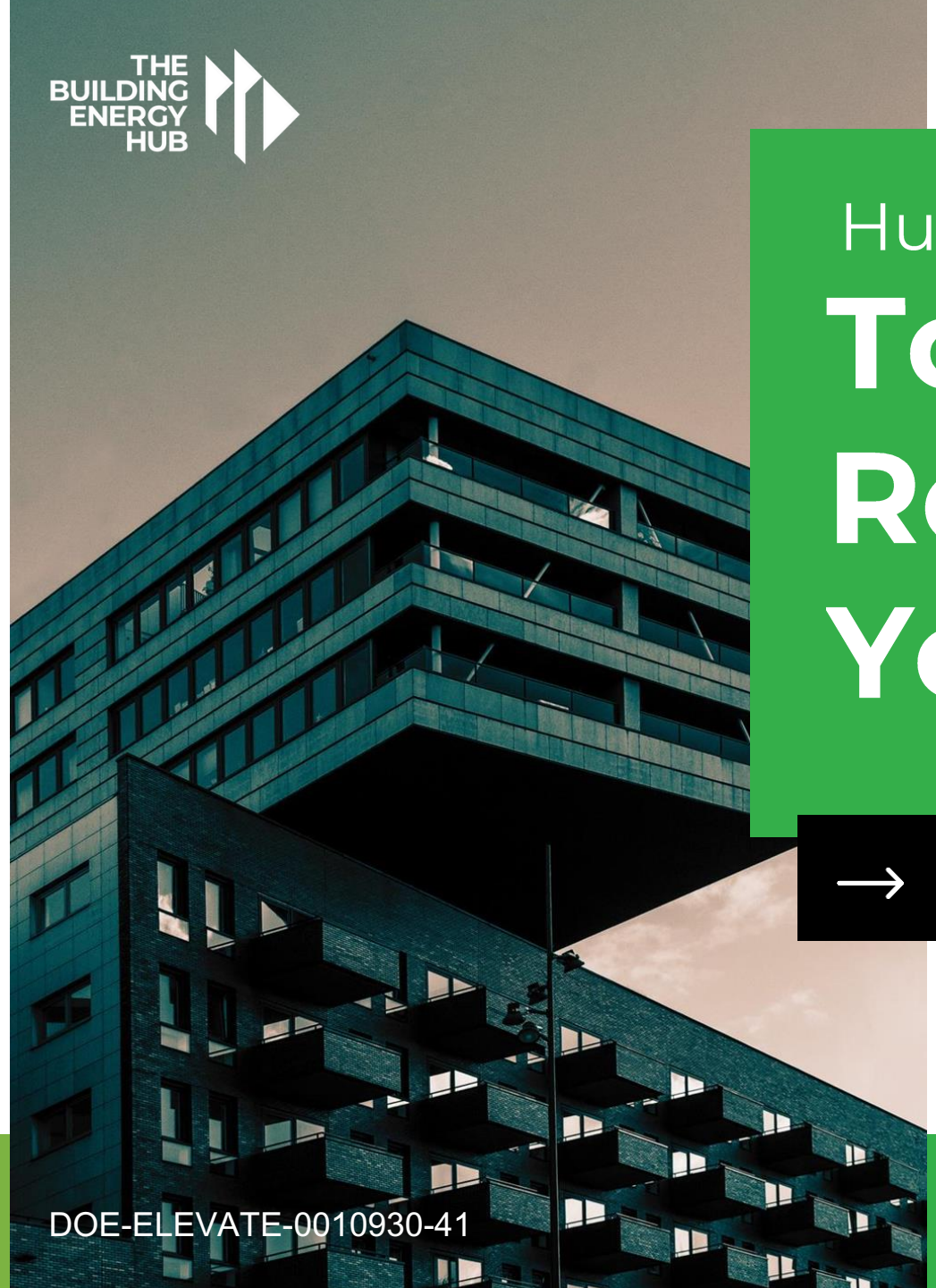


THE BUILDING ENERGY HUB

Hub 101

Tools and Resources for Your Building

→

May 6, 2026

DOE-ELEVATE-0010930-41

The Building Energy Hub is a project of Illinois Green Alliance

ILLINOIS GREEN ALLIANCE

THE BUILDING ENERGY HUB

The Goals of the Hub are to:

- Educate & train building professionals
- Support diverse contractors
- Connect contractors to a project pipeline
- Build capacity for advanced codes and policies
- Streamline access to financial resources

The Hub is Illinois' trusted resource center for building professionals seeking practical solutions to improve building performance.



Our Network

- The Building Energy Hub is a member of the Building Performance Partnership, a network of local high-performance building hubs that provide the support needed to accelerate lasting energy efficiency and performance improvement in their regions.
- The BPP Network supports the creation and operation of local high-performance building hubs that accelerate measurable, equitable, and sustainable action to improve the health, comfort, and performance of buildings.



Getting Started with the Hub – Resources for Beginners

Energy Benchmarking Guide

Measure your building’s performance

- Use EPA's ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager to track energy use over time.
- Understand how your building compares to similar types and size.
- Data collection worksheets to help you get started
- First step in identifying savings opportunities.



