

Annual Reports Due July 15, MES Year-End Reports Due July 15, Updated Portal Utility Rates Input Document

July 12, 2024

Coming up in Illinois Shines (Program events & due dates found at the [Vendor Forums & Key Dates webpage](#))

- **Events**
 - No events are scheduled for next week
- **Due Dates**
 - July 15, 2024 – [MES Year-End Report](#) for Program Year 2023-24 **and** 2023-24 Annual Reports are due
 - July 16, 2024 – Re-batching opens for AVs **and** Annual Report Cure Period begins
 - July 18, 2024 – Re-batching closes for AVs at 12:00 p.m. CPT

Stakeholder Support

- **Program Administrator Office Hours** – July 17, 2024 from 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. CPT - Individual AV or Designee support for Program requirements, portal, application, or other questions. Zoom link: <https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/95588710302Co>.
- **Application Tips and Tricks** - The Program Administrator publishes [Tips and Tricks](#) to help support stakeholders in avoiding project applications entering *Need Info* status and delaying their review and approval.
 - **System Photos:** Project applications require the submission of a photograph depicting the entire system and are used to verify information included in the application. Insufficiently clear or detailed photographs, or the use of stock photographs (from the manufacturer) or photographs of the same equipment installed at a different project are not acceptable, and will result in a *Need Info* request and delay in application review. Multiple photographs can be uploaded as separate files in the “Additional Documents” area of the application or may be combined into a single document and uploaded in the “Photograph(s) of the project” area. In addition, labeling the photos within such a document is extremely helpful in aiding review by application processors.
 - **Microinverter Photos:** For projects using microinverters, acceptable examples include a monitoring Portal screenshot stating the inverter model number or a photograph of one of the physical inverters that was installed. If a project utilizes a module model with integrated microinverters, project-specific documentation listing the module model number installed in lieu of a unique photograph of the inverter is also acceptable.

Program News – New or Updated Items (All Program updates can be found on the [Program Updates webpage](#))

- **Project Workforce Definition** - On July 12, 2024, the Program Administrator released an [announcement](#) clarifying the definition of project workforce and questions around the 5% threshold as it relates to compliance with the Minimum Equity Standard.
- **Portal Utility Rates Input Document** - On July 10, 2024, the Program Administrator updated certain utility rates in the Portal that are used to generate estimates of the value of electricity in the Disclosure Form due to identified errors. The updates impacted the following Ameren rates: Community Solar Price to Compare (corrected to 8.136 cents/kWh) and the Distributed Generation Average Retail Rate (corrected to 13.376 cents/kWh). The Program Administrator also updated these rates on the [Portal Utility Rates input document](#) on the Program website.

- **Surveys for Feedback on REC Adder and Disclosure Form Updates – Response Deadline July 24** - On [July 3, 2024](#), the IPA requested initial input on two topics through surveys. Stakeholders can respond to the [survey on the stranded customer REC adder](#) and the [survey on updating Disclosure Forms for supply-only net metering](#). **While responses to both surveys are optional, feedback from stakeholders is incredibly important in informing the Agency’s development of the REC adder for taking on stranded customers and an updated approach to Disclosure Form estimates.** AVs, Designees, Grassroots Educators, and other stakeholders that have first-hand experience working in the Programs and/or working with customers, and the information and perspective this provides cannot be overstated. The Agency thanks stakeholders for taking the time to share their experience with us as we work to update and improve our solar Programs.
- **July 2024 Consumer Protection Working Group** - The Agency and its Illinois Shines and Illinois Solar for All Program Administrators hosted the July Consumer Protection Working Group meeting today. The notes from the Working Group will be published on the Program website, where agendas for meetings are also shared. Please note that there will **not** be a Working Group meeting in August and the next Working Group meeting will be held on **Friday, September 6, 2024**, at 10:00 a.m. CPT. If you are interested in participating in the group and future meetings, please submit the form on the [website](#).
- **ISEA Webinar: Illinois Shines Distributed Generation Application Guidance** – The Program Administrator has been invited by the Illinois Solar Energy Association to jointly present a webinar to ISEA Business Members on specific application guidance, common mistakes, and tips and tricks when submitting Illinois Shines DG applications, including improving application submissions to avoid *Need Info* requests that delay review. The webinar will be held on **August 1, 2024 from 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. CPT**. For more information and to register via Zoom, please visit <https://www.illinoissolar.org/event-5789788>.
- **Illinois Power Agency Power Hour – Long-Term Regional Transmission Planning, State Initiatives, and the Power Grid - July 26, 2024 at 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. CPT**. This educational webinar will provide an overview on the role of Regional Transmission Organizations in long-term regional transmission planning and current challenges that states are facing on transmission reform. The webinar will also highlight Illinois’ policies and initiatives around transmission planning and policy implementation. The webinar will feature presentations from Mary Yang, Advisor to former Federal Energy Regulatory Commissioner Allison Clements; Jason Stanek, Executive Director of Government Services at PJM; and Brain Granahan, IPA Director. Register at: https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZctd-qujkuG9GomDX_aG6yr_I0dDt0CS9c#/registration
- **Illinois Shines Legacy Portal Was Retired June 30, 2024** - As [previously announced](#), on June 30, 2024 the Program retired the legacy Illinois Shines Portal administered by the prior Program Administrator. The legacy Illinois Shines Portal is no longer accessible to AVs and Designees.
- **New to the Program Website** - The following key additions to www.IllinoisShines.com have been shared:
 - [Portal Input Rates document](#) ([Program Documents](#) page)
 - Updated [Find an EEC Approved Vendor](#) document ([Find an Approved Vendor, Designee, or Subcontractor](#) page)
 - New [Find an EEC Designee](#) document ([Find an Approved Vendor, Designee, or Subcontractor](#) page)
 - New [Find an EEC Subcontractor](#) document ([Find an Approved Vendor, Designee, or Subcontractor](#) page)
 - New FAQs on Identifying the Project Workforce under the [Minimum Equity Standard](#) section ([Vendor FAQs](#) page)

