



IOWA CHAPTER

Certification Program for Distributed Generation: Dealers, Site Assessors, Installers

One key component of 21st Century energy production is distributed generation, which includes roof-top solar, solar hot water and small or community wind projects. Distributed generation allows individuals, businesses and communities to have their own electric generation and increases the use of renewable energy.



Photo credit: National Renewable Energy Laboratory

As of 2017, 37% of the electricity generated in Iowa came from wind energy, mostly utility-scale wind turbines. Iowans can continue to benefit from the state's wind and solar resources by installing distributed generation.

Iowa has great potential for distributed generation, including solar hot water, photovoltaics and small wind power.

In order to advance the installation of distributed generation, the Iowa Chapter supports a state-wide certification program for small wind and solar installers. A certification program will give the citizens of Iowa assurances that they can find someone who is qualified to install a renewable energy system. The program would certify

- Licensed dealers, who can assess equipment.
- Certified site assessors, who can determine the appropriate location to install solar and wind generation systems.
- Certified installers, who are trained in installation techniques.

The program would ensure that the installer:

- is knowledgeable about the equipment being installed
- is proficient in appropriately siting the equipment
- is skilled at installing the equipment
- is experienced in guiding the customer to make the contacts and agreements with the utility for ensuring that the customer is paid for excess energy produced and is allowed to purchase backup power

Without a certified installer program, the growth of distributed generation has a potential for being stunted when equipment is not properly sited, is not appropriate for the function or is not properly installed. Further, a certified installer program will protect the public from unscrupulous, fraudulent and incompetent vendors.

There are private certification programs, however, Iowa law does not require a certification to sell, install or make site assessments for renewable energy systems. One certification program, administered by the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners, is a private organization that conducts certifications for solar heat, photovoltaic and wind installers as well as a photovoltaic sales certification.



Photo credit: National Renewable Energy Laboratory