City of Chicago Benchmarking Requirements

Review the City of Chicago's energy and water benchmarking requirements, learn how to benchmark, and find resources.

Learn more

Energy Efficiency Checklist

Quick Wins for Any Building

A user-friendly checklist of low-cost and no-cost actions to cut energy waste in commercial, multifamily, and other buildings.

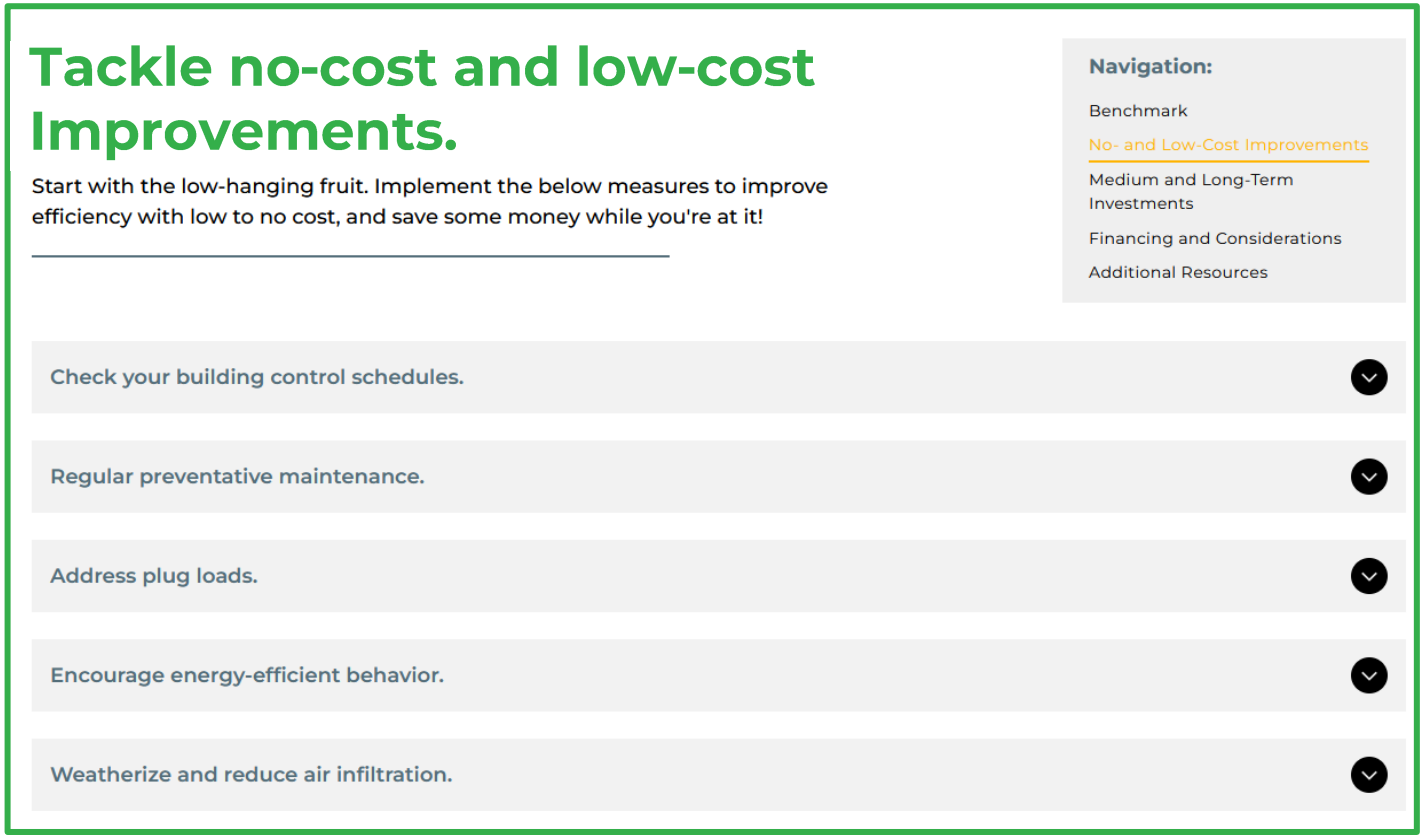
Key Steps:

