

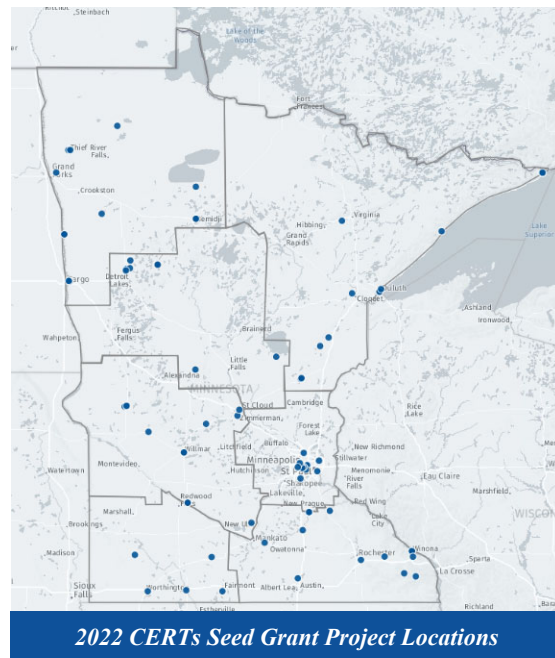
## 74 projects across Minnesota receive CERTs 2022 Seed Grants for community-based clean energy efforts, doubling the number from last round and adding more projects focused on underserved communities

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SAINT PAUL, Minn. (January 19, 2022) — Minnesota’s Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs) awarded seed grants to 74 innovative energy efficiency and renewable energy projects – over twice as many as last round – in communities from Warren to Winona, Morton to Mountain Iron, Long Prairie to Lindstrom. The communities are funded for a wide range of energy projects, from improving buildings for energy efficiency to job skills training for careers in clean energy.

This year, seed grants with a focus on underserved communities received additional funding. Underserved communities encompass a range of populations, such as BIPOC communities and households with high energy burdens, where they spend more than 5% of their annual income on energy costs, compared to 2% for the average Minnesota household.<sup>1</sup> For example, the Akiing 8<sup>th</sup> Fire project engages both White Earth Tribal members and people from the Lower Sioux Nation in a solar thermal installation and collaborative training effort. Numerous projects throughout Minnesota focus on energy efficiency in manufactured housing.



The doubling of seed projects and expansion of grants for underserved communities are the result of a successful public-private partnership. The Minnesota Department of Commerce Conservation Improvement Program allocation for seed grants was renewed by the Legislature at \$140,000. Commerce added \$120,000 more for projects focused on underserved communities by leveraging its State Energy Office funds from the U.S. Department of Energy. In addition, a new award from the Morgan Family Foundation provided an additional \$70,000 in CERTs Seed Grant funding.

“These seed grants will advance community initiatives, support local opportunities for jobs and training, and engage communities in reaching their clean energy goals,” says Lissa Pawlisch, CERTs statewide director.

Commerce Commissioner Grace Arnold said, “Through these local projects, Minnesotans across the state are investing in the future. These projects will save money, save energy, grow jobs and build more resilient communities.”

Seed grants encourage community-driven projects that help people see clean energy working in their own communities and provide communities with opportunities to tangibly learn about and experience the benefits of clean energy. The 74 funded projects span a broad range of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies along with electric vehicle charging. Many projects also include components of education, outreach and community building.

These awards mark the 11th round of CERTs Seed Grants, totaling over \$1.6 million to 467 projects since 2006. The complete list of funded projects with descriptions and grant amounts, is available at <https://cleanenergyresourceteams.org/2022grants>

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<sup>1</sup> CERTs defines underserved populations as energy burdened communities — those who spend more than 5% of their income on energy costs — and other groups historically excluded from energy decisions and opportunities. This includes (but is not limited to) Black, Indigenous and People of Color, immigrants, low income, disabled, women, LGBTQ+ communities, and geographically isolated communities.

