



ICC 2023 Supplier Diversity Report Shows Spending by ‘Big 6’ Utilities Remains Steady

Springfield, IL – The Illinois Commerce Commission’s Office of Diversity and Community Affairs’ (ODCA) [2023 Annual Report](#) shows that diverse spending by the state’s largest investor-owned utilities remained steady for the third year in a row at over \$2 billion. Some utilities reported a nearly 50 percent share of their total spending with diverse suppliers, including minority, women, veteran, and small business enterprises.

“Diversity, equity, and inclusion are top priorities at the ICC and impact every decision we make. Illinois has seen a positive shift in the amount of money its electric utilities are spending with diverse suppliers, but we know there are still plenty of opportunities for improvement,” said **ICC Chairman Doug Scott**. “In the year ahead, we’ll be focused on assisting areas that have little to no diverse spending.”

The report provides a summary and analysis of data from eight years of reports submitted by Illinois’ “Big 6” public utilities, Ameren Illinois, Aqua Illinois, Commonwealth Edison (ComEd), Illinois American Water, Northern Illinois Gas Company d/b/a Nicor Gas Company (Nicor), and Peoples Gas and Light and Coke Company/North Shore Gas Company (collectively Peoples Gas/North Shore). Since 2014, these companies have been statutorily required to report their annual supplier diversity outreach and inclusion efforts to the ICC. Statistical data demonstrates this reporting requirement has resulted in some of the utilities growing their diverse spend from an average of 15 percent to nearly 45 percent of all procurement spending, and beginning last year, the Big 6 utilities are also required to include short-term buy-in plans as a part of their diversity reports to the Commission.

“The ICC is pleased with the steady growth of diverse spending in Illinois over the past eight years, although our work is far from over. The Office of Diversity and Community Affairs is focused on bringing people together to find new opportunities for diverse suppliers and to further grow diverse spending. Fostering relationships between the utilities, energy suppliers, not-for-profits, diverse suppliers, and other state agencies is key to overcoming obstacles and building on our successes,” said **Director of Diversity and Community Affairs Jeanine V. Robinson**.

Diverse businesses interested in assistance and one-on-one support are encouraged to participate in the [Office of Minority Economic Empowerment’s \(OMEE\) initiatives](#) run through the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. OMEE is committed to providing minority-, women-, persons with disabilities, and veteran-owned small businesses and entrepreneurs across the state with equitable access to opportunities and resources.

Individuals and diverse businesses interested in upcoming energy programs born from the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) are encouraged to explore the [CEJA Implementation program](#), also administered through DCEO.

In 2017, Illinois became the first state to mandate that suppliers of wind and solar energy report on their efforts to diversify their supply chains. In 2019, OCDA began requiring diverse spending data for Illinois-headquartered businesses compared to total diverse spending. Illinois diverse spending for minority, women, and veteran businesses for the Big 6 currently ranges from approximately 13-30 percent. Most of the companies increased their spend with Illinois diverse businesses, and collectively, almost 60 percent of the utilities' diverse spend is with Illinois businesses.

A copy of the report can be found on the ICC website [here](#).

About the Illinois Commerce Commission

The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) is a quasi-judicial body made up of five Commissioners. Through its Public Utility Program, the Commission oversees the provision of adequate, reliable, efficient, and safe utility services at the least possible cost to Illinois citizens served by electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water, and sewer public utility companies. Through its Transportation Regulatory Program, the Commission oversees public safety and consumer protection programs with regard to intrastate commercial motor carriers of general freight, household goods movers, relocation towers, safety towers, personal property warehouses, and repossession agencies. The Commission's Rail Safety Program also inspects and regulates the general safety of railroad tracks, facilities, and equipment in the state.

To learn more about the Commission, its offices, and bureaus, click [here](#). If you are a consumer who needs help resolving a utility dispute call 800-524-0795 or file an online complaint [here](#). For a complaint related to transportation, call 217-782-6448.

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