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**CONTACT:** Alex Frank — (703) 276-3264, [afrank@hastingsgroup.com](mailto:afrank@hastingsgroup.com); Micaela Preskill — (312) 995-5908, [mpreskill@e2.org](mailto:mpreskill@e2.org); Michael Timberlake — (913) 645-9103, [mtimberlake@e2.org](mailto:mtimberlake@e2.org)

## **Report: More Than 677,900 Midwesterners Work in Clean Energy; Jobs Located in Every Corner of Region**

*Proposed federal, state policies could create thousands more jobs*

**CHICAGO, IL – (August 11, 2021)** – More than 677,900 Midwesterners worked in clean energy and clean vehicles at the end of 2020, making the sector a major – and promising – part of the region’s economy, according to a comprehensive [analysis of employment data](#) released today by the national, nonpartisan business group E2 (Environmental Entrepreneurs) and Clean Energy Trust. The report comes as Congress and the Biden administration are considering legislation to boost federal investments in clean energy and clean vehicles.

Like most of the economy, clean energy was hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic and economic downturn in 2020. According to this year’s [Clean Jobs Midwest](#), 2020 was the first year-to-year decline since E2 and Clean Energy Trust began tracking Midwest clean energy jobs. At one point, more than 131,600 Midwest clean energy workers had filed for unemployment, but the sector surged back 10.7 percent in the second half of the year to recover more than half of the jobs initially lost. The final 2020 job numbers represent an 8.9 percent drop in the Midwest clean energy workforce from 2019, or 66,100 jobs. Last year’s job losses were a dramatic change of pace for the industry. In the 3 years leading up to 2020, for example, clean energy jobs grew almost 4 times as fast as overall employment.

Despite the setbacks, clean energy jobs rebounded quicker than overall Midwest workforce, according to the analysis. The Midwest can take advantage of the sector’s high job growth potential by enacting policies that support renewable energy, energy efficiency and electric vehicles. Policies such as Minnesota’s newly adopted clean car standards, Michigan’s goal of decarbonization by 2050, and Illinois’s proposed comprehensive clean energy legislation would help create tens of thousands of new jobs for decades as the region moves beyond the immediate recovery.

[According to the analysis](#), energy efficiency jobs saw the biggest drop, declining about 12 percent over the year as workers were prevented from entering homes and offices because of the pandemic lockdowns. Other clean energy sectors also saw significant declines in 2020, including renewable energy [2.8 percent] grid and storage [7.8 percent] and clean fuels [5 percent].

Several clean energy sectors did see job gains in 2020, including Electric Vehicles (EVs) and Hybrid Electric Vehicles, which combined now employs about 65,212 workers as an increasing number of automakers announced shifts to producing 100 percent zero-emission vehicles.

Nationwide clean energy employment finished 2020 down about 307,000 jobs from 2019's high of nearly 3.4 million, recovering about 300,000 jobs nationally from June to December – a rate faster than nationwide employment growth during that period.

**Micaela Preskill, Midwest Advocate of the national, nonpartisan business group E2 said:**

"2020's unprecedented crisis showed why this region needs a strong clean energy economy more than ever before. Despite the decline, the data shows clean energy is rebounding back in every state and every county in the Midwest. Our state and federal lawmakers should take note: if you want these good paying jobs in your backyard, you need to support the policies on the table that are primed to turbocharge clean energy and keep it growing."

**Ian Adams, Managing Director at Clean Energy Trust said:**

"Now in its sixth year, the Clean Jobs Midwest report offers a snapshot of the Midwest's clean energy industry. These jobs prove to be resilient, rebounding faster than the overall Midwest workforce. We see the clean energy industry as ripe with opportunity for innovation and growth - and look forward to supporting the impressive climate entrepreneurs in this space."

**Russ Bates, founder of NXTGEN Clean Energy Solutions in Independence, OH said:**

"I grew up in 'coal country' in Southern Indiana and spent years working with coal fired power plants. I've been in the coal tunnels and I can tell you that I'd rather be putting up solar panels. The biggest myth of renewables is that they will lead to job loss. I am living proof that the transition from fossil to clean energy will happen and it will put more people to work. I founded NXTGEN - a solar, EV charging, and battery storage company - because I saw the potential of the clean energy industry and I wanted to help make the benefits of clean energy available to more people."