Program News – Previously Published Items (All Program updates can be found on the [Program Updates webpage](#))

- **General Program**
 - **Annual Reports Due July 15** - AVs with an active REC Contract are required to submit an Annual Report pertaining to the contracts and systems in their portfolio during the Annual Report period continues until **July 15, 2024**. **Please keep in mind that submission of an Annual Report is a Program requirement, and failure to submit an Annual Report is an Event of Default under the REC Contract. Failure to submit an Annual Report puts both the Approved Vendor and its contracted projects in jeopardy of continued participation in the Program.** On May 20, 2024 the Program Administrator

emailed stakeholders with relevant information and linkages to resources including pre-recorded walkthrough videos and more; on June 3, 2024, the [2023-24 Program Year Annual Report Guide](#) was added to the 'REC Contract and Annual Report Help Guides' section of the [Program Help Guides and Application Tips](#) page. If your team members did not receive a SharePoint permission validation email or cannot access SharePoint to review and submit Annual Reports, please contact the Program Administrator for assistance. Key dates relating to Annual Reports:

- **July 15, 2024 - Annual Report Response Period ends**
- July 16, 2024 - Annual Report Cure Period begins
- October 1, 2024 - Last day for Program to inform AVs of discrepancies on Annual Reports
- October 14, 2024 - Annual Reports are finalized
- November 15, 2024 - Program Administrator Drawdown calculations complete

Please see below for a full list of Annual Report resources available to AVs on the [Program Help Guides and Application Tips](#) page:

- [Annual Report Guide](#)
- [REC Performance Evaluation](#)
- [REC Performance Calculation Evaluation Walkthrough Video](#)
- [Community Solar Parameters Evaluation Walkthrough Video](#)
- [Annual Report and REC Performance Evaluation Walkthrough Video](#)
- [Community Solar System Parameters Evaluation \(Annual Subscriber Evaluation\)](#)
- [Annual Report FAQs](#)
- **Resuming Memo Submission Using the New 2024 REC Contracts - The Program Administrator resumed memo submission using the new 2024 REC Contracts beginning with the July 2, 2024 ICC meeting.** Any applications processed and approved in the new Program Year, even if they were submitted in the previous Program Year and waitlisted, will receive the 2024 REC Contract.
- **Minimum Equity Standard ("MES") Reminders**
 - **2023-24 Program Year MES Year-End Report Deadline** - As noted in previous [announcements](#), **Program Year 2023-24 MES Year-End Reports are due on July 15, 2024.** The online form can be accessed here: <https://forms.office.com/r/FM6YbtEFWd>. Failure to submit an MES Year-End Report by the deadline will result in escalation to the Program Administrator's Consumer Protection Team consistent with Sections X.C-D of the Consumer Protection Handbook and may risk future good standing in the Program and result in disciplinary action.
 - **2024-25 Program Year MES Compliance Plans Past Due** - The 2024-25 Program Year MES Compliance Plans were due on June 3, 2024. **Any compliance plans that have not been submitted ARE OVERDUE** and participating entities who did not comply with this Program requirement by June 17 may be subject to disciplinary action. The Program Administrator is currently working to review submitted compliance plans. AVs and Designees can expect to be notified of the Pass/Fail result from their compliance plan within the next four to six weeks. If you have not submitted your MES Compliance Plan, please do so at <https://forms.office.com/r/qvDmuW5Z74>. Resources on the MES and Equity Accountability System can be found here, <https://illinoisshines.com/equity-accountability-system/>, and stakeholders may contact the Program Administrator's MES team at mes@illinoisshines.com for assistance.
- **Community Solar Program News** - See full [TCS](#) and [CDCS](#) hubs on Program website.
 - **Community-Driven Community Solar ("CDCS") - Part II Demonstration of Project Commitments and Permissible Changes** - On [June 28, 2024](#), the Program published an announcement providing guidance on CDCS Part II demonstration of project commitments and permissible changes. The announcement provided an overview, a chart of primary and secondary scoring criterion, what should be submitted in Part II, and what comes after Part II Verification.
 - **Community Solar Updates and Reminders for 2024-25 Program Year** - See [previous](#) announcement