✓ Benchmarking

✓ No- and Low-Cost Improvements

✓ Medium and Long-Term Investments

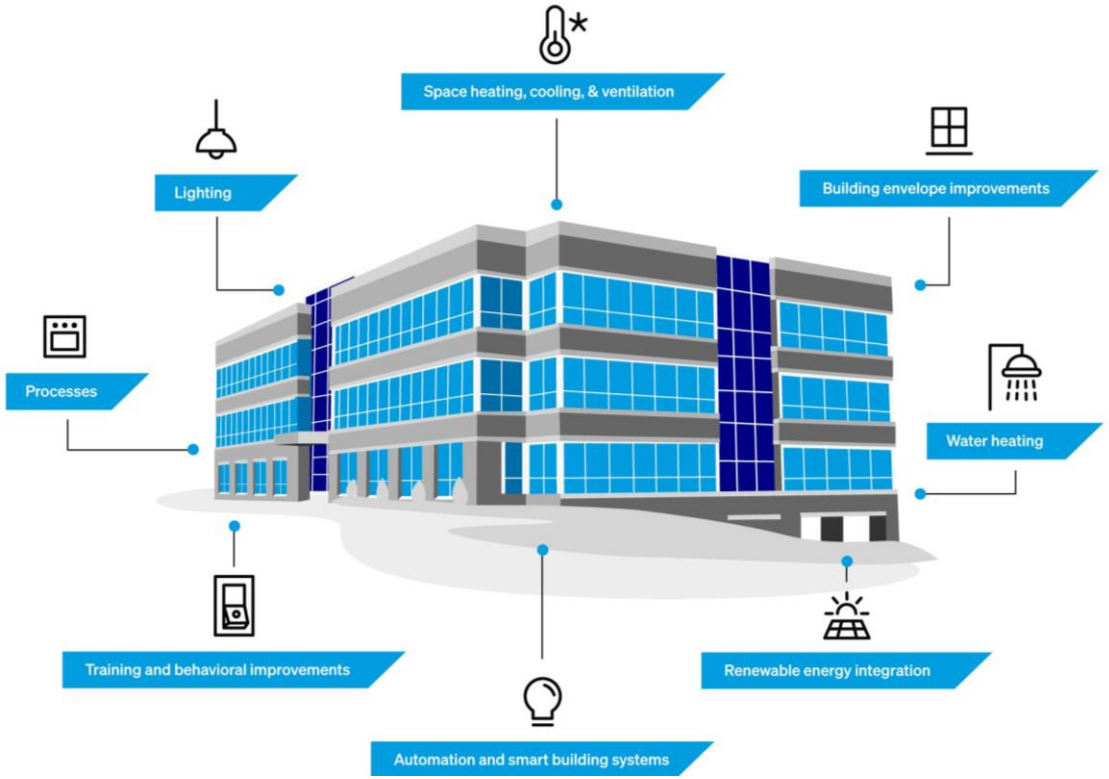
✓ Financing options to support these steps



Building Electrification 101

Pathways to electrification for existing and new buildings

- Electrification measures can allow for buildings to be powered more efficiently and sustainably
- Learn about which building systems to approach when considering electrification and options for electrification:
    - Mechanical heating systems (boiler or direct-fired gas heating)
    - Domestic hot water systems (water heater)
    - Appliances (gas range, gas clothes dryer)
    - Backup energy sources (generators)



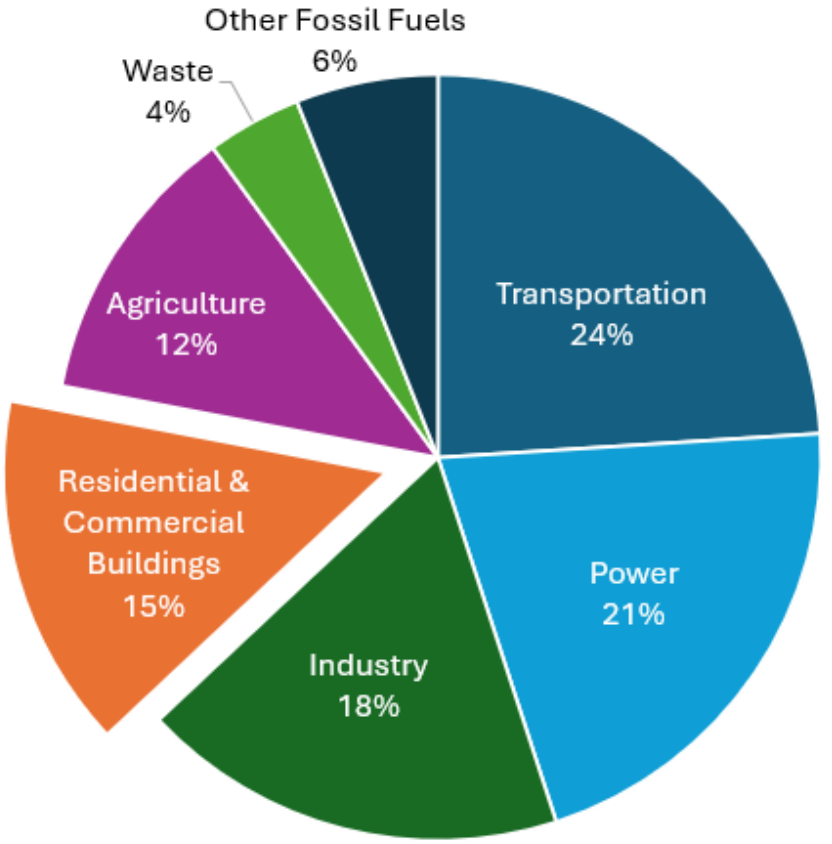
GHG Emissions 101

The Connection Between Buildings and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

To better understand GHG emissions and how buildings and their operations contribute to those emissions, this resource explains:

- How emissions are characterized
- How much GHG emissions are associated with a building in the state
- Ways to measure and target lower emissions for your building

Illinois 2021 Greenhouse Gas Emissions, by Percentage and Sector.



Source: Illinois EPA Priority Climate Action Plan, 2024.

