

# IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

- 2023 -

## OUR MISSION

*The mission of Winneshiek Energy District is to lead, implement, and accelerate the locally owned, inclusive, clean-energy transition in Winneshiek County. Our key strategies—energy planning, market transformation, public engagement, policy advocacy, and readiness—build an unstoppable flywheel of momentum. As the founding Energy District, our mission also includes demonstrating the viability of the energy district model and growing an energy district network throughout Iowa and beyond.*

## OUR TEAM

Andy Johnson, executive director  
Paul Cutting, energy planner  
Nina Taylor, financials

## OUR BOARD

Kyra Bellrichard, Dave Carlson, Zach Fromm,  
Kristine Kopperud, Mike Ludeking, Lyle Luzum,  
James Martin-Schramm, Wendy Stevens

(563) 382-4207  
PO Box 14, 217 W Water Street  
Decorah, IA 52101  
[www.energydistrict.org](http://www.energydistrict.org)



## A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This year brought exciting progress to the Energy District ecosystem, including the addition of new Energy Districts in Muscatine and Polk counties. We strengthened policy partnerships in support of all-scale clean energy and climate stewardship for all people and communities. And we are thrilled to announce that, on the strength of WED’s success here in Winneshiek County, the Clean Energy Districts of Iowa has been awarded \$1.35M in federal grant funding to implement District-driven technical assistance in clean energy transition in the coming years.

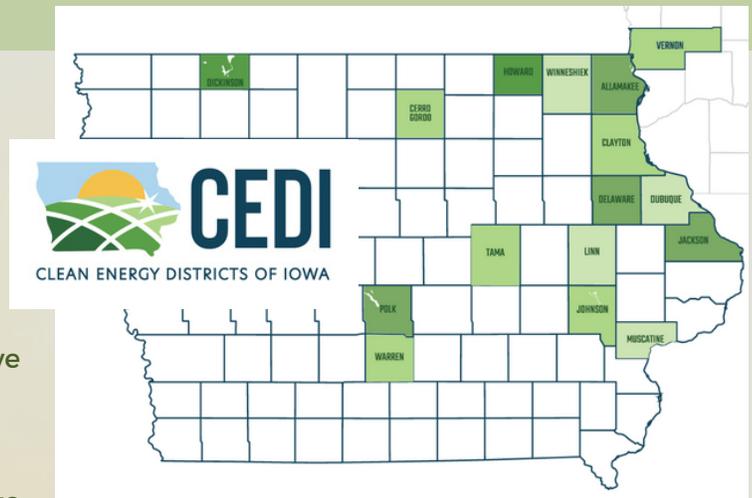
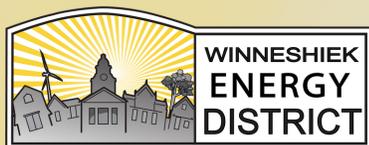
Right here at WED, we’ve expanded programming to make sure residents, nonprofits, municipalities, and businesses are prepared to take advantage of historic Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy. And we’re hard at work monitoring state and energy policy- and rate-making, to ensure that energy remains as accessible, equitable, and affordable as possible. WED also saw the addition of new board member Mike Ludeking, who brings vast financial expertise to the clean energy movement. Last but not least, we marked the departure of founding board member Larry Grimstad (thanks, Larry!) and our communications and outreach coordinator, Heidi Eger, who, we’re thrilled to report, is now a full-time farmer in our local foodshed. Read on for detail on what we’ve accomplished!

## We are Iowa’s flagship Clean Energy District.

WED was the first Clean Energy District. We’ve **created and proven the viability of the ‘universal local’ model**, and we’re the founding member of the Clean Energy Districts of Iowa (CEDI). Our work continues to support the network in many ways.

The model and movement are proving that **local ownership and leadership of the clean energy transition matters**. It brings local prosperity and stewardship, and it is poised to accelerate our **national** transition.

From our humble beginnings right here in Winneshiek County to our expanding national impact, your support matters more than ever to keep this movement growing. **Don’t let the fire go out!**



The ‘universal local’ model is expanding, with 12 Energy Districts in Iowa and one in Wisconsin in operation. Another three (Dickinson, Tama, and Warren) are in discussion or development. [More at cleanenergydistricts.org](http://cleanenergydistricts.org).

Here on Water Street, we make WED’s work happen with a very modest budget of roughly \$200K, including three local staff members.

### YOUR SUPPORT IS CRITICAL TO OUR SUCCESS!

Local donor-members – like you! – are the FOUNDATION of our financial stability. You allow us to leverage private, state, and federal grant funding year after year, which multiplies the impact of each donor’s contribution at least 2-3 times!



**Electrify!**  
Solar,  
Heat Pumps,  
Electric Vehicles

Saturday  
April 22nd  
9AM to 12PM  
Winneshiek  
Fairgrounds

Decorah Bank  
greenpenny

## EVENTS & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In April, our **Electrify! Fair** at Winneshiek Fairgrounds brought more than 500 people together with County Conservation to explore “everything you need to go solar,” including a close look at a Chevy, Ford, and Tesla EVs, as well as presentations from six local solar and HVAC contractors. Read the recap: [Successful Electrify! Fair Answers Questions About Everything Electric](#).

In June, our **Home Energy Tour** featured six area residences with an assortment of energy efficiency technologies, including: high-grade insulation, ductless cold-climate heat pumps, hot water heat pumps, high-efficiency windows, on-site solar and wind power generation, and much more. More details are here: [2023 Winneshiek Energy District Home Tour](#).

