FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE WITH MIDWEST GRID TRANSFORMATION



Electricity production is currently a leading cause of climate change, but it doesn't have to be. Renewable resources can provide clean, low-cost electricity without the greenhouse gas emissions of burning fossil fuels. The Environmental Law & Policy Center (ELPC) is working with groups across the Midwest to transform the electric grid to maximize clean energy and build resilient communities.

The Old Grid

Historically, electricity flowed in one direction from generator to end user.



But today, energy is starting to flow in many directions. A homeowner with rooftop solar panels is both using and generating energy, and sharing excess with neighbors. Batteries can store energy at many scales, so it's ready when needed. In the face of the climate crisis, we must embrace climate solutions from all parts of the grid.

Greening the Grid

Innovation is shaping the grid at every level. With a more flexible and responsive system we can work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and meet our energy needs more efficiently with clean energy. If we want to prevent the most devastating effects of climate change, we have to work fast to green the grid. We cannot afford to waste limited funds on grid investments that don't help us maximize clean, efficient, and flexible energy options.



Grid Modernization to Mitigate Climate Change

For a long time, utilities made grid-planning decisions behind closed doors. But today, everyday people and local communities must join the conversation to shape fair decisions and provide climate-friendly solutions. Utility-scale energy generation is important, but it's not enough. We can accelerate climate change solutions by investing in solar panels, electric vehicles and other distributed energy resources (DERs). "Integrated Distribution Planning" leverages DERs to unlock the power of clean energy at every scale. With DERs and thoughtful grid modernization, we can power the Midwest with clean energy quickly, affordably, and equitably.

Thoughtful Grid Modernization Means More...



Knowledge: Technology and transparency empower customers to better understand their

empower customers to better understand their energy use and efficiency opportunities.



Efficiency: The fastest and most affordable way to reduce our environmental impact is to simply use less energy. With the right technology and knowledge, we can do more with less.



Equity: With transparent planning and targeted subsidies, everyone can share in the burdens and benefits of a just transition.



fuels to power buildings & transportation with clean electricity, the grid must be ready to embrace new opportunities.



Reliability and Resilience: Extreme weather caused by climate change threatens our vulnerable grid, but DERs can make neighborhoods more resilient in the face of disaster.

What is ELPC's Midwest Grid Transformation Program Doing?

As part of its Midwest Grid Transformation Program, ELPC is leading a coalition of organizations, including GridLab, Vote Solar, Natural Resources Defense Council, Fresh Energy, Citizens Action Coalition, and Interstate Renewable Energy Council. We are working in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin to transform the energy grid for the future.

WE COORDINATE technical experts and advocates in electric planning and grid modernization. We share information and resources monthly, so participants can prioritize litigation and technical commitments across the region.

WE LITIGATE to refine or improve state-level grid modernization proposals. We also ensure that regulators reject harmful proposals for excessive utility investment at the expense of cost-effective, clean distributed energy generation.

WE EDUCATE energy stakeholders to help them prepare distribution systems for a future in which customer-owned and third-party-owned clean energy resources will provide increasing levels of grid services.