Hub Resources:
Overview and How to Use

Resource Library

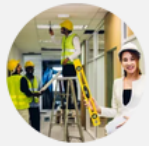
EXPLORE RESOURCES BY YOUR ROLE



Building Owners & Operators

Explore step-by-step guides for retrofit decision-making, case studies, and financing opportunities.

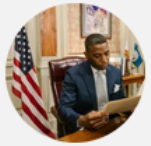
Explore resources



Building Architects & Engineers

Find playbooks and technical guides that will help you find ways to improve energy efficiency.

Learn more



Policymakers & Local Jurisdictions

Learn about policies like Energy Benchmarking, Building Performance Standards, and Stretch Codes.

View resources



Contractors & Service Providers

Find playbooks, technical guides, financing opportunities, and guidance to enable building improvements.

Explore resources

- Explore resources curated to your role within a building
- Find step-by-step guides, downloadable resources, educational tools, and relevant on-demand webinars tailored to your role

Funding and Financing Guide

Find the right financing for your building & projects

Financing Incentives from Utilities



ComEd

Learn more



Peoples Gas

Learn more



Ameren

Learn more

Not sure where to start?

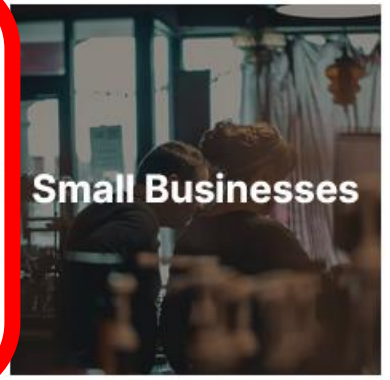
Start with a FREE Assessment from ComEd, Peoples Gas, or Ameren.

Funding and Financing Resources

Financing Options by Building Sector

We've compiled useful resources to help you find suitable funding and financing options for your next project.













Funding & Financing for Commercial Buildings

Explore energy efficiency funding and financing solutions that fit your needs. Whether you're planning efficiency upgrades, electrification projects, or sustainable expansions, the Building Energy Hub connects you with a curated suite of financial tools designed to make improvements both feasible and cost-effective. Explore tailored offerings and detailed eligibility requirements and application processes by clicking “Learn More”. The Hub also has several recorded webinars with speakers from organizations offering funding tools so you can get clarity on all aspects of the funding process. If you're unsure which path fits your building best, our Help Desk is ready to guide you step-by-step.

Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund

The Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund (EE RLF) program offers low-interest Bridge Loans to nonprofits, public entities, and commercial building owners in order to finance clean energy projects, such as building electrification, energy storage, and distributed generation, while addressing funding gaps caused by delays in receiving federal direct pay tax credits and Illinois Solar for All incentives. Apply for the EE RLF Bridge Loan here: Pre-application Link

Learn more



Download Materials

ILLINOIS GREEN ALLIANCE

THE BUILDING ENERGY HUB

Illinois Climate Bank Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund

Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund

Bridge loans, funded by congressionally approved and lawfully awarded funds from U.S. DOE's Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund (EERLF), provide short-term financing to cover the period between funding an energy efficiency project and receiving federal tax credits (including elective pay), renewable energy credits (RECs), or other financial incentives. These loans help ensure that contractors and customers can move forward with projects without waiting for tax credits, U.S. Treasury payments, utility payments, or other incentives. While we expect that solar and battery storage installations will be the most popular use of this loan, geothermal, energy efficiency, and other clean energy upgrades may also be eligible.

Learn More

Eligible Projects

Eligible projects must be commercial buildings, including multifamily buildings with five or more units located in Illinois, that have undergone a qualified energy audit as outlined in Section 3 of the EE RLF Initial Bridge Loan Strategy. The audit must recommend eligible technologies as defined in the strategy. Qualified borrowers include:

- Municipalities, counties, and local government agencies
- Public school districts
- Nonprofit organizations
- Rural electric cooperatives and municipal utilities
- Tribal governments and entities
- For-profit entities

Building Sector

Commercial, nonprofits, and community organizations (including schools)

Funding

- Bridge Loans: Up to $1,000,000, term of 18-24 months
- Co-Lending/Participation Loans: Up to $1,000,000, term of up to 7 years
- Interest rates generally range between 3-6%

Administrator

Illinois Climate Bank

Video Resource Library

Explore upcoming and on-demand programs



Funding Opportunities

Watch recorded webinars explaining funding and financing resources to fund your energy efficiency project.

Explore



Education

Watch recorded webinars to learn about new technologies, case studies, stretch codes, and other learning resources on energy efficiency.

