

A Message from
ILLINOIS ATTORNEY GENERAL
Lisa Madigan



In 2007, my office successfully negotiated new legislation (220 ILCS 5/16-107.5) that requires Illinois electric utilities to meet energy efficiency and renewable energy standards. Illinois also recently enacted a "net metering" law to provide incentives for homeowners and businesses to install renewable energy systems. Both of these laws will make it easier for Illinois consumers to save money by reducing electricity consumption, as well as promote the use of electricity generated by renewable resources.

Specifically, "net metering" means that customers who use renewable energy systems will be charged by their utility only for the net amount of electricity they consume. Through this program, customers benefit from reduced costs while all Illinoisans benefit from a cleaner environment.

Investing in renewable energy resources will protect the environment, stimulate economic growth, and enhance the continued diversification of Illinois' energy resource mix.

If you are interested in reducing your utility bill through the use of renewable energy, I urge you to take a closer look at the "net metering" program.

Lisa Madigan
Attorney General



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For more information on Illinois' net metering programs, please call us or visit our Web site:

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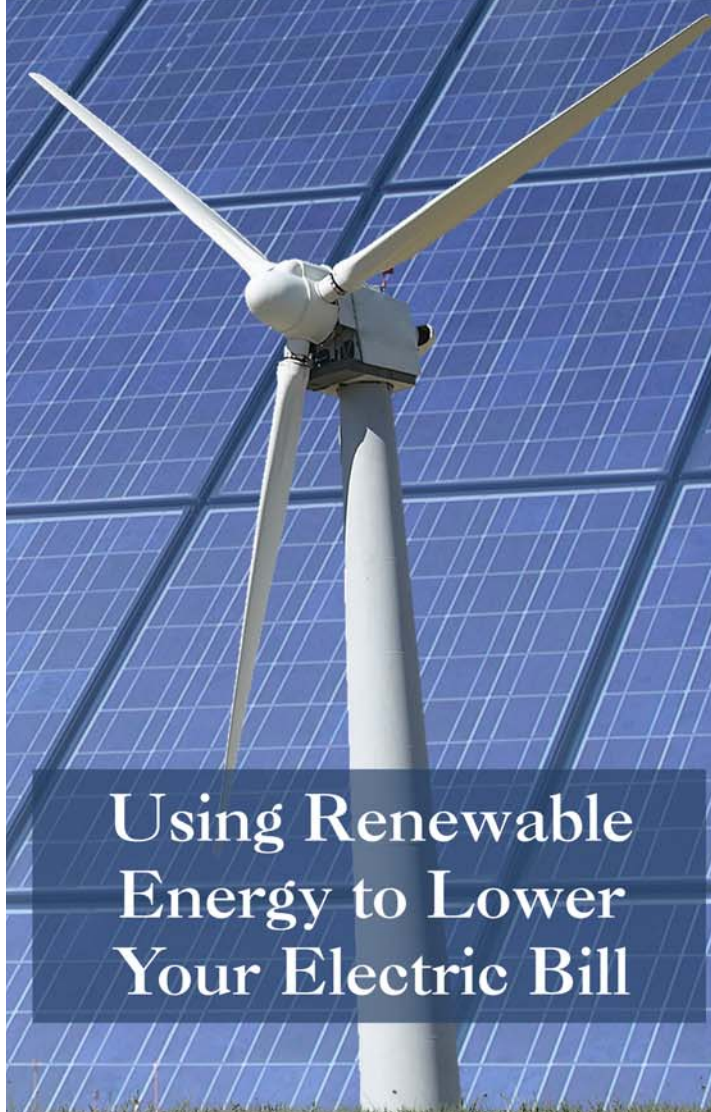
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Net Metering



Using Renewable
Energy to Lower
Your Electric Bill



Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is net metering?

A. Net metering is a way to capture the energy used and produced by a renewable energy generator located at a home or small business. Homeowners and small business owners who have a solar power system or a wind turbine can use net metering to offset their traditional utility costs while using cleaner energy.

Q. What equipment do I need?

A. Residential and small business customers typically invest in either a solar (photo-voltaic, or "PV") system or a wind system.

- **Solar electric systems** generally consist of photovoltaic panels added to a building's roof that capture the energy produced by the sun. These systems are most productive during the summer, but they can still generate electricity during the cloudier fall and winter seasons.



- **Wind systems** typically consist of individual turbines and vary widely in size. The placement of a wind system greatly affects the amount of electricity it generates.



Q. Do I have to buy a new meter?

A. Residential customers can use a single, bi-directional meter, which will be provided to them if their current meter cannot record the electricity generated on-site. Customers who use generators with a nameplate rating of 40 kW and below can obtain a dual-channel meter from their electricity provider. Customers with a larger system must purchase the dual-channel meter on their own.



Q. How much money can I save?

A. Annual savings estimates depend upon how much electricity you use and how much electricity your system generates. Properly installed solar or wind systems can offset anywhere from 1/3 to 1/2 of a household or small business' annual energy consumption.

Q. What should I know before I install a system?

- A. Before you install a net metering system, it is important to ask the following questions:
- Are there tax incentives or rebates for installing a renewable energy system available in your area? To find out, check DSIRE, a database of Illinois tax incentives for renewable energy, at www.dsireusa.org.

- Are there zoning laws or building ordinances that restrict what kind of system you can install in your area?
- Are there licensed contractors in your area to install the system you want?
- What is the process for connecting your system to the local electric grid?

Q. How does the Illinois program work?

A. The Illinois net metering program began April 1, 2008. Commonwealth Edison, the Ameren Illinois Utilities, and MidAmerican Energy Company must now offer customers credits on their electric bills for electricity generated by renewable energy systems. Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Under Illinois rules, eligible renewable generators of 40 kW or less receive a one-to-one retail rate credit. These customers will be compensated for excess electricity generated by their renewable energy systems at the same rate that they pay when buying electricity from their utility. These credits will be carried over month-to-month, with the annual period running from May to April, or November to October, at the customer's discretion.

Customers with eligible renewable generators between 40 kW and 2 MW will receive credits equal to the utility's avoided cost for their excess generation. However, customers who are "time of use" customers are compensated at time-of-use rates.