



ENERGY & SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE AGENDA

**THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2026
12:00 p.m.**

**Coachella Valley Water District
Steve Robbins Administration Building Training Room
75515 Hovley Lane East
Palm Desert, CA 92260**

**Members of the Committee and the public may attend and participate by
video at the following remote location:**

**Blythe City Hall
235 N Broadway, Room A
Blythe, CA 92225**

**Imperial Irrigation District
333 E. Barioni Blvd.
Imperial, CA 92251**

Members of the public may use the following link for listening access and ability to address the
Energy & Sustainability Committee when called upon:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83098567932?pwd=rEOYq3bk2VbZ0l3dzybUcYBs0Fswbu.1>

**Dial In: +1 669 900 9128
Webinar ID: 830 9856 7932
Password: 257394**

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO CONNECT VIA DIAL IN OPTION, PLEASE CALL 760-346-1127

Public Comment is encouraged to be emailed to the Energy & Sustainability Committee prior to the meeting at cvag@cvag.org by 5:00 p.m. on the day prior to the committee meeting. Members of the public joining the meeting by Zoom can also provide comment by using the “raise hand” feature or hitting *9 on the phone keypad.

As a convenience to the public, CVAG provides a call-in and internet-based option for members of the public to virtually observe and provide public comments at its meetings. Please note that, in the event of a technical issue disrupting the call-in or internet-based options, the meeting will continue unless otherwise required by law.

THIS MEETING IS ADA ACCESSIBLE.

**ACTION MAY RESULT ON ANY ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA.
UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED, ALL ACTION ITEMS WILL BE PRESENTED TO THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR FINAL APPROVAL.**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Councilmember Oscar Ortiz, City of Indio, Chair
Roll Call
Pledge of Allegiance
Agenda Modification
Conflict of Interest Disclosure

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2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**

This is the first of two opportunities for public comment. Any person wishing to address the Energy & Sustainability Committee on items appearing on this agenda may do so at this time. At the discretion of the Chair, comments may be taken at the time items are presented. Please limit comments to three (3) minutes.

3. **COMMITTEE MEMBER / DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

4. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

- A. Approve the minutes from the April 9, 2026, meeting
- B. Authorize the Executive Director to execute Amendment No. 3 to the Professional Services Agreement with HF&H Consultants, LLC for the Used Oil Recycling Program, extending the agreement term through September 30, 2027 and increasing the contract amount by \$13,530, contingent upon receipt of CalRecycle grant funding
- C. Reappoint Rancho Mirage Councilmember Ted Weill and City of Indio Environmental Programs Coordinator Sara Toyoda as CVAG’s representatives on the Solid Waste Advisory Council/Countywide Local Taskforce, and City of Cathedral City Environmental Conservation & Public Works Manager Deanna Pressgrove as taskforce alternate, for two-year terms

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- 4.1 **ITEMS HELD OVER FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR**

5. **DISCUSSION / ACTION**

- A. **Update on Colorado River Negotiations** – Imperial Irrigation District Director JB Hamby, Chairman of California’s Colorado River Board, and Board Executive Director Jessica Neuwerth **P17**

Recommendation: Information

- B. **Addressing Extreme Heat in the Coachella Valley** – Emmanuel Martinez **P19**

Recommendation: Provide feedback on an Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program grant application to develop a regional plan for functional shade and community spaces

- C. **Inland Regional Energy Network (I-REN) Incentive Finder** – Eman Nazir **P21**

Recommendation: Information

6. **INFORMATION**

- A. **Attendance Record** **P23**

- B. **CVAG annual meeting calendar** **P24**

- C. **Inland Regional Energy Network’s 2025 Annual Report** **P25**

- D. **Overview of Publicly-Available Information on Specialized Facilities** **P111**

7. **PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

This is the second opportunity for public comment. Any person wishing to address the Energy & Sustainability Committee on items of general interest within the purview of this Committee may do so at this time. Please limit comments to two (2) minutes.

8. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The next meeting of the **Energy & Sustainability Committee** will be held on Thursday, September 10, 2026 at noon at the Coachella Valley Water District, Steve Robbins Administration Building Training Room, 75515 Hovley Lane East, Palm Desert, 92260.

The next meeting of the **Executive Committee** will be held on Monday, June 29, 2026, at 4:30 p.m. at Fantasy Springs Resort’s Special Events Center, 84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio, 92203.

The next meeting of the **General Assembly** will be held on Monday, June 29, 2026, at 6 p.m. at Fantasy Springs Resort’s Special Events Center, 84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio, 92203.

9. **ADJOURN**

ITEM 1

**Energy & Sustainability Committee
Member Roster
2025 – 2026**



VOTING MEMBERS	
Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians	Councilmember Moraino Patencio
City of Blythe	Mayor Joseph DeConinck
City of Cathedral City	Councilmember Nancy Ross
City of Coachella	Councilmember Stephanie Virgen
Coachella Valley Water District	Director Anthony Bianco
City of Desert Hot Springs	Mayor Pro Tem Dirk Voss
Imperial Irrigation District	Director JB Hamby
City of Indian Wells	Mayor Toper Taylor
City of Indio	Councilmember Oscar Ortiz, <i>Chair</i>
City of La Quinta	Mayor Linda Evans, <i>Vice Chair</i>
Mission Springs Water District	Director Amber Duff
City of Palm Desert	Councilmember Gina Nestande
City of Palm Springs	Mayor Naomi Soto
City of Rancho Mirage	Councilmember Ted Weill
Riverside County – District 4	Supervisor V. Manuel Perez
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians	Tribal Chairman Joseph Mirelez
Ex-Officio / Non-Voting Members	
Riverside County – District 5	Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez

ITEM 4A

Energy & Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes April 9, 2026



The audio file for this meeting can be found at: <http://www.cvag.org/audio.htm>

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – The meeting was called to order by Chair Oscar Ortiz, City of Indio, at 12:02 p.m. at the Coachella Valley Water District Steve Robbins Administration Building Training Room, 75515 East Hovely Lane, in the City of Palm Desert. Zoom videoconferencing was available from the City of Blythe.

ROLL CALL – Roll call was taken and it was determined that a quorum was present.

Members Present

Mayor Joseph DeConinck
Councilmember Stephanie Virgen
Director JB Hamby
Mayor Toper Taylor
Councilmember Oscar Ortiz, *Chair*
Mayor Linda Evans, *Vice Chair*
Mayor Evan Trubee
Councilmember Ted Weill
Mayor Naomi Soto
Deputy Chief of Staff Pat Cooper

Agency

City of Blythe (*via Zoom*)
City of Coachella
Imperial Irrigation District (*via Zoom*)
City of Indian Wells
City of Indio
City of La Quinta
City of Palm Desert
City of Rancho Mirage
City of Palm Springs
Riverside County – District 4

Members/ Ex-Officios Not Present

Councilmember Nancy Ross
Director Anthony Bianco
Mayor Pro Tem Dirk Voss
Director Amber Duff
Tribal Chair Joseph Mirelez
Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez

City of Cathedral City
Coachella Valley Water District
City of Desert Hot Springs
Mission Springs Water District
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians
Riverside County – District 5

Councilmember Stephanie Virgen led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance. There were no agenda modifications or conflicts of interest announced.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

None

3. COMMITTEE MEMBER / DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Director of Energy & Sustainability Lisa McNeilly thanked the Coachella Valley Water District for their hospitality in hosting the CVAG committee meetings and reviewed the meeting logistics. She announced that the Committee's May 14, 2026 meeting has been canceled, and the Committee will next convene on Thursday, June 11. Ms. McNeilly also provided an update on the CAL FIRE tree grant previously discussed, sharing photos with the Committee and noting that a tree-planting event took place in the City of Indio on April 4.

Chair Ortiz requested that two future topics be added to upcoming agendas: an item on Colorado River water levels and the ongoing multi-state negotiations, and a presentation on data centers to better understand their operations, resource needs, and current regional activity.

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Approve the minutes from the February 12, 2026, meeting**
- B. Authorize the Executive Director to take the necessary steps to accept funding from Coachella Valley Water District and the Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District for the region's Landscape Certification Program, and then scale the program's scope to the available budget**

IT WAS MOVED BY MAYOR TAYLOR AND SECONDED BY MAYOR EVANS TO APPROVE THE CONSENT CALENDAR.

THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 10 AYES AND 5 MEMBERS ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.

Mayor DeConinck	Aye
Mayor Ross	Absent
Councilmember Virgen	Aye
Director Bianco	Absent
Mayor Pro Tem Voss	Absent
Director Hamby	Aye
Mayor Taylor	Aye
Councilmember Ortiz	Aye
Mayor Evans	Aye
Director Duff	Absent
Mayor Trubee	Aye
Mayor Soto	Aye
Councilmember Weill	Aye
Deputy Chief of Staff Cooper	Aye
Tribal Chairman Mirelez	Absent

4.1 ITEMS HELD OVER FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR

None

5. DISCUSSION / ACTION

A. Local Efforts to Address Hexavalent Chromium (Chromium- 6)

Joanne Le, Coachella Valley Water District's (CVWD) Director of Environmental Services, provided a PowerPoint presentation detailing what the agency is doing to comply with Chromium-6 regulations.