Explore



Utility Incentives

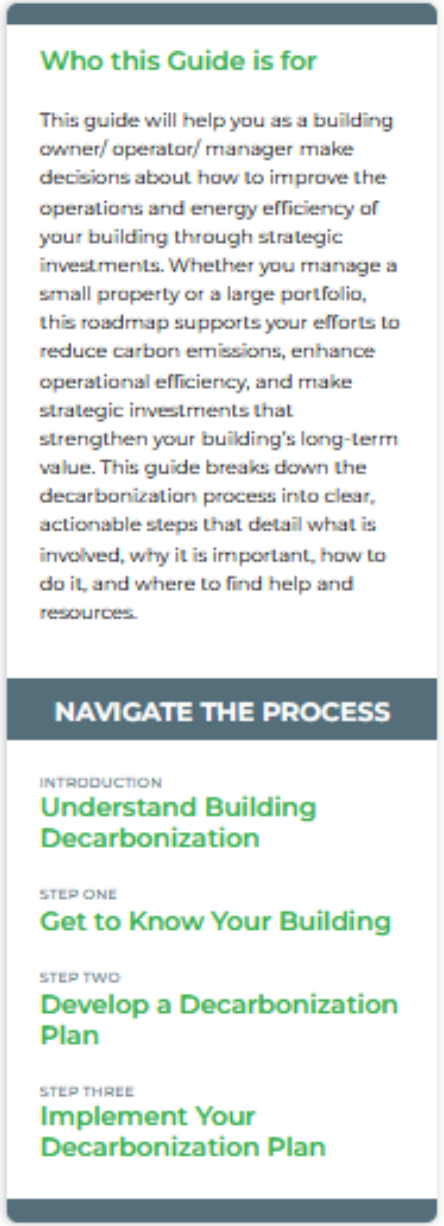
Watch recorded webinars explaining incentives and financing resources from ComEd.

Explore

Building Performance & Decarbonization Planning Guide

Use Strategic Decarbonization Planning to improve your building performance over time

This guide helps building owners, operators, and managers make decisions about how to improve the operations and energy efficiency of your building through strategic investments that strengthen your building's long-term value.



Who this Guide is for

This guide will help you as a building owner/ operator/ manager make decisions about how to improve the operations and energy efficiency of your building through strategic investments. Whether you manage a small property or a large portfolio, this roadmap supports your efforts to reduce carbon emissions, enhance operational efficiency, and make strategic investments that strengthen your building's long-term value. This guide breaks down the decarbonization process into clear, actionable steps that detail what is involved, why it is important, how to do it, and where to find help and resources.

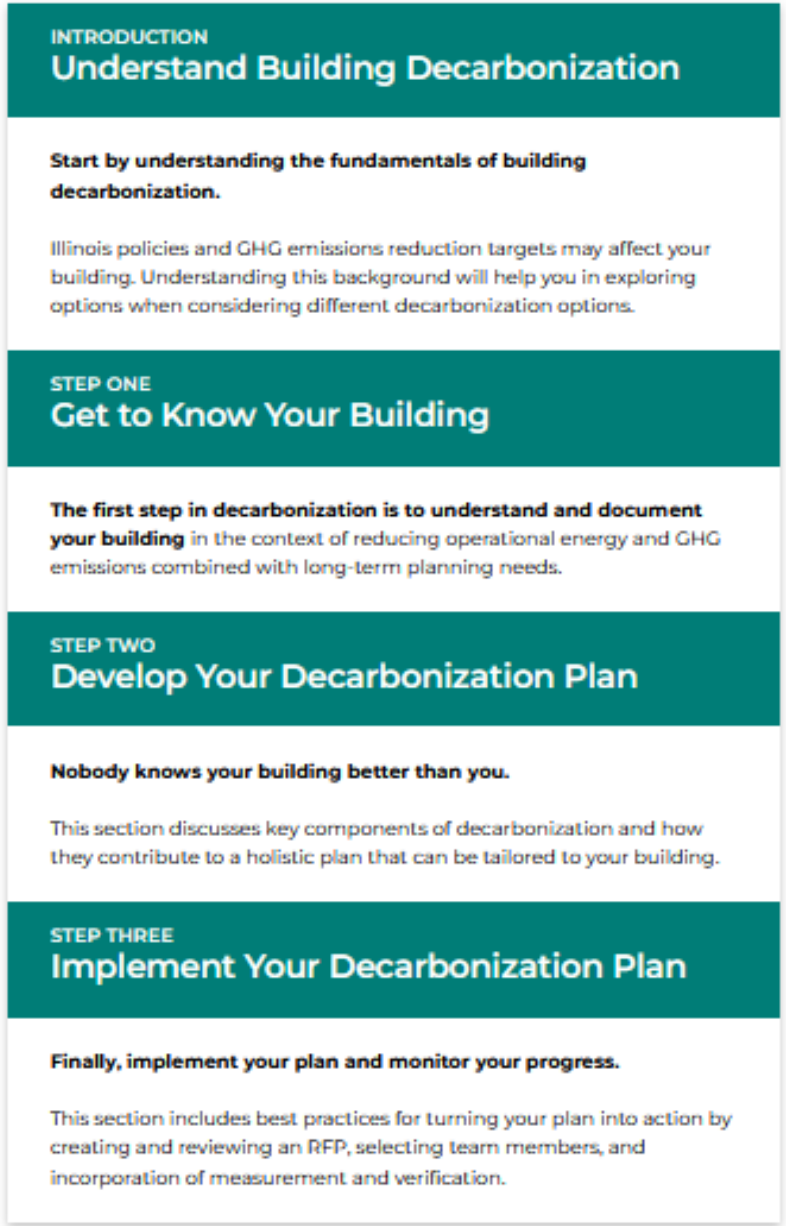
NAVIGATE THE PROCESS

INTRODUCTION
Understand Building Decarbonization

STEP ONE
Get to Know Your Building

STEP TWO
Develop a Decarbonization Plan

STEP THREE
Implement Your Decarbonization Plan



INTRODUCTION
Understand Building Decarbonization

Start by understanding the fundamentals of building decarbonization.

