



ISACo Wind And Solar Facility Law Task Force

Survey Results Summary

April 5, 2024

The Illinois State Association of Counties (ISACo) established a Wind and Solar Facility Law Task Force in 2023 to discuss wind and solar siting and zoning issues following enactment of P.A. 102-1123. The intention of the Wind and Solar Task Force is not to work toward repealing P.A. 102-1123, but to discuss and collect policy recommendations to provide counties with more flexibility when complying with the law.

An initial function of the Task Force involved collecting information about county experiences with wind and solar projects. Twenty-six counties responded to the survey (25 percent of all Illinois counties). The survey inquired about the following factors:

Number of Wind and Solar Projects Approved	Number of Future Projects Under Consideration
Total Acres for Individual Projects	Total Acres of Future Projects Under Consideration
Number of Wind and Solar Project Denied	Number of Future Projects Under Consideration (Leased Land vs. Purchased Land)

Key Findings

Denial of Wind and Solar Projects Is Infrequent

Counties responding to the survey denied very few wind and solar projects. Context is important. Those counties that denied multiple projects approved significantly more projects than were denied.

Overall, the survey of 26 counties showed over 400 approved projects and fewer than 50 denials. This is a ratio of eight approved projects for every project denied. It should be noted that not all approved projects are constructed. Some are either awaiting future construction or the approved permit expired.

LaSalle County denied the most projects (13), but approved (3) wind facilities, approved and constructed (11) solar facilities, approved (23) solar facilities only to have the permits expire and approved (15) solar projects for which construction has not yet begun.

Solar is Leading Among Renewable Energy Projects

Over 400 hundred solar projects and approximately 25 wind projects were approved. Counties responding to the survey did not receive many applications for wind turbine facilities compared to applications for solar facilities.

Counties Have Many Projects Under Consideration

There are almost 50 projects “in the pipeline” among the counties responding to the survey. Only four wind and solar projects under consideration are on land purchased for the projects. All remaining projects under consideration are located on leased property.

Significant Acreage is Being Used for Renewable Energy

Wind and solar projects approved by the 26 counties responding to the survey require approximately 59,000 acres of land. This converts to 92 square miles of land dedicated for renewable energy facilities, or square mileage equal to almost 40 percent of the land occupied by the City of Chicago. An additional amount of land totaling just under 7,000 acres could be used for projects currently under consideration among the 26 counties.