID number.

ICC APPROVAL INFORMATION

One commenter suggested that the Program Administrator provide an “official form and/or notice of project contract approval.” The IPA has published a sample project-specific contract approval form that would be emailed to Approved Vendors as a .pdf attachment commensurate with each project’s REC batch or contract approval by the Illinois Commerce Commission (and thus could be shared with customers, financing parties, etc. by the Approved Vendor as needed). Note that the final form will look substantially similar to the published form template.

¹ Withdrawn projects would be removed from subsequent spreadsheets.

² Addresses for systems below 25 kW in size that were previously published pursuant to the IPA’s lottery guidelines will be removed from that posting.