Illinois policies and GHG emissions reduction targets may affect your building. Understanding this background will help you in exploring options when considering different decarbonization options.

STEP ONE
Get to Know Your Building

The first step in decarbonization is to understand and document your building in the context of reducing operational energy and GHG emissions combined with long-term planning needs.

STEP TWO
Develop Your Decarbonization Plan

Nobody knows your building better than you.

This section discusses key components of decarbonization and how they contribute to a holistic plan that can be tailored to your building.

STEP THREE
Implement Your Decarbonization Plan

Finally, implement your plan and monitor your progress.

This section includes best practices for turning your plan into action by creating and reviewing an RFP, selecting team members, and incorporation of measurement and verification.

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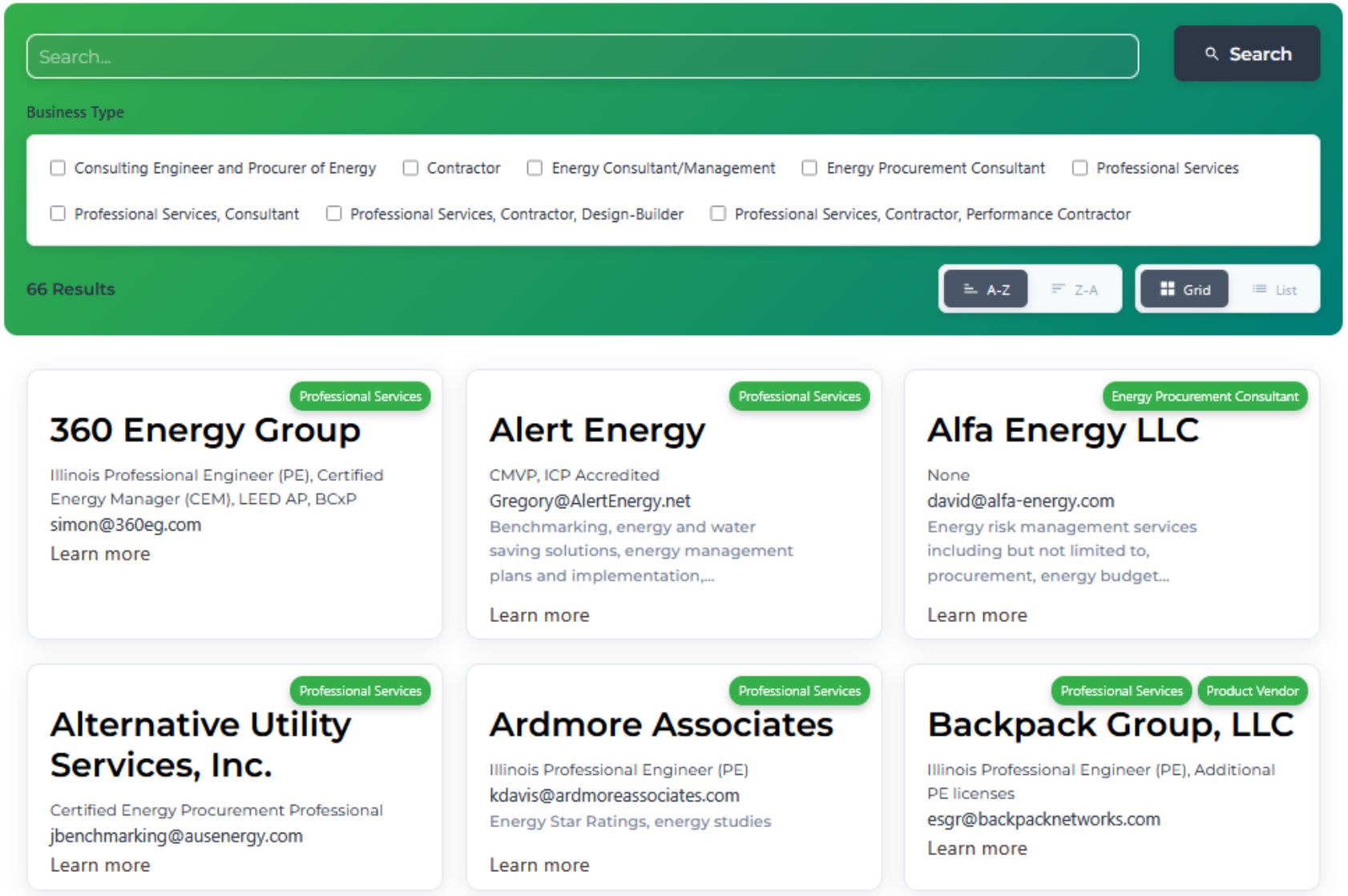
Building Performance & Decarbonization Planning Guide