Robust member discussion ensued with Ms. Le and CVWD Government Affairs Program Manager Karen Borja answering questions from the Committee regarding potential health

impacts at various Chromium-6 levels, legislative efforts to address policy concerns and other information presented in the PowerPoint.

The Committee directed the Energy & Sustainability Chair and Executive Director of CVAG to work with local water districts and come back with direction on a legislative plan for Chromium-6 efforts.

B. Commercial Electric Lawn & Garden Equipment Program

Program Manager Jacob Alvarez provided an introduced the item and invited Danielle Soto, South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) Public Affairs Manager, who joined the meeting via Zoom, to provide an overview on their commercial electric lawn and garden program.

Robust member discussion ensued with Ms. Soto and SCAQMD Program Supervisor Yuh Juan Tan, who also joined via Zoom, answering questions from the Committee regarding average out-of-pocket costs for an average landscaping team, amongst questions other questions on the items presented.

No action was taken as this was an informational item only.

C. Public Sector Projects Policy Update and Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget

Mr. Alvarez presented the staff report.

Brief member discussion ensued with Mr. Alvarez answering questions regarding the project cap and projected budget forecast.

IT WAS MOVED BY MAYOR EVANS AND SECONDED BY MAYOR SOTO TO AUTHORIZE THE CVAG REPRESENTATIVE ON THE INLAND REGIONAL ENERGY NETWORK (IREN) EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TO 1.) SUPPORT A SUSPENSION OF THE CURRENT POLICY LIMITING AN AGENCY'S CONCURRENT CASH FOR KILOWATTS PROJECTS, SO LONG AS IT MAINTAINS THE OVERALL PROJECT CAP AND 2.) APPROVE THE FISCAL YEAR 2026-27 I-REN BUDGET

THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 10 AYES AND 5 MEMBERS ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.

Mayor DeConinck	Aye
Mayor Ross	Absent
Councilmember Virgen	Aye
Director Bianco	Absent
Mayor Pro Tem Voss	Absent
Director Hamby	Aye
Mayor Taylor	Aye
Councilmember Ortiz	Aye
Mayor Evans	Aye
Director Duff	Absent
Mayor Trubee	Aye
Mayor Soto	Aye
Councilmember Weill	Aye

Deputy Chief of Staff Cooper
Tribal Chairman Mirelez

Aye
Absent

6. INFORMATION – The following items were provided in the agenda for information only:

A. Attendance Record

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Donald Ziegler, resident of Palm Desert, expressed his desire to see CVAG form a citizens committee to help implement the regional Climate Action Plan, which was recently approved. He expressed he believes the plan is an excellent one, but would benefit from citizen input to be adequately executed.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

It was noted in the agenda that the next meeting of the Energy & Sustainability Committee was planned for Thursday, May 14, 2026, but staff clarified that the meeting was being canceled. The Committee will next meet at noon on June 11 at the Coachella Valley Water District, Steve Robbins Administration Building Training Room, 75515 Hovley Lane East, Palm Desert, 92260.

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be held on Monday, April 27, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. at the Coachella Valley Water District, Steve Robbins Administration Building Training Room, 75515 Hovley Lane East, Palm Desert, 92260.

9. ADJOURN – Chair Ortiz adjourned the meeting at 1:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, *Elysia Regalado, Deputy Clerk*

ITEM 4B

Coachella Valley Association of Governments Energy & Sustainability Committee June 11, 2026



STAFF REPORT

Subject: Contract Amendment for Used Oil Recycling Program

Contact: Eman Nazir, Management Analyst (enazir@cvag.org)

Recommendation: Authorize the Executive Director to execute Amendment No. 3 to the Professional Services Agreement with HF&H Consultants, LLC for the Used Oil Recycling Program, extending the agreement term through September 30, 2027 and increasing the contract amount by \$13,530, contingent upon receipt of CalRecycle grant funding

Background: CVAG, in partnership with its member jurisdictions, has long administered regional recycling programs for waste tires and used oil. These programs are funded through grants from the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) and implemented with consultant support for program coordination and administration. In April 2023, the CVAG Executive Committee approved Resolution No. 2023-01 authorizing grant applications for tire and used oil recycling programs through 2028.

The Used Oil Recycling Event Grant Program provides funding for local jurisdictions to collect and recycle used oil and oil filters that may otherwise be improperly disposed of, creating environmental and public health risks. CVAG has administered used oil recycling events throughout the Coachella Valley and the City of Blythe since 2003, including events in partnership with local jurisdictions and Riverside County to serve incorporated and unincorporated communities.

HF&H Consultants, LLC has provided consultant services for CVAG's Used Oil Recycling Program since 2011. In 2023 staff issued a Request for Proposals (RFP), and on September 25, 2023, the Committee authorized the Executive Director to execute a one-year professional services agreement with HF&H Consultants, LLC for the Used Oil Recycling Program, including two optional one-year extensions, following a qualifications-based review and interview process. Staff now recommends approval of an additional one-year extension through September 30, 2027, in an amount not to exceed \$13,530, to continue program support services.

Due to reduced CalRecycle Oil Payment Program funding levels at the State level, no used oil collection events are anticipated during Fiscal Year 2026-27. Consultant services will instead focus on program administration, Certified Collection Center inspections, grant application preparation, reporting assistance, educational outreach materials, and budget tracking.

Fiscal Analysis: Amendment No. 3 provides an additional amount of \$13,530, bringing the total contract amount to \$144,955. Funding for the amendment is contingent upon receipt of CalRecycle grant funds, which support eligible program costs including consultant services, program administration, outreach, and related expenses.

CVAG staff will apply for the next cycle of CalRecycle Used Oil Payment Program funding in June 2026.

Attachment: Amendment No. 3 – HF&H Consultants, LLC Professional Services Agreement

**AMENDMENT NUMBER THREE
TO THE
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
COACHELLA VALLEY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
AND
HF&H CONSULTANTS, LLC
FOR THE
USED OIL RECYCLING PROGRAM**

This **AMENDMENT NUMBER THREE** is made and entered into this **29th day of June 2026**, by and between **Coachella Valley Association of Governments**, a California joint powers agency ("**CVAG**"), and **HF&H CONSULTANTS, LLC** ("**CONSULTANT**"), and is made with reference to the following background facts and circumstances. All other terms and conditions shall remain the same as stated in the original Agreement dated September 25, 2023, for the Used Oil Recycling Program.

1. This Amendment Number Three extends the term of the Agreement to **September 30, 2027**.
2. This Amendment Number Three provides the additional budget in the amount not to exceed \$13,530 to complete the scope work for the period of October 1, 2026 through September 30, 2027, as included in the attached updated cost proposal dated May 13, 2026 and Table 1: HF&H Consultants Workplan for FY 2026-27.
3. The total amount payable under this agreement shall not exceed **\$144,955**.

Original Agreement	September 25, 2023	\$ 56,995
Amendment Number One	September 12, 2024	\$11,470
Amendment Number Two	September 19, 2025	\$ 62,960
Amendment Number Three	June 29, 2026	<u>\$ 13,530</u>
Total Agreement Not-to-Exceed		\$144,955

Consistent with CVAG Policy 21-02, this amendment shall be executed with the use of electronic or digital signatures in order to be in effect.

[Continued on next page]

Contract No. CVAG-23-011-03
Project: Used Oil Recycling Program

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this Amendment Number Three to be executed by their duly authorized representatives on this date:

**COACHELLA VALLEY ASSOCIATION OF
GOVERNMENTS**

HF&H CONSULTANTS, LLC

By: _____
Tom Kirk, Executive Director

By: _____
Laith Ezzet, Senior Vice President

**HF&H Consultants**

590 Ygnacio Valley Rd. Suite 105
Walnut Creek, CA 94596
Phone: (925) 977-6950
Web: hfh-consultants.com

May 13, 2026
Eman Nazir
Management Analyst
Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG)
74-199 El Paseo Drive, Suite 100
Palm Desert, CA 92260

Sent via email: enazir@cvag.org; nreyes@cvag.org

Subject: 2026-27 Used Oil Recycling Program Cost Proposal

Dear Eman Nazir,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this updated cost proposal.

We have invested significant resources to make the used oil grant program successful during the past twenty years and we are proud of the results in the Coachella Valley. We hope you concur that this offer represents significant value to CVAG, and we look forward to continuing efforts on your behalf.

Sincerely,

Laith B. Ezzet, CMC®
Senior Vice President



Cost Proposal

On April 21, 2026, the Coachella Valley Association of Governments requested that HF&H Consultants prepare a cost proposal for a one-year contract extension. The current contract extension is set to expire on September 30, 2026.

HF&H will perform the scope of work for the period of October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2027 (FY 2026-27) as contained in Table 1 of the workplan.

Due to the reduced level of CalRecycle Oil Payment Program (OPP) funds, CVAG has hosted used oil events every other year beginning in 2024. HF&H Consultants and CVAG understand that there will be no used oil and filter collection events in 2027. The majority of the OPP funds will be conserved for used oil and filter collection events in 2028, contingent on OPP funding. In the scope of work below, Tasks 1 through 3, which relate to hosting used oil filter exchange events, have been estimated at 0 hours.

Under Task 4, HF&H will create a web flyer for CVAG and member cities to share education on the used oil recycling program. Under Task 5, HF&H will perform twelve virtual (12) Certified Collection Center site visits. Under Task 6, HF&H will prepare and submit the application for OPP Cycle 18 (FY 2027-28) funds and prepare the Annual Report for OPP Cycle 17 (FY 2026-27). Under Task 7, HF&H will provide quarterly budget updates.