## Seed Grants by Region

### CENTRAL REGION

- Akiing 8th Fire: 8th Fire Crew Trains and Installs at Lower Sioux Indian Housing Authority — Callaway, Minn.
- Community Grassroots Solutions: Clean Energy Careers for St. Cloud's Somali Community — St. Cloud, Minn.
- Creator's Place: Energy Efficiency for Creator's Place Bam'idizowigamig — Pine Point, Minn.
- Hempax: Solar Microgrid Test Site — Ponsford, Minn.
- Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe: Electric Vehicle Transition Project — Cass Lake, Minn.
- Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, Department of Natural Resources: Electric Vehicle Charging Station — Onamia, Minn.
- Ogema Organics: Climate Smart Technologies for a Prepared Future on White Earth — Callaway, Minn.
- St. Mary of Mt. Carmel Catholic School: Double Door Vestibule — Long Prairie, Minn.
- Unidos MN Education Fund: Energy Justice Pueblitos — St. Cloud, Minn

### METRO REGION

- All Parks Alliance For Change: Manufactured Home Improvement Partnership Program — Saint Paul, Minn.
- Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative: Solar Initiative — Minneapolis, Minn.
- Center for Earth, Energy and Democracy (CEED): Energy Education — Hennepin County, Minn.
- City of Bloomington: Energy Resource Workshops — Bloomington, Minn.
- City of Maplewood: Clean Energy for All — Maplewood, Minn.
- City of St. Louis Park: Engaging NOAH Property Owners and Tenants for More Resiliency — St. Louis Park, Minn.
- Clark Grace United Church of Christ: UCC Energy Outreach — South St. Paul, Minn.
- Iby's LLC: Light of Lake Street — Minneapolis, Minn.
- Just B Solar Co: Intro to Solar 101 — Minneapolis, Minn.
- Minneapolis Climate Action: Art and Climate Change — Creating Partners in Community Solar Gardens — Minneapolis, Minn.
- Northcountry Cooperative Foundation: Improving Energy Efficiency of Manufactured Homes — Anoka and Chisago Counties, Minn.
- Unidos MN Education Fund: Energy Justice Pueblitos — Minneapolis, Minn.

### NORTHEAST REGION

- 40 Acre Cooperative: Solar Powered Hoop Houses for Crop Protection — Rutledge, Minn.
- East Central ISD #2580: Eagles Soar with Solar — Finlayson, Minn.
- East Range Academy of Science and Technology: 40 kW School Solar Array — Mountain Iron, Minn.
- Ecolibrium3: Lincoln Park Resilience Hub Resilient Power Design Project — Duluth, Minn.
- Ecolibrium3: One Block — Developing Environmental Justice Climate Resilience Data — Duluth, Minn.
- Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa: Sustainable Living Tours — Cloquet, Minn.
- Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa: Clean Energy Initiative — Grand Portage, Minn.
- Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa: Log Building LED Project — Grand Portage, Minn.
- Healthy Alliances Matter for All, St. Mark AME Church: Charcoal Coolers at the Giving Garden — Duluth, Minn.
- Kanabec County Agricultural Society: Light the Grounds — Mora, Minn.
- Prototypical LLC: Ten K Solar Microinverter Adaptation Project — Finland, Minn.
- Regency Park Mobile Homes: Mora Energy Efficiency Outreach — Mora, Minn.

### NORTHWEST REGION

- Aaron's Grocery: Cooler Replacement — Fertile, Minn.
- City of Halstad: Wimmer Homes Insulation — Halstad, Minn.
- City of Middle River: Legacy Center Energy Efficiency Project — Middle River, Minn.
- City of Warren: Clean Energy Independence — Model Plan for Design for Community Regeneration — Warren, Minn.
- Halstad Municipal Utilities: Electric Vehicle Charging Station — Halstad, Minn.
- Headwaters Music and Arts: Creating Light and Warmth with Music and Art — Bemidji, Minn.
- Lake Agassiz Habitat for Humanity: ReStore HVAC Update — Moorhead, Minn.
- Marshall County: Electric Vehicle Charger — Warren, Minn.
- New Americans Integration Center: Building Energy Efficiency Assessment and Open House — East Grand Forks, Minn.
- Northcountry Cooperative Foundation: Improving Energy Efficiency of Manufactured Homes — Moorhead, Minn.
- Red Lake Charter School: Solar for Red Lake Charter School (Endazhi-Nitaawiging) — Red Lake, Minn.