- This guide breaks down the decarbonization process into clear, actionable steps that detail what is involved, why it is important, how to do it, and where to find help and resources.
- The Building Performance Planning Guide introduces decarbonization through three overarching principles:
  - Getting to Know Your Building
  - Developing a Decarbonization Plan
  - Implementing a Decarbonization Plan



Find a Vendor

- Benchmarking service providers (including verification services)
- Utility service providers and trade allies
- Illinois Solar for All approved vendors



Resources for Building Professionals

Playbooks

- Engineers
- Architects
- Building Owners
- Property Managers
- Contractors



Technology Primers

- Air to Water Heat Pumps
- Chilled Water Plant Optimization
- Energy Recovery Ventilators (ERVs)
- Dedicated Outdoor Air Systems
- High Performance Windows
- LED Lighting Retrofits
- One-Pipe Steam Optimization
- Two-Pipe Steam Optimization
- Plug Loads and Tenant Energy Use Reduction
- Variable Refrigerant Flow Systems
- Wall Insulation

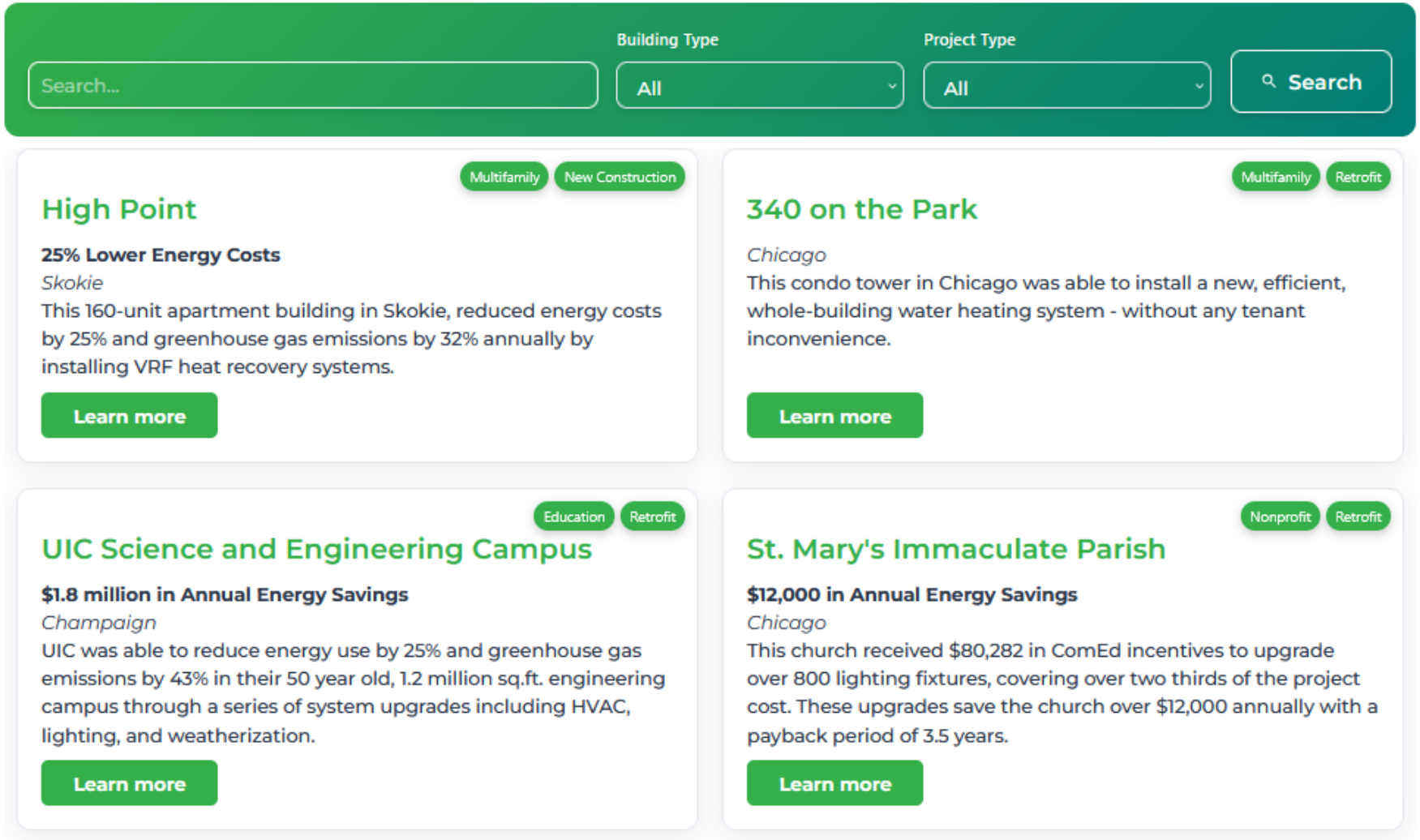
Operations & Maintenance Guide

- Step 1: Increase management awareness and appreciation of the operations and maintenance program/department.
- Step 2: Begin tracking Operations and Maintenance activities.
- Step 3: Through tracking begin to identify your troubled equipment and systems.
- Step 4: Commit to addressing at least one of these troubled systems.
- Step 5: Commit to striving for Operational Efficiency of this system.
- Step 6: Commit to purchasing or contracting for some form(s) of diagnostic, metering, or monitoring equipment.
- Step 7: Commit to trending the collected tracking and diagnostic data.
- Step 8: Select, request funding for, and complete first “Operational Efficiency” project.
- Step 9: Strive to highlight this success – capitalize on visibility opportunities.
- Step 10: Commit to choosing the next piece of equipment…go to Step 3.