HF&H remains available under Task 8 to perform a solid waste presentation upon request and at no additional charge to members of the CVAG working group on an industry topic of mutual determination.

Our proposed billing rates and budgets for the project are shown in the table below. The budget does not include CVAG staff or overhead costs.

2026
Used Oil Recycling Program Cost Proposal



Table 1 CVAG Used Oil Program – HF&H Consultants Workplan
FY 2026-27

TASK DESCRIPTION	Engagement Director & Advisor	Project Manager	Event Coordinator and Event Staff	Total Hours
Used Oil Filter-Exchange Events				
1. Pre- Event Coordination				
Task 1: Hours	0	0	0	0
Task 1: Budget				\$ -
2. Used Oil Filter Exchange Events (0 events)				
Task 2: Hours	0	0	0	0
Task 2: Budget				\$ -
3. Project Measurement and Monitoring (i.e. Record Event Data)				
Task 3: Hours	0	0	0	0
Task 3: Budget				\$ -
4. Identify Alternative Program Implementation Options				
A. Create web flyer for CVAG and member Cities to share	0	2	4	6
B. Send educational e-blast to mailing list	0	2	5	7
Task 4: Hours	0	4	9	13
Task 4: Budget				\$ 2,145
5. Twelve (12) Certified Center Inspections	0	1	9	10
Task 5: Budget				\$ 1,650
6. Grant Application and Report Assistance				
A. Grant Application for OPP 18.	0	1	12	13
B. FY 2026/2027 Report Assistance.	2	4	35	41
Task 6: Hours	2	5	47	54
Task 6: Budget				\$ 8,910
7. Provide Support at Meetings as Requested by CVAG				
A. Provide event participation results after each event.	0	0	0	0
B. Provide updated budget expenditure sheet on a quarterly basis or upon staff request.	0	1	4	5
Task 7: Hours	0	1	4	5
Task 7: Budget				\$ 825
8. Solid Waste Presentation	Per CVAG's Request At No Additional Charge			
Total Hours				82
Average Hourly Rate				\$ 165
Total Professional Fees				\$ 13,530
Travel Expenses				\$ -
Total FY Fees and Expenses				\$ 13,530

(1) HF&H estimates no hours for Tasks one through three in FY 2026-27 because there will not be any used oil events in FY 2026-27.

ITEM 4C

Coachella Valley Association of Governments Energy & Sustainability Committee June 11, 2026



STAFF REPORT

Subject: Representation on the Solid Waste Advisory Council/Countywide Local Taskforce

Contact: Lisa McNeilly, Director of Energy and Sustainability (lmcneilly@cvag.org)

Recommendation: Reappoint Rancho Mirage Councilmember Ted Weill and City of Indio Environmental Programs Coordinator Sara Toyoda as CVAG's representatives on the Solid Waste Advisory Council/Countywide Local Taskforce, and City of Cathedral City Environmental Conservation & Public Works Manager Deanna Pressgrove as taskforce alternate, for two-year terms

Background: The Solid Waste Advisory Council was established by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors in 1981. In 1989, the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939) was passed, which established mandated solid waste diversion and recycling requirements. With that, the role of the Solid Waste Advisory Council was expanded to include the AB 939 State mandated duties of a Local Task Force, forming the Riverside County Solid Waste Advisory Council/Countywide Local Task Force (SWAC/LTF).

With this added function, the responsibilities of the SWAC/LTF were increased to include making findings and providing advisory recommendations to Riverside County's Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors on all substantive waste management issues and solid waste facility land use matters, but also assisting the County and its cities in meeting AB 939 requirements, the preparation and revision of the Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan (CIWMP), reviewing and commenting on solid waste facilities and their expansions for consistency with the CIWMP, and sending recycling goals to the California Integrated Waste Management Board.

Meetings of the SWAC/LTF are held as needed, generally on the third Thursday of the month, and require a quorum of 11 members. The Riverside County SWAC/LTF provides members with the opportunity to assist the County and its cities in complying with AB 939 and SB 1383 Short-Lived Climate Pollutants (SLCP) mandates, to plan for adequate waste disposal capacity and organics processing facilities, to evaluate waste disposal alternatives and technologies, and to influence the direction of waste management practices and legislation.

From 2013 to 2015, CVAG was an active member of the SWAC/LTF. There have been no meetings since 2015. In July 2023, CVAG appointed two primary members and two alternate members to represent the region on the SWAC/LTF after soliciting volunteers. Because the terms have expired, Riverside County staff is now requesting that CVAG confirm its appointees.

CVAG staff is recommending Rancho Mirage Councilmember Ted Weill, who is CVAG's Vice Chair this fiscal year, and Indio Environmental Programs Coordinator Sara Toyoda be re-appointed as primary members. Staff is also recommending Cathedral City Environmental Conservation & Public Works Manager Deanna Pressgrove be re-appointed as taskforce alternate. CVAG staff is recommending the individuals be appointed for two-year terms. Given the lack of regular meetings, CVAG staff is not recommending a second alternate at this time.

Fiscal Analysis: The SWAC/LTF is organized by the Riverside County Department of Waste Resources. There is no cost to CVAG for this taskforce.

ITEM 5A

Coachella Valley Association of Governments Energy & Sustainability Committee June 11, 2026



STAFF REPORT

Subject: Update on Colorado River Negotiations

Contact: Lisa McNeilly, Director of Energy and Sustainability (lmcneilly@cvag.org) and Emmanuel Martinez, Assistant Director of Energy & External Affairs (emartinez@cvag.org)

Recommendation: Information

Background: At its April 2026 meeting, members of the Energy and Sustainability Committee expressed interest in receiving an update on the on-going negotiations related to the Colorado River and potential impacts for the State of California, particularly for the Coachella and Imperial Valleys. Imperial Irrigation District (IID) Director JB Hamby currently serves as Chairman of the State of California's Colorado River Board, which is tasked with protecting California's rights and interests in the river's resources. In that role, he is responsible for negotiating matters related to the Colorado River on behalf of the state. Director Hamby and Jessica Neuwerth, the Colorado River Board's Executive Director, will provide an update on Colorado River negotiations at the Energy and Sustainability Committee's June meeting.

The Colorado River is at a critical point after experiencing drought conditions for more than 20 years, threatening water reliability for all the seven states that rely on the river as well as energy production. In addition to climate-related factors, human demand and consumption of the Colorado River water to meet urban, agriculture and industrial needs have further pushed the river to its limits. This has placed significant pressures on states that rely on the river and federal government to devise a plan that reduces water use while meeting water demands. At 4.4 million acre-feet of water per year, California has the largest allocation of Colorado River water, of which IID is entitled to 3.1 million acre-feet annually and Coachella Valley Water District is entitled to 330,000 acre-feet of river water per year.

Director Hamby also presented to the Committee in May 2023, followed by a second update on the Colorado River negotiations from Christopher Harris, then-Executive Director of the Colorado River Board, in June 2023. On May 22, 2023, the seven basin states – California, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, New Mexico, Arizona and Nevada – agreed to a proposal by the Lower Basin states (California, Arizona, and Nevada) that was projected to prevent reservoirs from reaching critically low levels by reducing water use by 3 million acre-feet. The water conserved as a result of the agreement would remain in Lake Mead, the nation's largest reservoir. According to details provided by the Department of Interior, 2.3 million acre-feet of the reductions were to be compensated by \$1.2 billion of Inflation Reduction Act funding, largely spent on paying agricultural landowners, irrigation districts and other water users to conserve water. California committed to take on the largest water reductions, approximately 1.6 million acre-feet through 2026.

Timing is critical as several key policies and agreements that help to manage the Colorado River are set to expire at the end of 2026. These include the 2007 Interim Guidelines for managing Lower Basin shortages and coordinating operations between Lake Powell and Lake Mead, the 2019 Drought Contingency Plan, and the bi-nation agreement with Mexico under the 1944 Water Treaty. Together, these agreements established the framework for management and operation of water allocations across the Colorado River system.

Since the last update to the Committee, states have continued discussions regarding long-term management of the river and the new rules that need to be negotiated this year. On May 1, 2026, the Lower Basin states [announced a proposal](#) that would deliver more than 3.2 million acre-feet through 2028, building on previous proposals and part of an integrated package of actions.

Fiscal Analysis: There is no cost to CVAG for this informational report.

ITEM 5B

Coachella Valley Association of Governments Energy & Sustainability Committee

June 11, 2026



STAFF REPORT

Subject: Addressing Extreme Heat in the Coachella Valley

Contact: Emmanuel Martinez, Assistant Director – Energy & External Affairs
(emartinez@cvag.org)

Recommendation: Provide feedback on an Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program grant application to develop a regional plan for functional shade and community spaces

Background: Addressing extreme heat and mitigating extreme weather events has long been a priority of this committee and CVAG. In the Coachella Valley, where temperatures can reach 110 degrees, extreme heat events are projected to be more intense and longer lasting. Socioeconomic factors such as age, income, health status, and the condition of the built environment can further influence who is most at risk and how well communities can respond to heat impacts. According to California's Climate Change Assessment, average daily temperatures in the Inland Desert region are projected to increase by eight to 14 degrees by the end of the century.

