# St. Joseph Solar Farm

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

**Brief Summary:**

Indiana Michigan Power (I&M) and the University of Notre Dame collaborated on the new 20-megawatt St. Joseph Solar Farm. The facility will generate enough electricity to power more than 2,700 homes annually. The facility is I&M's fifth and largest solar farm yet and Notre Dame's largest solar project.

Notre Dame will promote its sustainability goals by committing to support 40% of the renewable energy credits (RECs), which represent the clean energy generated by the solar farm

I&M and Notre Dame will join forces to maximize educational opportunities and research benefits from the project.

**FAQS:**

**Where is the facility located?**

The St. Joseph Solar Farm is adjacent to the Indiana Toll Road, at the intersection of Bittersweet and Cleveland Roads, in St. Joseph County, IN. It's on 210 acres of I&M owned land.

**How many solar panels are installed and is there anything unique about them?**

There are approximately 57, 720 solar panels, measuring 86 inches long and 51 inches wide**,** inside the St. Joseph Solar Farm. The solar panels inside the facility would fill up more than 30 football fields.

The solar panels are from First Solar, based in Ohio, and are designed to maximize the sun's power. The panels can withstand wind, hail and snow. The panels also track from east to west throughout the day.

Given the proximity to the Indiana Toll Road, the solar panels also have an anti-glare covering.

**Will the panels still be useful if the sun doesn't shine?**

The state of the art First Solar panels are designed to work well in our climate, and will continue to generate energy when skies are cloudy, albeit at a reduced rate.

**How long did construction take?**

After a brief delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic, construction on the St. Joseph Solar Farm began in July 2020. It took more than 100 workers eight months and 75,000 plus working hours to construct the St. Joseph Solar Farm.

**What role will the University of Notre Dame take in the St. Joseph Solar Farm?**

The University of Notre Dame is acquiring 40-percent of the renewable energy credits or RECS from the St. Joseph Solar Farm. What this means is Notre Dame is purchasing the renewable attributes, or clean energy, generated from the solar farm itself, to reduce its carbon footprint.

Both organizations will work together to ensure education opportunities and research benefits are utilized from having a local solar facility for students and the overall Michiana area.

**Why did I&M and the University of Notre Dame decide to work together?**

I&M and Notre Dame want to create a bright, sustainable future for our communities. Both organizations are leading by being an example using advancing technology and innovation to reduce our environmental footprint.

We also realized the enormous educational benefits from the St. Joseph Solar Farm – whether that be educational tours or using real-time data in classrooms.

**What are the environmental benefits of the St. Joseph Solar Farm?**

The environmental impact of the solar facility are quite remarkable.

More than 13,000 tons of carbon dioxide or $CO_2$ will be avoided. That's the equivalent of not driving more than 30 million miles or 14,000 trips from South Bend to Los Angeles. It's also equal to taking more than 2,600 passenger cars off the road.

The $CO_2$ harnessed from the St. Joseph Solar Farm is the same as if it were produce more than 200,000 trees.

**How will I&M keep the environment in mind when it comes to planting and seeding within the solar farm?**

The St. Joseph Solar Farm is designed to create a habitat for pollinators, including bees and butterflies.

Certain types of grass were selected to keep the natural environment of the land going while the solar farm generates clean energy.

I&M is going above industry standards to ensure environmental benefits beyond the clean energy produced at the site.

**Are there any economic benefits?**

The St. Joseph Solar Farm will provide our customers with local clean resources, which will be used in homes and businesses across the area.

In addition, the facility will help the Michiana area attract businesses looking to operate on renewable energy options. This could mean new jobs and help continue the growth in the Michiana area.

In addition, the educational opportunities the facility will provide for local students in elementary, middle and high schools and with the partnership with the University of Notre Dame are boundless and could spur interest in STEM careers.

**Why is I&M investing in solar projects like this one?**

A number of our customers have expressed the desire for more of their energy use to come from wind and solar facilities. The St. Joseph Solar Farm exemplifies our commitment to diversifying our generation mix to include more renewable energy and that we are listening to our customers.

I&M and our parent company, American Electric Power, aim to achieve net zero carbon dioxide emissions by 2050. In the meantime, we want to grow our renewable generation portfolio to more to more than 50% by 2030.

**Does I&M have any other solar, wind and renewable energy facilities?**

I&M operates in total five emission-free solar generation facilities:

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| St. Joseph Solar Farm (Granger, IN) | 20 MW |
| Deer Creek Plant (Marion, IN) | 2.5 MW |
| Olive Plant (New Carlisle, IN) | 5.0 MW |
| Twin Branch (Mishawaka, IN) | 2.6 MW |
| Watervliet, MI | 4.6 MW |

The solar facilities generate nearly 35 megawatts of electricity, with enough energy to power more than 4,700 homes annually.

I&M's energy delivered in 2020 was more than 85% emission-free thanks in part to the solar farms, three wind farms, six run-of-river hydroelectric dams on the St. Joseph River and the D.C. Cook Nuclear Plant.

**Do you have any programs when it comes to solar and wind for customers?**

I&M's customers can also support a green energy future by participating in the IM Green program, which enables customers to purchase RECs from I&M-owned facilities. This costs as little as pennies per day for an average residential customer.

I&M can also partner with businesses and communities to customize green energy projects that suit your needs. To learn more or participate, please visit IndianaMichiganPower.com/IMGreen.

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