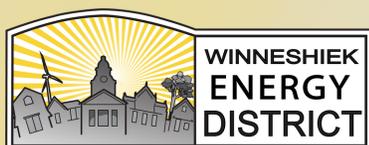
## Energy Lunch(es)

Throughout the year, WED hosts Energy Lunch(es), the mid-day evolution of our original Energy Breakfast(s).

Energy Lunches are **free** and **available in-person and on Zoom**, featuring various topics, including:

- State energy policy updates,
- Solar-powered heating, and
- Climate adaptation in Iowa.

Read more on one of our best-attended events: [Energy Lunch Recap: Nonprofits and the IRA](#).



## Annual Tree Planting

WED’s final Green Iowa AmeriCorps members, along with additional enthusiastic volunteers, partnered with Kevin and Leslie Sand to offer our annual tree-planting for residents.

By signing up, residents qualified for free swamp white oak, hackberry, and Kentucky coffee tree seedlings, which the team sited and planted. In total, the team planted more than 20 trees to shade Decorah for years to come. [Read the recap.](#)



## Community Highlight:

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church electrifies its building and secures its energy future



Mission Green LLC, founded by Jim and Liz Fritz, facilitated the planning, financing, and installation of additional solar arrays and geothermal pumps at Good Shepherd, offsetting the church’s total heating and cooling expenses. Already Energy Star-rated, Good Shepherd has achieved the highest rating of “100% CO2 Reduction” and been certified a “Cool Congregation” by Interfaith Power & Light. The project, dedicated in fall 2023, included extensive technical and planning assistance from WED for more than a year, along with strong partnership with local contractors. It may well be the first of its kind in Iowa! Jim and Liz are already busy giving presentations on the success of this model to other interested congregations across Iowa and beyond.

## ENERGY PLANNING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

WED’s energy planner, Paul Cutting, and Green Iowa Americorps (GIA) members conducted **dozens of consults with homeowners, farmers, business owners, and more** on all aspects of clean energy and carbon footprint reduction.

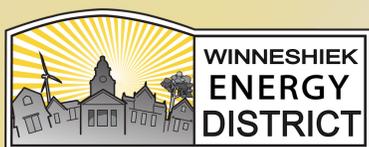
- GIA members Imani Cornelius, Luke Frederich, and Matt Novotny performed 30 in-home energy efficiency assessments, blower-door tests, and efficiency materials installations.
- WED was central to numerous in-depth energy planning activities with a diverse array of customers, including solar site assessment/analysis, whole-home energy audits, and plans.

## Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger Grant: Regional interagency partnership bring a \$45K grant and public Level 2 chargers to six sites

Led by energy planner Paul Cutting, WED provided extensive technical assistance, to facilitate the planning, funding, and implementation of public-facing EV charge stations at multiple institutions, including:

- City of Calmar
- Northeast Iowa Community College,
- Winneshiek Medical Center,
- Sunflower Child Development and Discovery Center,
- Decorah’s Chamber of Commerce, and
- Seed Savers Exchange.

[Read the recap here.](#)



# POLICY ADVOCACY

WED continues to work hard on state-level clean energy policy, in partnership with the Clean Energy Districts of Iowa (CEDI), other state organizations, and numerous WED members and supporters who made their voices heard on the following important policy matters:



- **The prevention of state legislation that would have made the siting of utility scale solar farms almost impossible.** See [Solar Farming Bans Proposed, Solar Prosperity At Risk Throughout Rural Iowa \(Winneshiek Energy District\)](#), and especially [Opinion: Limiting solar in rural Iowa is a bad idea \(desmoinesregister.com\)](#)
- **The prevention of multiple bills that would have further benefited the shareholders of investor-owned utilities at the expense of utility ratepayers.** See [The Electric Monopoly's Company Store \(Winneshiek Energy District\)](#)
- **Participation in a major study by the Iowa Utilities Board about ratemaking in Iowa** that was mandated by the Iowa Legislature and must be completed before the next legislative session. See [2023-24 Utility Ratemaking Procedures \(Clean Energy Districts on Iowa\)](#)

## Concerned About Rate Increases By Alliant?

On October 12, Alliant Energy filed with the Iowa Utilities Board (IUB) to “revise” electric and natural gas rates, **representing the sixth rate increase for Alliant’s electric customers since 2004.**

**Alliant’s rates for residential customers are higher than almost every other electric utility in Iowa,** creating high energy burdens for low-income households and others living on fixed incomes. At the same time, **Alliant’s high rates for business and industrial customers significantly hinder economic development.**

WED, as a leader of the Clean Energy Districts of Iowa, is developing resources to help communities express their concerns to the IUB and may form a coalition to intervene in the rate case.

## Energy Efficiency Plans (CEDI)

One of WED’s strongest impacts in 2023 has been its contributions to CEDI’s intervention in the IUB dockets considering the five-year Energy Efficiency Plans proposed by Alliant, Black Hills, and MidAmerican.

These state-mandated and ratepayer-funded energy efficiency programs are one of the few ways ratepayers can reduce their rising energy costs.

WED board member and CEDI Policy Analyst Jim Martin-Schramm authored multiple rounds of expert witness testimony in each docket and will write a summary of key outcomes when the review concludes in 2024. See [2024-28 Energy Efficiency Plans - \(CEDI\)](#).



## PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR HOMETOWN ENERGY DISTRICT!

If you’re already a supporter, THANK YOU! We are honored to put your donation to work. Please consider creating or increasing a **recurring monthly donation**. For all donation options, please visit: [energydistrict.org/about/donate/](https://energydistrict.org/about/donate/).