In February 2023, the CVAG Executive Committee, at the recommendation of the Energy & Sustainability Committee (then Energy & Environmental Resources Committee), endorsed a regional urban tree planting and shade initiative to increase shading, build climate resilience and reduce the impacts of increased heat. The direction to staff was to seek out grant opportunities as well as partnerships that would bring resources to efforts that help address extreme heat. This direction was reinforced by a partnership with the Imperial Irrigation District (IID), and the successful grant application to CalFire's Urban and Community Forestry Program that is now funding the planting of 3,000 trees across the Coachella Valley.

CVAG staff has been tracking funding opportunities relating to Proposition 4, the \$10 billion climate bond approved by voters in 2024. One notable program is the Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program (EHCRP), which will open its second round of funding this summer. As the Committee may recall, CVAG secured \$748,500 in the first round of EHCRP for the Cool Streets for Affordable Housing Neighborhoods (Cool Streets) project, which is identifying priority locations and show how cool pavement technologies can help to mitigate the health impacts of extreme heat. Round two of the EHCRP will make available \$27.5 million statewide for advancing work related to addressing the health impacts of extreme heat. The total bond allocation to the EHCRP is \$50 million and a subsequent round of funding from this program is anticipated.

CVAG's innovative use of EHCRP funding was highlighted in March 2026 when the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI) held an Extreme Heat and Climate Resiliency Program convening at the Wellness Center in the City of La Quinta. The convening was hosted by LCI and attended by several CVAG member jurisdictions and local non-profits working on extreme heat issues. Through these regional workshops, LCI's goal is to increase awareness of extreme heat, review the EHCRP funding opportunity, and also to share ideas, strategies and collaboration opportunities to advance mitigation efforts. Following a presentation on the Cool Streets program,

CVAG staff led an interactive activity designed to capture city-specific and regional insights. This exercise successfully gathered targeted, localized feedback on priority heat mitigation strategies, the areas and populations most acutely impacted by rising temperatures, and distinct opportunities for cross-jurisdictional collaboration. The actionable project ideas collected during the session can directly inform and shape CVAG's regional resilience strategy and scope for the EHCRP grant opportunity.

Staff is now looking to build on the momentum with another EHCRP grant application. CVAG staff is proposing a regional planning effort that focuses on functional shade and key community spaces, including public and private spaces most used by the public, particularly vulnerable populations. This proposed planning effort would integrate the lessons learned from the Cool Pavements and tree planting efforts.

If funded, this plan can also help address new planning requirements for CVAG's member jurisdictions. Assembly Bill 2684 (AB 2684) mandates all California cities and counties to integrate extreme heat hazards into the Safety Element of their General Plans. This statutory requirement ensures that local jurisdictions move beyond broad climate goals and design specific, actionable strategies to combat rising urban temperatures. Jurisdictions must address extreme heat hazards upon the very next update of one or more General Plan elements occurring on or after January 1, 2028. Local planning agencies must review and revise their Safety Element at least once every eight years, usually aligned with their Housing Element updates. If a city has already adopted a standalone Extreme Heat Action Plan (EHAP) or a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) that fulfills these goals, it can summarize and incorporate that document directly into the Safety Element.

At the June meeting, staff is soliciting feedback from the Energy & Sustainability Committee about the proposed grant application, which is due during the summer. The final grant guidelines are expected to be released in the next few weeks. If awarded funding, the EHCRP grant can help inform the extreme heat hazard general plan requirements and support and supplement ongoing efforts by CVAG's member jurisdictions. Furthermore, these efforts may also assist in the development of model ordinances that CVAG's member agencies may consider combatting rising temperatures and create more resilient communities. A regional EHCRP plan would also compliment local plans that may be underway, such as the City of Palm Springs' efforts to conduct a comprehensive shade and heat mitigation plan and host an Extreme Heat Summit on Sept. 18.

Fiscal Analysis: There is no cost for providing this update to the committee.

The Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program (EHCRP) Round 2 significantly expands California's investment in heat mitigation, with \$27.5 million in total funding available to support transformative, community-centered infrastructure and planning efforts. Unlike the multiple, small and large grant categories that were in Round 1, Round 2 is more focused on two primary project tracks — early-stage and advanced “transformative infrastructure” projects — generally ranging from about \$600,000 to \$1 million for early-stage projects and approximately \$2.5 million up to around \$4 million for advanced, implementation-ready projects. The program continues to emphasize equity and accessibility, and does not impose a local match requirement, lowering financial barriers for disadvantaged communities, although it does require structured partnerships and allocation of funding to community-based partners such as minimum percentages directed to partners in many project types.

ITEM 5C

Coachella Valley Association of Governments Energy & Sustainability Committee

June 11, 2026



STAFF REPORT

Subject: Inland Regional Energy Network (I-REN) Incentive Finder

Contact: Eman Nazir, Management Analyst (enazir@cvag.org)

Recommendation: Information

Background: The Inland Regional Energy Network (I-REN) is a collaborative of local governments in Riverside and San Bernardino counties focused on expanding access to energy efficiency resources, education, and funding opportunities across the Inland Empire. I-REN is comprised of CVAG, San Bernardino Council of Governments (SBCOG), and Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG).

Amid discussions related to I-REN's 2028–2035 Business Plan, the CVAG Executive Committee, based on the recommendation of the Energy & Sustainability Committee, voted in December 2025 to continue the advocacy for expansion of programs that benefit residential homes as well as small and medium commercial buildings. While those programs were not ultimately identified as formal sectors in when the Business Plan was submitted, the I-REN Executive Committee directed staff to continue advancing programs within the Public, Workforce Education & Training, and Codes & Standards sectors, while coordinating with existing residential, commercial, and industrial energy efficiency programs to help expand access to resources across the Inland Empire. To avoid duplication of existing ratepayer-funded programs and services, I-REN and CVAG staff have prioritized partnership, outreach, and referral efforts that connect residents and businesses to available third-party incentive programs and resources.

On January 20, 2026, the I-REN Executive Committee approved a Professional Services Agreement between WRCOG and Paulo Analysis for the development and implementation of the I-REN Incentive Finder. In April 2026, I-REN, in coordination with CVAG staff, launched the Residential Incentive Finder Tool, now available through the [I-REN website](#).

The Incentive Finder consolidates more than 160 federal, state, utility, regional, and local incentive programs into a single platform, allowing residents to quickly identify programs they may qualify for based on basic household and location information. The tool helps residents identify opportunities related to energy bill assistance and discount programs; home energy efficiency improvements; electrification upgrades and appliances; solar and battery storage incentives; as well as electric vehicle and clean transportation programs. The tool was designed to simplify access to available incentives, increase participation in existing programs, and support regional electrification and energy efficiency goals. No login or personally identifiable information is required, and users may email results directly to themselves for future reference.

CVAG staff has coordinated with staff at member jurisdictions to test the Incentive Finder prior to its launch. The coordination also led to distributing customized marketing materials, including website content, newsletter templates, flyers, and social media resources, to help expand public awareness and accessibility of the tool.

Staff will provide a demonstration of the Incentive Finder, including examples of available incentives within the Coachella Valley and an overview of outreach efforts currently underway across the region.

In addition to the Incentive Finder, I-REN and CVAG staff continue coordinating with regional energy efficiency and electrification program partners to help connect residents with available resources and incentives. Current coordination efforts include outreach and referral collaboration with organizations such as Maroma Energy Services (MES), Cascade Energy, and the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Go Zero Program. CVAG staff will continue evaluating opportunities to expand partnerships and outreach efforts that support regional energy efficiency goals.

Fiscal Analysis: There is no cost to CVAG for this program. The Incentive Finder, including staff time related to the launch, is funded directly through I-REN.

ITEM 6A

**ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE
ATTENDANCE RECORD
FY 2025-26**

VOTING MEMBERS	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE
City of Blythe	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	
City of Cathedral City	-	-	✓	-		-	-	✓	-		-	
City of Coachella	-	-	✓	-		-	-	✓	-	✓	-	
Coachella Valley Water District	-	-		-		-	-	✓	-		-	
City of Desert Hot Springs	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	-		-	
Imperial Irrigation District	-	-	✓	-		-	-	✓	-	✓	-	
City of Indian Wells	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	
City of Indio	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	
City of La Quinta	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	
Mission Springs Water District	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	-		-	
City of Palm Desert	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	
City of Palm Springs	-	-	✓	-		-	-	✓	-	✓	-	
City of Rancho Mirage	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	
Riverside County - District 4	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians	-	-	✓	-		-	-		-		-	
EX-OFFICIO / NON-VOTING MEMBERS												
Desert Water Agency	-	-		-		-	-		-		-	
Riverside County - District 5	-	-		-		-	-		-		-	

Absent
Vacancy



No Meeting
Present

-
✓

COACHELLA VALLEY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

FISCAL YEAR 2026-27



STANDING COMMITTEES & GOVERNING BODIES	DAY	TIME	JULY (Dark)	AUG (Dark)	SEPT	OCT (Dark)	NOV	DEC (Dark)	JAN	FEB	MAR (Dark)	APR	MAY	JUN
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	Last Monday	4:00 p.m.	-	-	28	-	30	-	25	22	-	26	H June 7	28
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE	1 st Monday	10:00 a.m.		-	H Aug 31	-	2	-	4	1	-	5	3	7
ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE	2 nd Thursday	12:00 p.m.	-	-	10	-	12	-	14	11	-	8	13	10
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE	2 nd Monday	9:00 a.m.	-	-	14	-	9	-	11	8	-	-	10	14
HOMELESSNESS COMMITTEE	3 rd Wednesday	10:00 a.m.	-	-	16	-	18 9:30 am	-	20	17	-	21	19	16
GENERAL ASSEMBLY	Last Monday in June	TO BE ANNOUNCED	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28
OTHER AGENCIES														
COACHELLA VALLEY CONSERVATION COMMISSION	2 nd Thursday	10:30 a.m.	-	-	10	-	12	-	14	11	-	8	13 11 am	10
DESERT COMMUNITY ENERGY	3 rd Monday	3:00 p.m.	-	-	21	-	16	-	H Jan 11	H Feb 8	15	-	17	21
COACHELLA VALLEY POWER AGENCY	Last Monday	3:00 p.m.	-	-	28	-	30	-	25	22	-	26	H June 7	-

H = Holiday * = Special Meeting

AGENDAS CAN BE FOUND AT: www.cvag.org.