Ongoing Operations Updates

- **ComEd Community Solar Portal Outages** - The Program Administrator is aware that the ComEd Community Solar Portal has experienced outages since mid-February 2024, impacting CS subscriber billing and the ability to add/remove subscribers. The Program Administration team is working hard to support AVs impacted by these outages and will provide updates from ComEd as this system comes back to full operating capacity.
- **Part II Verification Cut Off for July** - To allow time for invoice calculation and generation, the last valid Part II Verification date for July will be **July 24, 2024**. Applications that are Part II verified on or before July 24, 2024 will be included in the June invoicing period. Application processing will continue throughout the last week of the month and any applications that are reviewed between July 25, 2024 and July 31, 2024 will be invoiced in September 2024.
- **Re-Batching for ICC Meetings** - In advance of each submission of batches to the ICC for approval, AVs are provided the opportunity to withhold or re-batch projects. AVs must indicate any requests to withdraw or withhold projects during the two day re-batching window. In the absence of any action by an AV, the Program Administrator will re-batch the projects at their discretion and submit eligible projects to the ICC.
 - It is extremely important that AVs review their re-batching files on SharePoint to indicate any re-batching preferences, but especially requests to withhold projects from submission. The Program Administrator alerts AVs by email when they have projects that are eligible for re-batching and planned to be submitted to the ICC in the next memo. Unfortunately, sometimes these communications are missed, and projects are submitted to the ICC despite an AVs intent to hold a project back.
 - The Program Administrator requests that AVs who believe they may want to withhold or re-batch projects mark their calendars and review SharePoint folders for re-batching templates. This way, if any email alerts are missed, AVs are still aware of the dates that re-batching opens and can check if any projects are in the upcoming ICC submission. Below are the next re-batching windows:

Re-Batching Opens for AVs	Election Deadline – 12:00 p.m. CPT (Re-batching closes for AVs)	Trade Date (ICC Meeting Date)
7/16/2024	7/18/2024	8/1/2024
7/29/2024	7/31/2024	8/14/2024
8/13/2024	8/15/2024	8/29/2024
8/26/2024	8/28/2024	9/12/2024
9/10/2024	9/12/2024	9/26/2024
9/24/2024	9/26/2024	10/10/2024
9/30/2024	10/2/2024	10/17/2024
10/15/2024	10/17/2024	10/31/2024
10/21/2024	10/23/2024	11/7/2024

Application Processing Updates

- **Application Processing Tables** - Application processing tables are maintained at IllinoisShines.com/project-application-reports/. These tables are typically updated daily, but in some cases may experience slight delays. The Program Administrator is currently experiencing technical issues and data on the [Project Application Reports](#) page and it may not be updated daily. Thank you for your patience as the Program Administrator works on a solution. For questions about specific project applications, please contact the Program Administrator at admin@IllinoisShines.com.
- **Application Processing Update** - Following the start of the 2024-25 Illinois Shines Program Year, the Program Administrator has made substantial progress reviewing waitlist applications. On June 3, the waitlist volume totaled 7,938 Small DG and 208 Large DG applications. Since June 3, over 3,829 Small DG Part I and 171

Large DG Part I previously waitlisted applications have been reviewed. Over 3,183 Small DG Part I and 97 Large DG Part I applications have been verified.

The Program Administrator has increased application processing staffing and will continue to add processors over the coming weeks to address the high volume of applications to be reviewed. Once staffing is increased to full capacity, the forecasted throughput is approximately 800 DG applications weekly.