- White Earth Economic Development: Naytahwaush Boxing Gym — White Earth, Minn.
- White Earth Land Recovery Project: Solar Feasibility and Building Energy Assessment — Callaway, Minn.

### **SOUTHEAST REGION**

- Channel One Regional Food Bank: Food Bank Lighting Retrofit — Rochester, Minn.
- City of Houston: Community Electric Vehicle Charging Station — Houston, Minn.
- Growing Up Healthy: Clean Energy Resources in Spanish — Northfield, Minn.
- Healthy Community Initiative/Growing Up Healthy: It Takes a Community to Strengthen Energy Efficiency — Faribault, Minn.
- Hillcrest Community Cooperative: Community Building Remodel — Clarks Grove, Minn.
- Hometown Resource Center: Facilities Efficiency Updates — St. Charles, Minn.
- Northcountry Cooperative Foundation: Improving Energy Efficiency of Manufactured Homes — Southeast MN
- Precipitate and Community Action Center of Northfield: Energy Engagement with the Hillcrest Community — Northfield, Minn.
- Project FINE: Energy Efficiency Outreach to Refugee and Immigrant Populations — Winona, Minn.
- Project FINE: Understanding Your Energy Bill — Winona, Minn.
- Regency Park Mobile Homes: Eagle Lake Energy Efficiency Outreach — Eagle Lake, Minn.
- Rethos: Places Reimagined: Old Home Energy Efficiency Classes — Winona, Minn.
- Semcac: Collaboration for Interpreting Services of Energy Programs — Southeast MN

### **SOUTHWEST REGION**

- City of Jackson: Bike Local, Shop Local — Developing a Bicycle Incentive Program — Jackson, Minn.
- Lower Sioux Indian Housing Authority: Akiing 8th Fire Crew Trains and Installs at Lower Sioux Indian Housing Authority — Morton, Minn.
- Northcountry Cooperative Foundation: Improving Energy Efficiency of Manufactured Homes — Southwest MN
- Shetek Lutheran Ministries: Clean Energy Educational Programs — Slayton, Minn.
- South Central Electric Association: Electric Vehicle Education — Windom, Minn.
- Unidos MN Education Fund: Energy Justice Pueblitos — Worthington, Minn.

### **WEST CENTRAL REGION**

- Akiing 8th Fire: 8th Fire Crew Trains and Installs at Lower Sioux Indian Housing Authority — Morton, Minn.
- City of Morris: Energy Experience Pathway — Morris, Minn.
- City of Willmar: Willmar GreenStep Reboot — Willmar, Minn
- Greater Minnesota Council of Churches: MN Venture Farms Cold Climate Solar Greenhouse — Benson and Paynesville, Minn.
- Gustavus Adolphus College: Promoting Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency In Diverse Communities — St. Peter, Minn.
- Paynesville Area Secondary School: Performing Arts Center/ Lighting Upgrade — Paynesville, Minn.
- Regional Fitness Center: Growing Support for Electric Biking in Stevens County — Morris, Minn.
- University of Minnesota Morris: Intercultural Sustainability Leaders in Energy — Morris, Minn.
- Willmar Municipal Utilities: Regency Park Energy Efficiency Outreach — Willmar, Minn.

**Project details are available at [cleanenergyresourceteams.org/2022grants](https://cleanenergyresourceteams.org/2022grants)**

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**About the Clean Energy Resource Teams:** The Clean Energy Resource Teams, or CERTs, connects individuals and communities in Minnesota to the resources they need to identify and implement community-based clean energy projects. CERTs is a partnership of the University of Minnesota Extension Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships, Minnesota Department of Commerce, Southwest Regional Development Commission, and Great Plains Institute. Learn more at [www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org](https://www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org).