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Report: More Than 69,300 Wisconsinites Work in Clean Energy; Jobs Located in Every County

Proposed federal policies could create thousands more jobs

MADISON, WI – (August 11, 2021) – More than 69,300 Wisconsinites worked in clean energy and clean vehicles at the end of 2020, making the sector a major – and promising – part of the state’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 Wisconsin clean energy jobs. At one point, more than 11,300 Wisconsin clean energy workers had filed for unemployment, but the sector surged back 6.2 percent in the second half of the year to recover more than half of the jobs initially lost. The final 2020 job numbers represent a 9.6 percent drop in Wisconsin clean energy workforce from 2019, or 7,340 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 2 times as fast as overall statewide employment.

Despite the setbacks, clean energy jobs are rebounding, according to the analysis. Wisconsin can take advantage of the sector’s high job growth potential by enacting policies that support renewable energy, energy efficiency and electric vehicles that would help create tens of thousands of new jobs for decades as Wisconsin moves beyond the immediate recovery.

[According to the analysis](#), energy efficiency jobs saw the biggest drop, declining about 11.9 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 grid and storage [4.3 percent], and clean fuels [5.8 percent].

Several clean energy sectors did see job gains in 2020, including Electric Vehicles (EVs) and Hybrid Electric Vehicles, which combined now employs about 1,369 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 Wisconsin needs a strong clean energy economy more than ever before. Despite the decline, what the data shows is that 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."

Mahanth Joishy, City of Madison Fleet Superintendent of Madison, WI:

"We don't talk enough about how clean energy makes sense economically and is smart for business. It can connect both red counties and blue counties politically. In the City of Madison, for example, we are making our fleet of 1,400 vehicles more sustainable and that benefits air quality, saves the city money, and invests and creates jobs in a growing industry, including right here in-state. All of the biodiesel vehicles and North America's first electric fire truck operated by Madison are Wisconsin-made. The advanced transportation industry will continue to grow and as the industry gets cleaner, everyone benefits and the Midwest could be the global leader in this revolution."

Other Findings:

- Energy efficiency, Wisconsin's largest clean energy employer, now employs 55,986. The sector was hardest hit in 2020 — losing 7,583 jobs or 11.9 percent of its total workforce.
- Renewable energy now employs 6,121, including 1,797 in wind and 3,768 in solar.
- Clean vehicles now employs 4,808 Wisconsinites.
- Grid and storage now employs 2,081 Wisconsinites.
- Clean fuels now employs 347 Wisconsinites.
- Small businesses drive Wisconsin's clean energy sector — in 2020, 69 percent of Wisconsin's clean energy businesses employed fewer than 20 people.
- Clean energy employed workers in all 72 counties in Wisconsin.
- Clean energy employed workers in all 8 congressional districts in Wisconsin.
- 11.6 percent of Wisconsinites 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 — 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 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.