UPDATED: June 1, 2026

PLEASE NOTE: When it becomes necessary to have a special meeting or to change the date of a meeting, committee members will be alerted and the change will be noted on the CVAG website calendar.

ITEM 6C

Coachella Valley Association of Governments Energy & Sustainability Committee June 11, 2026



STAFF REPORT

Subject: Inland Regional Energy Network's 2025 Annual Report

Contact: Jacob Alvarez, Program Manager (jalvarez@cvag.org)

Recommendation: Information

Background: CVAG is collaborating with Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) and San Bernardino Council of Governments (SBCOG) on a joint Regional Energy Network (REN), known as the Inland Regional Energy Network (I-REN). I-REN is governed by an Executive Committee, with CVAG's votes represented by the Energy & Sustainability Committee Chair (or Vice Chair as needed).

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) mandates that all Energy Efficiency Program Administrators (PA), including Renewable Energy Networks (RENs), submit an Annual Report each spring. These reports serve a dual purpose: They look back at the achievements of the previous year and provide a forward-looking perspective by outlining plans for the upcoming year. The 2025 Annual Report, filed on April 14, 2026, represents I-REN's fourth submittal, building on initial program framework and milestones achieved since its authorization.

The 2025 Annual Report recaps a year of data-driven growth, cross-sector synergies, and expanded community engagement across the Inland Empire. Additionally, per the CPUC directives, I-REN submitted a business plan in 2026 that outlines how funding would be distributed for program years 2028 and beyond, ensuring a long-term approach to regional energy efficiency and resilience.

Among the highlights from the 2025 Annual Report is the Energy Fellowship Initiative, which is the workforce pipeline program that was scaled up to place 37 Energy Fellows with I-REN partner jurisdictions in 2025 (including four Fellows within CVAG's territory). This was an increase from 14 Fellows (three of which were within CVAG's territory) in 2024. Fellows provide critical, hands-on administrative capacity to directly support Public Sector projects, and Workforce Education & Training (WE&T).

The Annual Report also details the Normalized Metered Energy Consumption (NMEC). Under its "Cash for Kilowatts" program, I-REN successfully completed five NMEC projects in 2025, with an additional 12 projects officially approved for installation in the program year 2026, including the Cities of Indian Wells and Palm Springs. Most of these initiatives directly benefit hard-to-reach (HTR) and underserved public agencies.

The 2025 Annual Report details strong, measurable progress across all three of I-REN's core operational areas:

- *Public Sector:* I-REN established a secure, streamlined utility data collection process with SCE and SoCalGas in alignment with CPUC Decision 23-02-002, significantly easing the administrative burden for local jurisdictions. The report notes that 86% of all facility benchmarking support provided by I-REN during the year directly focused on public facilities serving underserved

or hard-to-reach communities. Due to overlapping efforts between Public Sector resources and WE&T Fellow placements, this cross-sector pipeline has generated public sector projects totaling nearly \$7.4 million in lifetime utility bill reductions and more than \$2.1 million in potential incentives.

- *Codes & Standards (C&S) Sector (CVAG-led program):* I-REN delivered 13 comprehensive training courses and two forums in 2025, reaching member jurisdictions' staffs across both counties. Notably, in September 2025, I-REN became the first REN to offer a live simulcast of its these trainings in Spanish as part of the efforts to reach more equity participants. The program also formalized a partnership with the American Institute of Architects (AIA) to become an approved continuing education unit (CEU) provider. Additionally, I-REN delivered code compliance materials to 14 jurisdictions to assess permitting needs, with 23 more visits planned for June.
- *Workforce Education & Training (WE&T) Sector:* WE&T experienced notable growth, with regional workforce collaborations scaling dozens of active partnerships across local community colleges, California State Universities, chambers of commerce, and building industry associations. Building on its December 2024 Energy Workforce Gaps Assessment, I-REN created collaborations with the Workforce Development Departments of both Riverside and San Bernardino Counties related to regional energy career pathways. Over a two-year period, this partnership is expected to provide 180 individuals with no-cost or low-cost training, support services, and employer engagement to help close the regional skills gap. As of February 2025, I-REN enrolled 12 regional public agencies including Palm Springs, Riverside County, Colton, and Corona, among others, into the Local Government Sustainable Energy Coalition (LGSEC), offering sponsored memberships to connect local jurisdictions to state energy policy.

CVAG staff continues to work directly with its member jurisdictions on I-REN program opportunities. The City of Palm Springs continues to develop two local reach code ordinances, which focus on early adoption of 2025 energy standards for controlled-environment horticulture lighting, alongside enhanced home energy efficiency criteria. Local agencies also continue to expand municipal capacity by utilizing the free Energy Fellowship program. Within the CVAG region, Palm Springs hosted two Fellows, while Indio and the Mission Springs Water District each hosted one. In 2026, the CVAG region is on track to expand to eight host agencies utilizing 10 Fellows, and the College of the Desert will be the first junior college to host an I-REN Fellow.

Fiscal Analysis: There is no additional cost to CVAG for these items. Staff time dedicated to I-REN and the costs of the services of consultants are covered through the I-REN budget.

Attachment: I-REN 2025 Annual Report



2025

Energy Efficiency
Annual Report



Your Local Champion for Equitable Access to Energy Resources

Our mission is to build a stronger clean energy economy and community throughout California's Inland Empire by connecting residents, businesses, and local governments to a wide range of energy efficiency resources. Together, we will empower local governments to practice energy efficiency; support workforce education and training in our region; and enable code compliance in the building industry.

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01.

Executive Summary

I-REN Overview

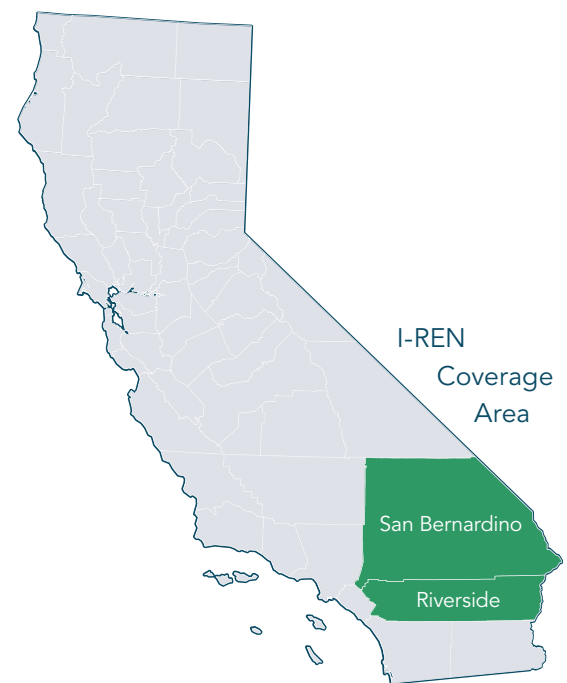
The Inland Regional Energy Network (I-REN) is a consortium of the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG), San Bernardino Council of Governments (SBCOG), and Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) that serve the counties of Riverside and San Bernardino.

These partners initially began collaborating in 2019 with a shared vision to establish locally administered, designed, and delivered energy efficiency (EE) programs.

Historically, the Inland Empire has faced challenges in receiving equitable opportunities to participate in EE and advanced energy. As dedicated representatives of local government, the I-REN consortium members bring established connections from their work serving this region to support filling gaps in existing EE services. The establishment of a Regional Energy Network (REN) in the Inland Empire region offers equitable opportunities for ratepayers in these communities to be engaged and active participants in meeting California's EE goals.

In February 2021, I-REN applied for REN portfolio administrator (PA) status to offer a portfolio of programs serving the Public Sector, Codes & Standards (C&S), and Workforce Education & Training (WE&T), with governance from WRCOG as the administrative lead agency, as well as SBCOG and CVAG. I-REN was authorized by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC or Commission) in Decision (D.) 21-11-013 Approval of Inland Regional Energy Network Energy Efficiency Business Plan, which funded I-REN to offer EE services for a unique six-year period of program years 2022–2027.

As directed in D.21-11-013, I-REN made a new portfolio filing in 2026, along with other PAs, for program year 2028 and beyond. In its new portfolio filing, I-REN proposes to continue its foundational set of programs and market sectors in 2028 and beyond, applying lessons learned from program operations, stakeholder engagement and needs, and evaluation studies as described here and in its application filing.



