



Indianola Solar Project Beginning **March 2024**

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Harnessing the Sun IMUs Pledge to Carbon Neutrality through Solar Energy

In pursuit of carbon neutrality and community-driven sustainability, Indianola Municipal Utilities (IMU) is moving forward on a well-planned, long-term strategy to deliver greener energy solutions.

To that end, IMU has teamed with Omaha-based Sandhills Energy to establish a cutting-edge solar generation facility, which is scheduled to be operational by the close of the year.

“We’ve been working toward this outcome for a while, and we’re excited to explore the possibilities of solar for the community of Indianola,” said Lori Smith, chair of IMU’s board of trustees. “This project, its vision and goals, and our partnership with Sandhills Energy have the very real potential to transform a community of our size, and it’s an opportunity we simply can’t ignore.”

Affordability and service continuity are at the forefront of IMU’s commitment to customers. “Costs are not going to tick upward because of this project and bills are going to remain unaffected,” Smith said. “The new solar-generated electricity, which will produce five percent of IMU’s electricity, is going to seamlessly integrate into our overall power mix and will reflect a balance of traditional and renewable sources.”

Smith noted that Sandhills Energy has a proven record results in its discipline. “It’s more than its two-plus gigawatts of wind, solar, and storage development. Sandhills Energy’s people have a culture of working well with strategic partners like IMU, and their commitment to local subcontractors and economic benefits for the community underscore their holistic approach to renewable energy projects,” she added.

IMU will strategically invest in an appropriate transformer and secure competitive rates for the solar-generated electricity they consume. This cooperative model paves the way for Sandhills Energy to bear the financial responsibility for everything else, ranging from the design, construction, and maintenance of the solar infrastructure to the establishment and nurturing of a low-growth pollinator habitat on the site.

The facility stands on 25 utility-owned acres adjacent to the city’s water department at 1602 S. K St. Its 4.1-megawatt capacity, empowered by First Solar Series 6 photovoltaic panels, will generate up to 6.5 million kilowatt hours of IMU customers’ electricity annually. The changing seasons will pose no significant hurdle, Sandhill Energy experts say, thanks to the system’s ability to maintain reliable electricity production even when partially covered by snow.

EQUIVALENT TO:

Driving **1,021**
gasoline powered passenger vehicles for a year

516,420
gallons of gasoline consumed

5,140,864
pounds of coal burned

578
homes energy use for an entire year

558,270,134
smart phones charged



Anti-reflective material so no glare
Single Axis - move east to west
pollinator habitat - no maintenance/mowing

EQUIVALENT TO THE EMISSIONS THAT WOULD BE AVOIDED BY:

1,588 tons of waste recycled instead of landfilled | **75,887** tree seedlings grown for 10 years

Customer Service Corner

The IMU customer service team answers your questions!



For questions about your bill or usage, call the IMU Customer Service Center at (515) 961-9444, Option 2, or stop by the office at 210 W 2nd Avenue during regular business hours.

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The groundbreaking partnership's roles are distinctly defined: Sandhills Energy will spearhead the ownership and maintenance of the solar equipment, while IMU will retain ownership of the land in an arrangement that capitalizes on both entities' strengths. Meanwhile, the solar project brings welcome stability in an evermore volatile energy market and day-one savings expected to grow over time.

By tapping into renewable solar energy, IMU anticipates shedding nearly 10 percent of its peak demand load during summer and up to 40 percent during winter. This calculated move translates to less reliance on the grid when electricity costs are at their peak, ushering in substantial cost savings and a long-term reduction in energy procurement expenses.

General manager Chris DesPlanques paints a bigger picture of the effort's significance: "IMU is not just generating reliable electricity for years to come, we're creating a cleaner, greener future for our community, our kids and their kids, too."

Fall Energy Saving Tips for Your Home

Autumn is a great time to reset your home and transition to cooler weather, whether the kids are getting settled back to school routines or you're just feeling the seasonal pull towards a fresh start.

01

Seal up air leaks.

Check windows and doors for gaps or cracks, and repair them.

02

Check the outside of your house.

Clean gutters and downspouts to prevent ice buildup. Change lightbulbs and clean debris away from the house.

03

Turn off unneeded devices.

Unplug electronics when you're not using them. Close curtains and blinds when you leave for the day.

04

Use energy-efficient appliances.

Wash clothes in cold water. Dry them on low heat, at night, or outside to avoid heating up temps in the house.

05

Change your thermostat settings.

Turn up the thermostat when you leave for the day, and down when you're asleep.

06

Install a programmable thermostat.

This will automatically adjust your thermostat settings based on your schedule.

07

Check your furnace filter and batteries.

A dirty filter can reduce your furnace's efficiency. Make sure your smoke detectors have fresh batteries.

08

Save water.

Take shorter showers. Fix leaks around the house. Use a water-efficient showerhead.

09

Be prepared.

Set up a grab-and-go station with reusable water bottles and other on-the-go essentials.

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INDIANOLA MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

IMU

Electric • Communications • Water

CONTACT IMU

210 West 2nd Ave.
Indianola, IA 50125
(515) 961-9444
Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

IMU RESOURCES

Online bill pay: my.imufiber.com/ebill/login
Report outage: indianola.com/outages
IMU board meetings: youtube.com/@indianolamunicipalutilities
Work for IMU: indianola.com/careers