



# 2022 Policy Priorities

MnSEIA is a 501(c)(6) trade association that serves to move Minnesota solar and energy storage forward. Representing over 140 member companies, MnSEIA pursues its mission to grow solar and storage as part of Minnesota's clean energy transition by delivering strong public policy, education, job creation, and sustainable industry development.

Building on the bipartisan success of the 2021 Legislative Session, MnSEIA has an ambitious legislative agenda this year to strengthen the solar and storage industries. Our policy priorities are as follows.

## Community Solar Gardens

MnSEIA aims to modernize Minnesota's nation-leading Community Solar Garden program. MnSEIA's main goals this session are to:

1. Remove the Contiguous County requirement - This unnecessary requirement says that solar garden subscribers be located in the same county or a county contiguous (next to) to the solar project.
2. Increase the CSG project size limit from 1 MW up to 3-5 MW.
3. Establish a CSG program that focuses on residential access in exchange for transparency and consumer protection requirements.

## Residential Solar

This session MnSEIA will protect residential solar and expand opportunities in currently prohibited areas. MnSEIA will work to:

1. Extend the Solar\*Rewards program for another two years and increase funding through the Renewable Development Account (RDA).
2. Prohibit Homeowners Associations (HOAs) from banning solar on residential properties located within an HOA. 1 in 4 Minnesotans live in an HOA and cannot access the benefits of clean energy.
3. Mandate all solar installers obtain a general contractor license and pay into the contractor recovery fund that pays out to customers impacted by bad actors.

# Energy Storage

MnSEIA wants to accelerate the Minnesota energy storage market with these initiatives:

1. Help the PUC create standardized interconnection rules for energy storage.
2. Mandate that energy storage be used when utilities replace outdated feeders.
3. Strengthen 2019 storage legislation by requiring utilities complete pilot projects.
4. Require utilities to define customers that are “Critical infrastructure” and protect them with energy storage microgrids to strengthen our grid.
5. Require IOUs create a tariff for time-of-discharge rates for behind-the-meter storage to discharge at peak demand.
6. Establish a rebate program, similar to Solar\*Rewards, using Renewable Development Account money for small-scale, behind-the-meter storage in Xcel Energy territory.
7. Change the personal property tax status for battery storage technology that is not owned or leased by utilities.

## Utility-Scale Solar

MnSEIA aims to remove regulatory barriers to utility-scale solar projects in Minnesota by changing a rule that requires solar projects by independent power producers produce a certificate of need before obtaining construction permits.

## Commercial & Industrial Solar

This session MnSEIA hopes to advance the commercial and industrial (C&I) solar market by focusing on four areas:

1. Data access practices - Allow customers to request usage and interval data.
2. Solar roads & carports - Develop a program for projects that combine solar carports and EV level-2 or -3 charging ports and work with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to implement solar snow fencing projects.
3. PV Demand Credit - Require utilities outside Xcel Energy to create a PV Demand Credit tariff within their territories.
4. Solar for Schools adjustment - Amends the Solar for Schools statute to allow developers to combine Solar for Schools incentives with the PV demand credit.

# Interconnection

Interconnection delays are a major issue affecting solar deployment in Minnesota. MnSEIA aims to improve interconnection timelines by requiring utilities invest in substations, transformers, and other DG infrastructure to upgrade the grid.

# Co-op Initiatives

MnSEIA aims to lay the groundwork for increasing solar in cooperative and municipal utility territory with six main initiatives:

1. Implement a size-to-load agreement of at least 120% of load as long as the project size can be greater than 40kW.
2. Secure an increased rate for Great River Energy co-ops that net-meter projects between 40-50 kW.
3. Clarify that the 1-mile rule does not apply to DG qualifying facilities.
4. Amend 2017 legislation to drop or adjust current allowable “reasonable fee” to net-metered projects.
5. Clarify that storage configured for non-export does not count toward net-metering limits, and find other ways to incentivize it.
6. Allow a temporary, nonrefundable tax credit to taxpayers who install solar.

# Mid-Scale Market Development

The mid-scale solar market (the size between community solar and utility-scale solar) is an important potential market for Minnesota. MnSEIA wants to:

1. Create transparency in the DG Tariff - Developers currently cannot see what the DG Tariff is before they've applied for interconnection, which is a lengthy and expensive process. Streamlining this process will expand the market.
2. Avoided cost statutory change - A statute provision forces mid-market sized solar projects to sell power at the lowest cost renewable bid that the utility has ever received. MnSEIA wants to delete this outdated and unnecessary provision.

## Questions? Contact:

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