2025: Data-Driven Growth, Cross-Sector Growth, and Responding to Stakeholder Needs

In 2025, I-REN saw significant growth among its individual programs, but also importantly developed strong synergies between programs. The year 2025 saw higher forecasted energy savings, increased participation among all sectors, and the further development of strong, cross-sector resources.

*I-REN's portfolio is continuing to **deliver tangible, cross-cutting public interest impacts and increasing equitable access to EE in the Inland Empire region.***

- I-REN's Energy Fellowship workforce initiative provides **job opportunities and experiential energy education** to participants who directly support local jurisdictions and local energy projects; 37 energy fellows were placed within I-REN partner jurisdictions in 2025, with many fellows providing direct support to both Codes & Standards and Public Sector resources in the region.
- I-REN **completed five Normalized Metered Energy Consumption (NMEC) projects through its Cash-for-Kilowatts program, with 12 more approved for installation in program year 2026.** The vast majority of these projects directly support resources for hard-to-reach (HTR) and underserved agencies.
- I-REN continues to lead with equitable energy code training for public sector and private sector building professionals. In September 2025, I-REN became the **first REN to offer a live simulcast of its C&S trainings in Spanish.**
- I-REN **launched six evaluation studies of its portfolio in 2025** to ensure that it is hearing directly from participants and non-participants and learning from program successes and challenges. I-REN is proud to contribute these study findings to the statewide EE stakeholder community to inform greater understanding of its underserved region. These findings are already being applied to drive continuous program improvement in 2026 and have also played a key role in I-REN's strategic approach for the recent 2028–2035 portfolio filing.

I-REN continues to be guided by input from its communities and stakeholders. In the past year, I-REN further expanded opportunities for community and industry input to its program designs and operations by convening stakeholders in all sectors of its portfolio, including roundtables, working groups, energy forums, and more. Notably, I-REN leveraged findings from its Energy Workforce Gaps Assessment to improve implementation of its Workforce Development program, leveraging existing partnerships while forming new partnerships with local training providers, community colleges, and California State Universities.

In 2025, I-REN also coordinated closely with its fellow PAs to fulfill regulatory obligations, as well as to enhance program offerings and ensure judicious use of ratepayer funds. When the Commission approved portfolios in D.23-06-055, they ordered that the PAs work together to examine various topics and submit joint advice letters. I-REN has been a diligent contributor to those efforts, embracing the opportunity to work collaboratively with fellow PAs and advocate for equity and the value that RENs bring to the EE landscape. I-REN also worked closely with fellow PAs in the region to develop reporting criteria that enable PAs to accurately progress toward market support and equity objectives. I-REN also contributed to discussions among PAs about approaches to statewide program assessment.

Going into 2026, I-REN is continuing to expand program activities and deliver tangible benefits for not only program participants but also the region as a whole. Data was gathered directly from stakeholders via I-REN's ongoing community engagement, and while driving outcomes in its current portfolio, I-REN will also look to the future. I-REN's recently filed 2028–2035 portfolio application was developed using insights gained from early program implementation, along with extensive feedback from stakeholders regarding the energy efficiency and resilience needs of the Inland Empire.

37

energy fellows placed
in 2025

5

NMEC projects
completed

12

projects approved
for 2026

1st REN

to offer Spanish-language
training simulcast

6

evaluation studies launched
in 2025

I-REN Accomplishments: From Business Plan Approval to Present

Abbreviations in timeline

ACEEE	American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy
AIA	American Institute of Architects
CAEECC	California Energy Efficiency Coordinating Committee
CCEC	California Climate and Energy Collaborative
CEDARS	California Energy Data and Reporting System
CEU	Continuing Education Unit
COG	Council of Government
CPUC	California Public Utilities Commission
ED	Energy Division
IDSM	Integrated Demand-Side Management
IEDRC	Integrated Energy Data Resource Center
IOU	Investor-Owned Utility
JCM	Joint Cooperation Memorandum
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
PA	Portfolio Administrator
REACH	Regional Energy and Climate Hub
STEP	Student Technology Expo Program



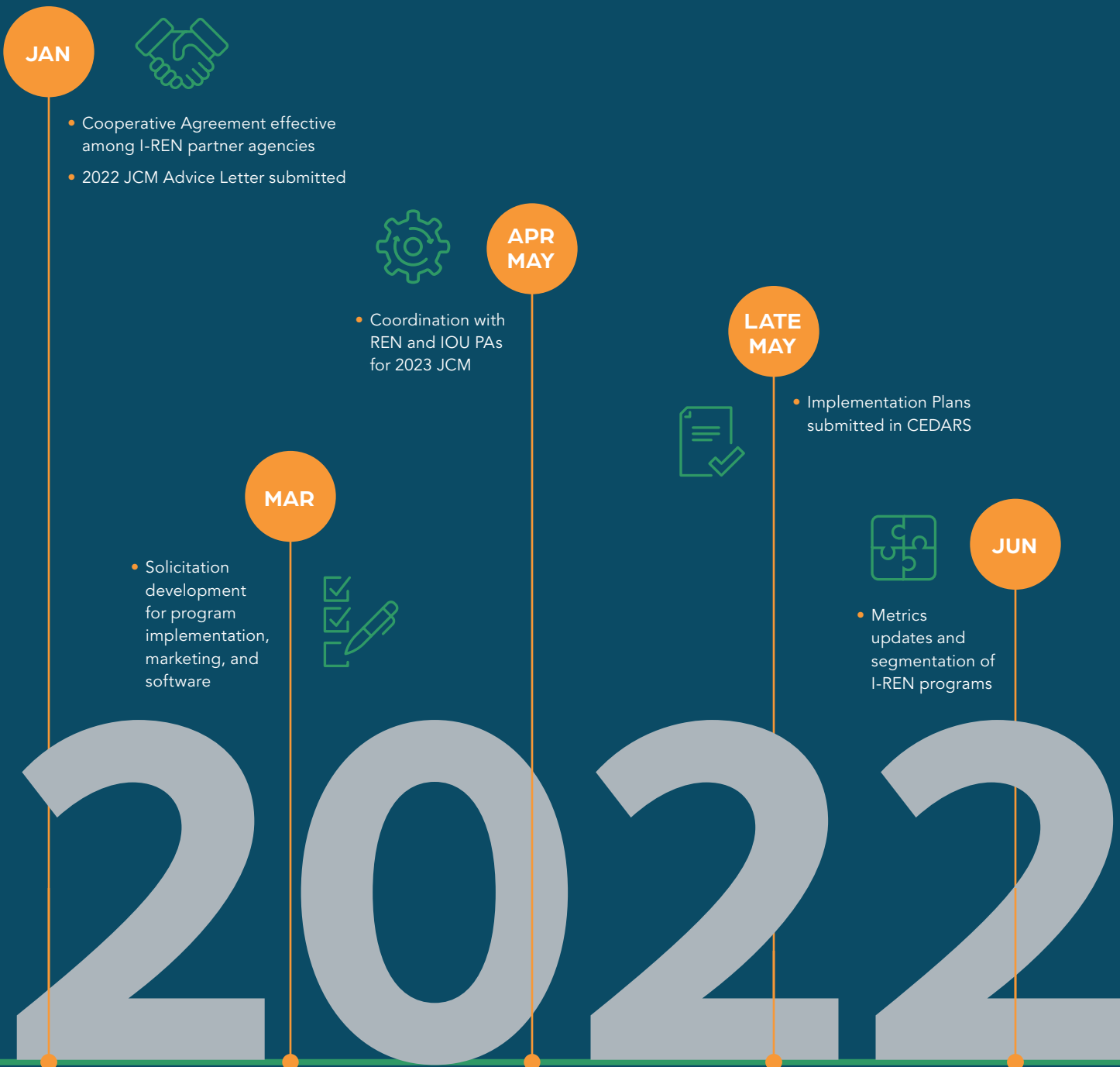
- Business Plan approved in D.21-11-013
- Building I-REN contacts list for local governments, tribes, and other stakeholders
- Began working with SoCalGas on Program Agreement
- MOA and I-REN Governance and Operations Rules in development between I-REN partner agencies