**Maria Onesto Moran, Owner of Green Home Experts in Lyons, IL said:**

"I own a company that provides energy efficiency services throughout Chicagoland – from the installation of smart thermostats for senior citizens to shipping and packing energy efficiency kits to utility customers. My company is an example of the industry's growth potential. Five years ago I was the only employee and now we have 38 staff. Comprehensive energy legislation in Illinois and bold action from Congress will set the energy efficiency industry up to continue to grow, create jobs, and provide new opportunities to communities of color. If our lawmakers act now, clean energy can be a key part of Illinois's post pandemic future and economic recovery."

**Robert Bollinger, CEO and Founder of electric truck maker Bollinger Motors based in Oak Park, MI said:**

"Michigan is America's center of auto engineering, and the job transition from internal combustion to electric vehicles is well underway. In 2018, I moved my electric truck startup company, Bollinger Motors, from New York State to the Detroit metro area. The sea change that I saw starting to happen then has accelerated, as both automotive giants and entrepreneurs have embraced the historic transition to EVs. And we need both state and federal policy support to ensure that it continues here, as an economic growth stimulator and job creator."

**Other Findings:**

- Energy efficiency, the Midwest's largest clean energy employer, now employs 470,651. The sector was hardest hit in 2020 – losing 63,915 jobs or 12 percent of its total workforce.

- Renewable energy now employs 84,881 Midwesterners, including 37,842 in wind and 36,837 in solar.
- Clean vehicles employ 90,652 Midwesterners.
- Grid and storage employ 24,209 Midwesterners.
- Clean fuels employ 7,525 Midwesterners.
- Small businesses drive the Midwest's clean energy sector – in 2020, 70.5 percent of the Midwest's clean energy businesses employed fewer than 20 people.
- Clean energy employed workers in all but 1 of 1,054 counties in the Midwest.
- Clean energy employed workers in every congressional district in the Midwest.
- 10.6 percent of Midwesterners employed in clean energy are veterans.

For a full breakdown of clean energy jobs in each sector and for every state in the Midwest, see the detailed breakdowns available at [www.cleanjobsmidwest.com](http://www.cleanjobsmidwest.com) – including job totals for every county, congressional district, and state legislative district.

#### **Methodology:**

*The analysis is based on preliminary employment data collected and analyzed by BW Research Partnership for the 2021 U.S. Energy and Employment Report (USEER, forthcoming). The USEER analyzes data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) to track employment across many energy production, transmission, and distribution subsectors. In addition, the 2021 USEER relies on a unique supplemental survey of 35,000 business representatives across the United States.*

#### **Previous E2 and Clean Energy Trust Jobs Reports:**

- [Clean Jobs Midwest 2020](#)
- [Clean Jobs Midwest 2019](#)
- [Clean Jobs Midwest 2018](#)
- [Clean Jobs Midwest 2017](#)
- [Clean Jobs Midwest 2016](#)

#### **Additional Information:**

- Report: [Clean Jobs America 2021 \(April 2020\)](#)
- Report: [Clean Jobs, Better Jobs: An examination of clean energy job wages \(October 2020\)](#)
- Report: [Build Back Better, Faster: How a federal stimulus focusing on clean energy can create millions of jobs and restart America's economy \(July 2020\)](#)
- Report: [Clean Energy & COVID-19 Economic Crisis, May Impact Analysis \(June 2020\)](#)

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*[Environmental Entrepreneurs \(E2\)](#) is a national, nonpartisan group of business leaders, investors, and professionals from every sector of the economy who advocate for smart policies that are good for the economy and good for the environment. Our members have founded or funded more than 2,500 companies, created more than 600,000 jobs, and manage more than \$100 billion in venture and private equity capital. For more information, see [www.e2.org](http://www.e2.org) or follow us on Twitter at [@e2org](https://twitter.com/e2org).*

*Clean Energy Trust provides catalytic capital and support to early-stage startups in the Greater Midwest working on solutions for clean energy, decarbonization, and environmental sustainability. Based in*

*Chicago, Clean Energy Trust invests in and provides hands-on support to help entrepreneurs scale and succeed. To date, Clean Energy Trust has helped its 36 portfolio companies raise \$34 for every \$1 Clean Energy Trust has invested. Learn more at [www.CleanEnergyTrust.org](http://www.CleanEnergyTrust.org).*