Illinois Green Building Case Studies Database

- Case studies curated from organizations across Illinois highlighting energy and monetary savings
- New construction & retrofit examples



ILLINOIS GREEN ALLIANCE

THE BUILDING ENERGY HUB

Case Studies

Explore buildings' success stories

- Explore case studies of a variety of building types including commercial buildings, nonprofits and small businesses, higher education and healthcare, hospitality and multifamily, municipal buildings, and more.

Commercial Buildings



401 North Michigan
The Hub



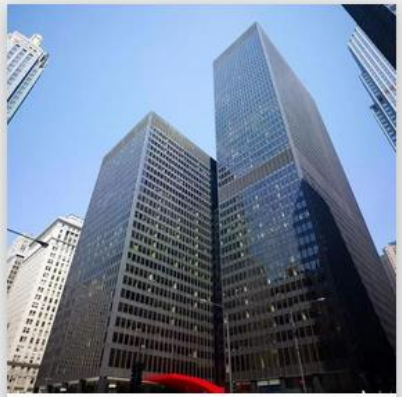
445 North Wells
Retrofit Chicago



The Rookery
Retrofit Chicago



The Wrigley Building
Retrofit Chicago



Michigan Plaza
ComEd



311 South Wacker
ComEd

Curated Partner Resources

Resources from agencies like DOE, ASHRAE, etc.

- GHG Emissions Reduction Audit Checklist and Template
- ASHRAE Advanced Energy Design Guides
- Green Leasing Resources
- Retrofit Playbook for Large Buildings
- Emissions Reduction Planning Framework for Building Portfolios
- … and more



ASHRAE: Advanced Energy Design Guides

This is a series of publications designed to provide recommendations for achieving zero energy buildings or building energy savings

Read more →



GHG Emissions Reduction Audit Scope of Work Template

The GHG Emissions Reduction Audit Tool helps building owners and operators identify achievable emissions reductions through

Read more →

Illinois Stretch Code Overview & Guides

Use Strategic Decarbonization Planning to improve your building performance over time

2023 Illinois Stretch Code Guides



Commercial Stretch Code Guide

The 2023 Illinois Commercial Stretch Energy Code, effective January 1, 2025, is based on the 2024 IECC with amendments.

Learn more



Residential Stretch Code Guide

The 2023 Illinois Residential Stretch Energy Code, effective January 1, 2025, is based on the 2021 IECC with amendments.

Learn more

The Building Energy Pod

- Each episode features in-depth conversations with industry leaders, innovators, and changemakers who are shaping the future of high-performance buildings
- Learn about best practices, lessons learned from the field, financing used, and new technologies.



Tom Bassett-Dilley: A...

Friday Apr 17, 2026

Summary:
In this episode, we dive into the...

34



Manny Flores: Unlocki...

Friday Feb 27, 2026

Summary:
In this conversation, Manny Flores...

52



Beth Holaday: The Int...

Friday Feb 13, 2026

Summary:
In this conversation, Beth Holaday...

2 50



Wayne Beals: The Po...

Friday Jan 30, 2026

Summary:
In this conversation, Wayne Beals,...

1 48



Bob Hattier: Navigatin...

Friday Dec 19, 2025



Delmar Gillus: Empow...

Friday Dec 05, 2025



Benny Skelton: The B...

Friday Nov 14, 2025



A.J. Patton: Transform...

Friday Oct 24, 2025

Newsletters

- Stay up to date with energy efficiency news and updates with the Hub's monthly newsletters

Hub Monthly Newsletters



Hub March 2026 Newsletter

Greetings - Each month the Hub is here to provide objective guidance so you can make informed decisions about building upgrades,

Read more →



Hub February 2026 Newsletter

Greetings - The Building Energy Hub remains a steady resource for Illinois building professionals. Whether you're planning a

Read more →



Hub January 2026 Newsletter

Greetings - Happy New Year, everyone! The Hub is back with more programming, upcoming tools, updates to existing resources,

Read more →



Hub December 2025 Newsletter

Building Energy Hub December 2025 Newsletter

Read more →



Hub November 2025 Newsletter

Building Energy Hub November 2025 Newsletter

Read more →



Hub October 2025 Newsletter

Building Energy Hub October 2025 Newsletter

Read more →

How to Ask a Question

Get Expert Assistance for Your Building's Energy Needs

How We Can Help You:

- Benchmarking & Utility Data – Understand and track your building's performance.
- Financing Opportunities – Explore grants, loans, and incentives.
- Finding a Contractor – Connect with service providers.
- Where to Start – Not sure what you need? We'll guide you!

HELP DESK - Fill Out Our Online Help Desk Form

Stay Engaged with the Hub

- Sign up for our newsletter
- Follow us on LinkedIn
- Share a featured building or project
- Tune in to the Building Energy Pod
- Join our next webinar



Thank you for joining us!