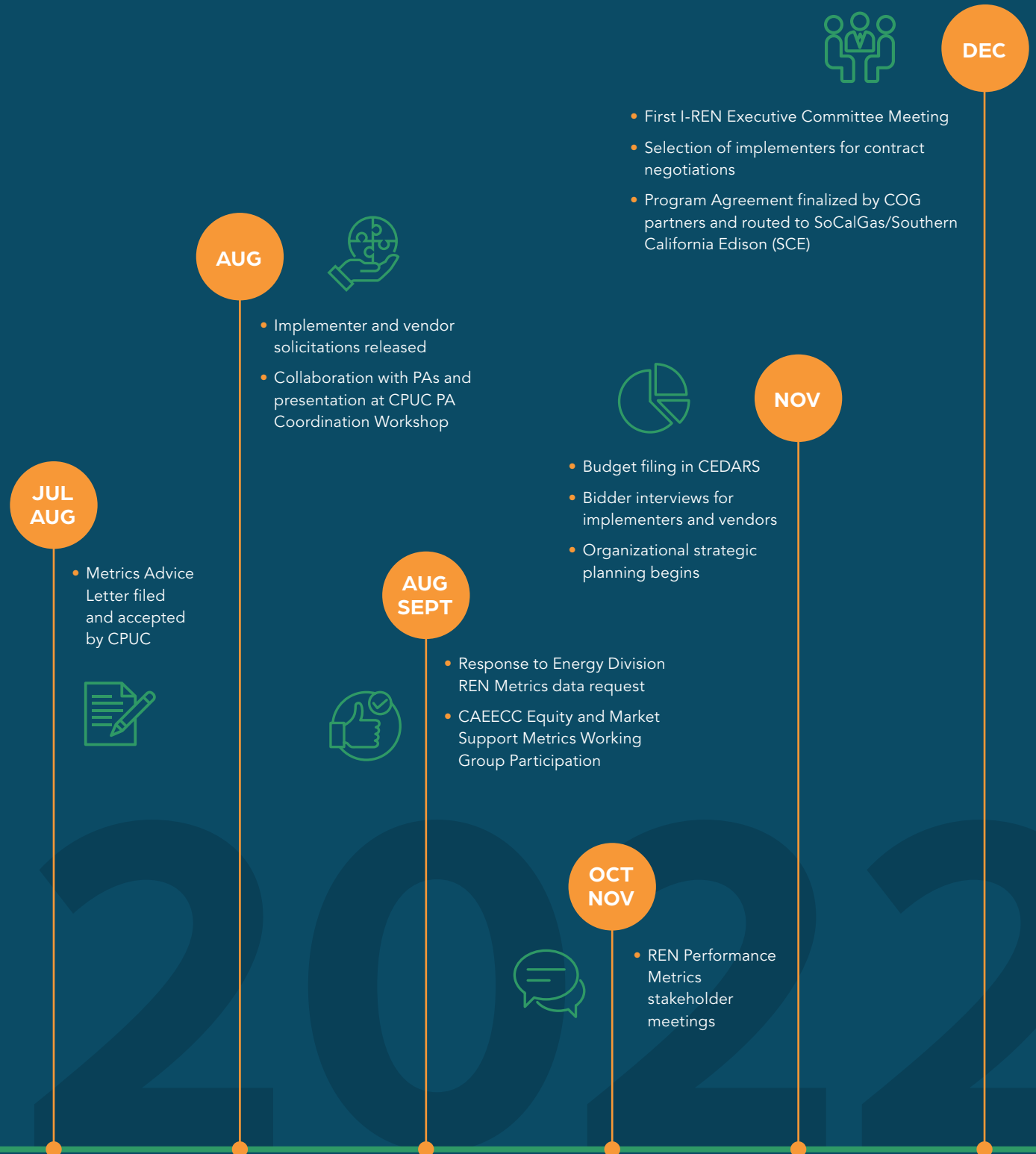
NOV



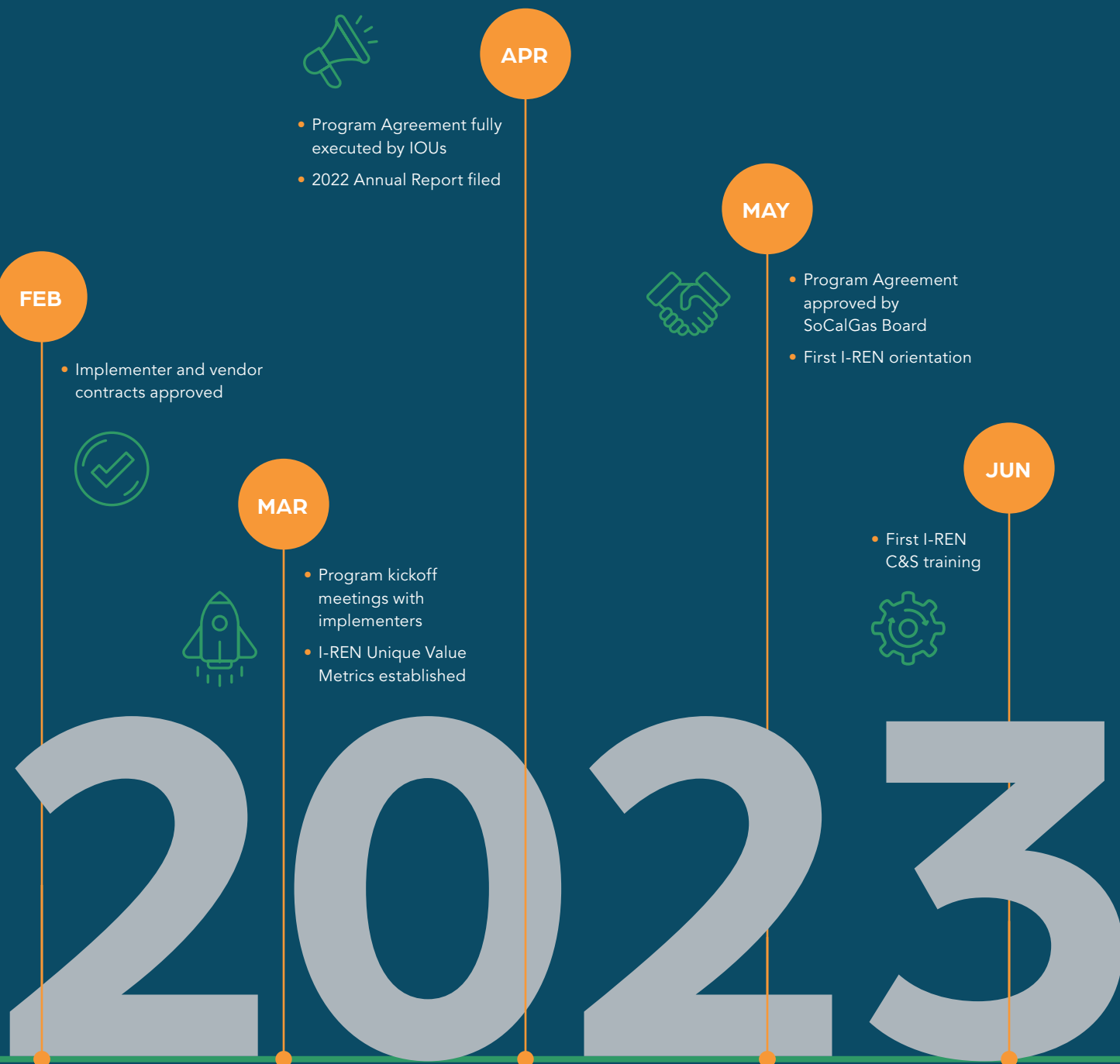
2021

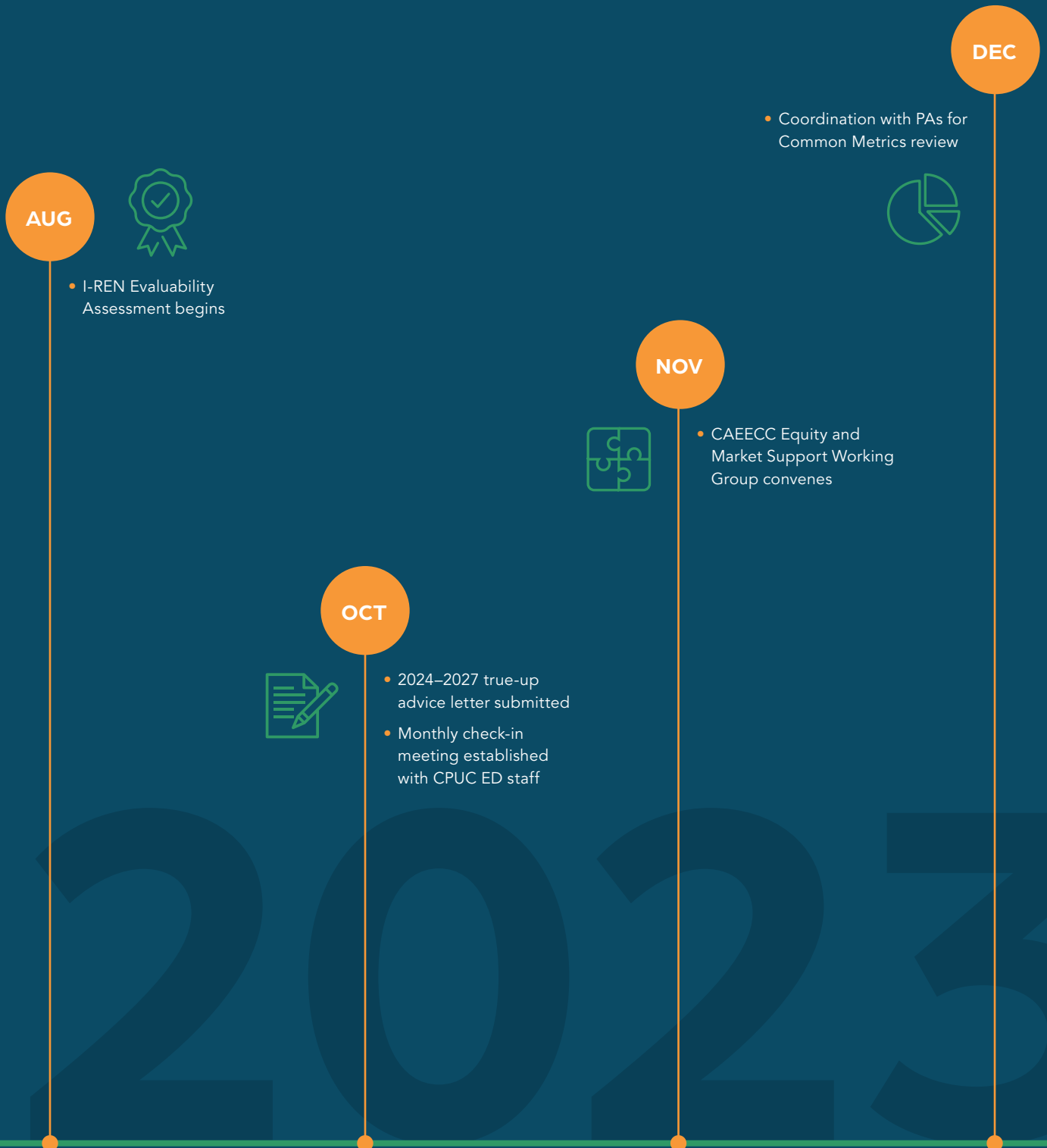
I-REN Accomplishments



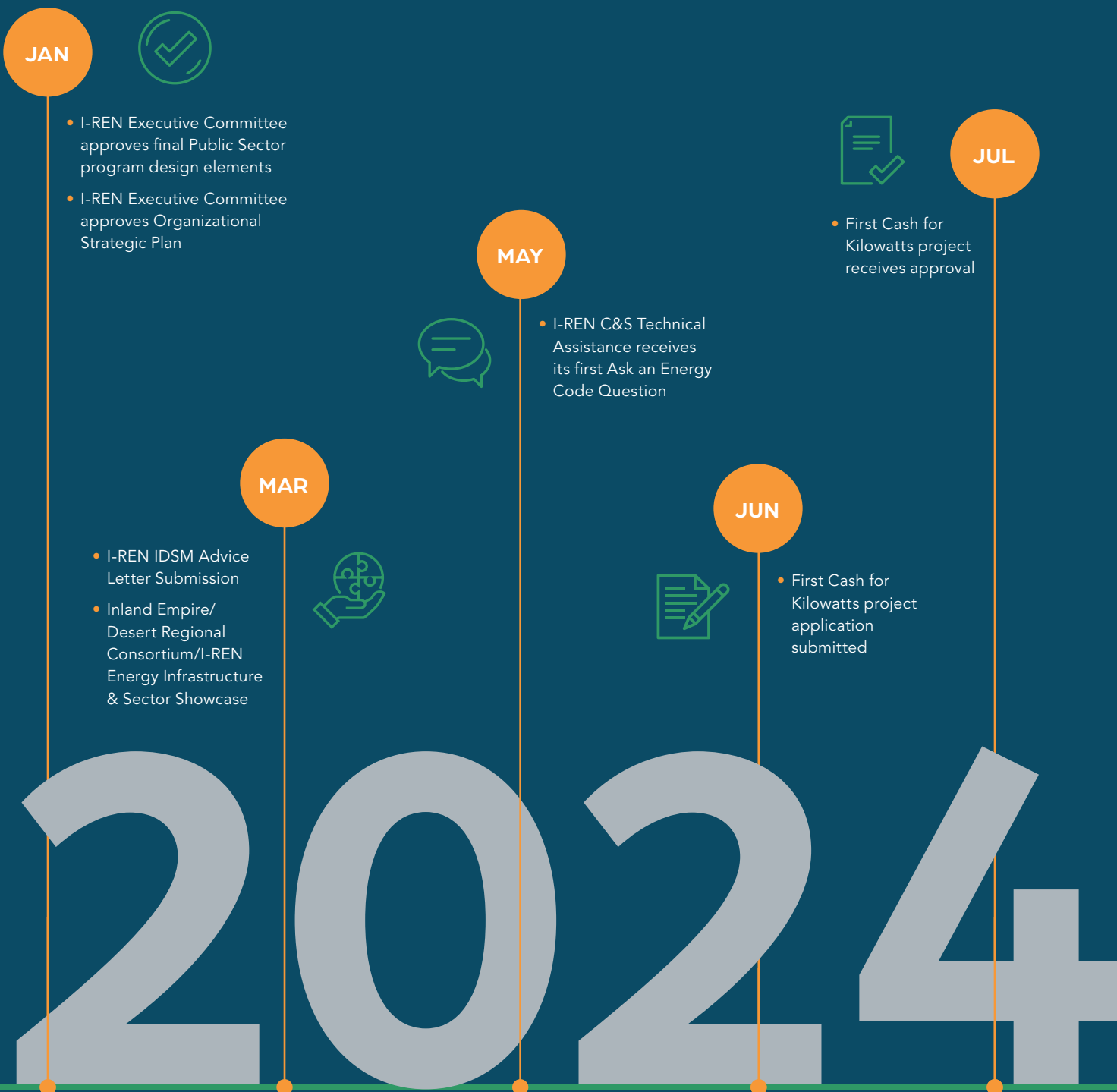


I-REN Accomplishments





I-REN Accomplishments



AUG



- I-REN presents a poster on its Public Sector programs at the ACEEE 2024 Summer Study on Energy Efficiency in Buildings

SEPT