Reviewing Part I DG applications is a high priority that must be balanced with the priority of reviewing Part II DG and CS applications. Staffing is evaluated and reassigned week over week to address each of these areas while considering the necessity to resource *Need Info* requests and cures, technical review, and quality assurance tasks. Currently the Program Administrator anticipates completing the review of all previously waitlisted DG applications by the beginning of August. With continued high volumes of new applications being submitted, the Program Administrator expects to be within a two-week turnaround time for application review at the end of September for all application categories. This forecast is subject to change, and updates will be provided in each Weekly Announcement until processing times are back within a normal range.

Ongoing Program Portal Updates

- The latest portal updates and enhancements, a Portal Development Roadmap, and portal help guides can be found at <https://illinoisshines.com/portal-updates/>.
- **Portal Maintenance and Releases** - Scheduled system maintenance windows continue on **Tuesday and Thursday evenings (from 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. CPT)**, during which times the Portal is typically unavailable to users; the Program hopes these windows are minimally disruptive to Program participants. **Users working in the Portal should save their work prior to the 8:00 p.m. CPT start of system maintenance window, as any unsaved information will be lost when the system is moved into maintenance mode.** In some cases, Portal availability may resume earlier than 11:00 p.m. CPT, though **AVs and Designees should plan on the full three hours.**

Development Focus	Details	Planned or Actual Delivery
Bugfix		
Cannot submit app when interconnecting Utility Changed Between Part I and II (from ComEd)	Issue: When a Part I project application was originally submitted with the Interconnecting Utility specified as ComEd, but the Interconnecting Utility was later updated/corrected to a different utility company during Part I Verification, submission of the Part II application was being blocked by a validation error requesting to have a Net Metering Letter uploaded in the documents section. This document requirement is unique/specific to projects where the Interconnecting Utility is ComEd and should not apply to these projects. Fix: Part II Submission logic has been updated to account for this scenario.	July 9, 2024
Enhancement		
Disclosure Form: Completing eSign does not update status in Portal if eSign Request was re-sent/re-submitted (EG: 553250 SkyFi Solar)	Previously, if an e-Signature was requested multiple times on a given Disclosure Form, only the most recently sent e-Signature request would automatically update the Disclosure Form (moving the status from "Awaiting Signature" to "Complete" and uploading a copy of the Disclosure Form PDF) when the document was signed in Dropbox Sign, requiring someone to manually download the signed form PDF from DropBox Sign and manually upload it into the portal if the e-Signature was obtained on an earlier request. After July 10, 2024, any e-Signature Request for a given Disclosure Form will update the status to "Completed" and upload a copy of the e-Signed PDF automatically when completed.	July 9, 2024

Exclusions:

(1) The Disclosure Form will only be updated automatically by the e-Sign Process when the status of the Disclosure Form is "Awaiting Signature". If a Disclosure Form has already been Completed/signed, and a second e-Sign request is signed, the original signature event will be retained in the Disclosure Form record by design. In the rare case that a Disclosure Form is signed two times, and the latter signed document should be the document of record, someone would need to manually upload the document in the portal to replace the earlier file.

(2) This change takes effect July 10, 2024. If Multiple e-Signature Requests were sent for a given Disclosure Form prior to July 10, 2024 and one of the older requests is completed, the signed Disclosure Form will still need to be updated manually (even if the signing event happened after July 10, 2024).

Requirements and Reminders

- **Stakeholder Feedback** - This table outlines current and forthcoming proposals and feedback requests. Details on previous proposals and feedback requests can be found [at the Program website](#).

Proposal or Feedback Topic and Link to Details	Request for Comment Released	Deadline for Comment	Results or Updates to Request
Survey on the stranded customer REC adder	July 3, 2024	July 24, 2024	See feedback invitation here .
Survey on updating Disclosure Forms for supply-only net metering	July 3, 2024	July 24, 2024	See feedback invitation here .
Equity Accountability System Assessment	March 21, 2024	April 10, 2024	Comments received are published here .

- **IPA Request for AVs and Installer Designees Interested To Serve Stranded Illinois Shines DG Customers** - As previously [announced](#), the Program seeks entities interested in serving stranded customers, and [updates the lists](#) of participating vendors on a rolling basis. The original announcements include details regarding the opportunity to support stranded customers, eligibility requirements, and anticipated responsibilities.

CONTACT US: For portal, application, or Program-specific questions and inquiries, please contact admin@IllinoisShines.com or call 877-783-1820.