- I-REN hosts first Public Sector Working Group
- I-REN hosts the first of its Quarterly Workforce Roundtables
- I-REN Energy Fellowship Program Cycle 2024–2025 begins with 14 Energy Fellows placed at 12 public sector agencies

NOV

- I-REN C&S Technical Assistance develops and publishes its first two permit guides available on I-REN's website

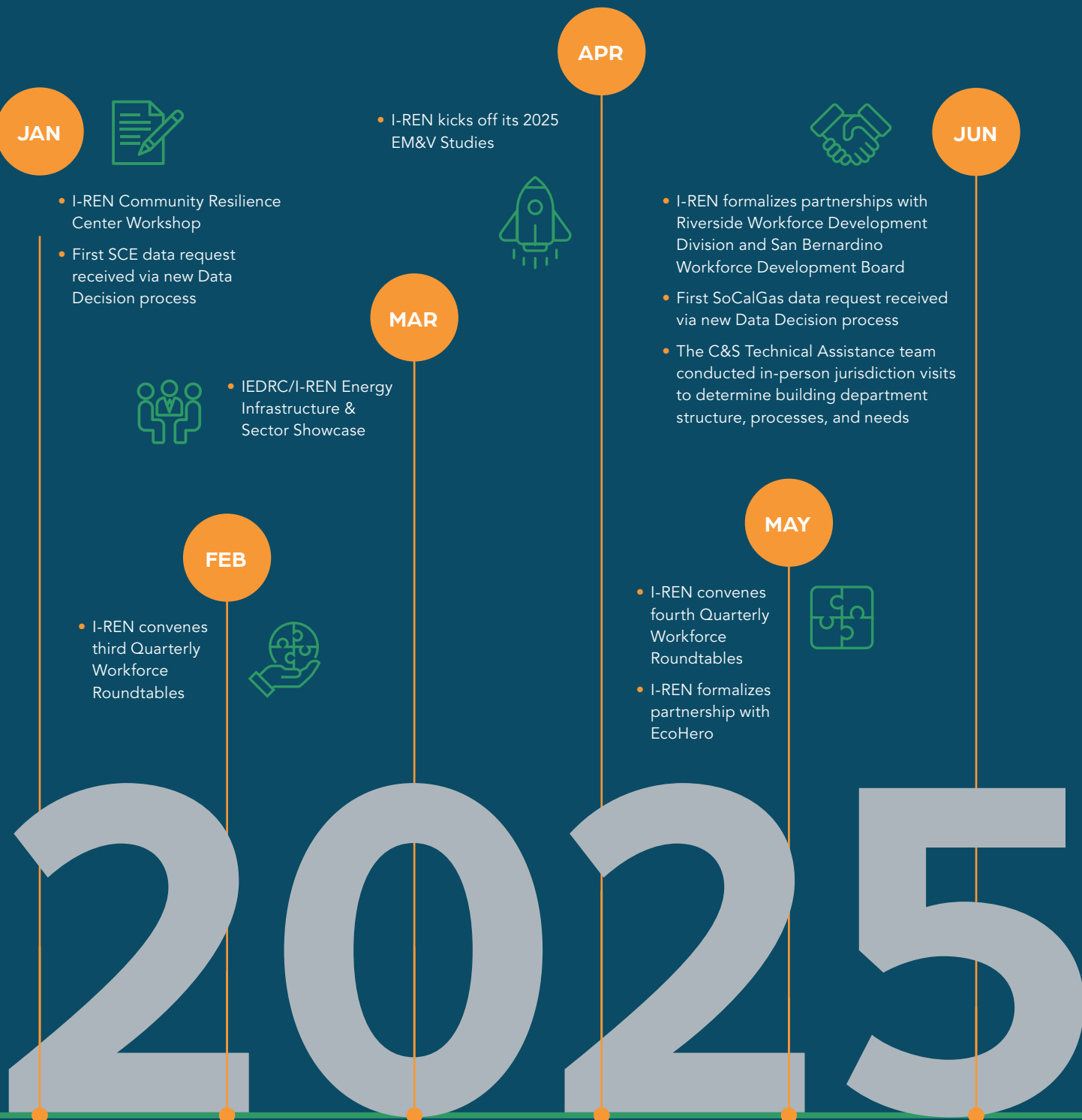


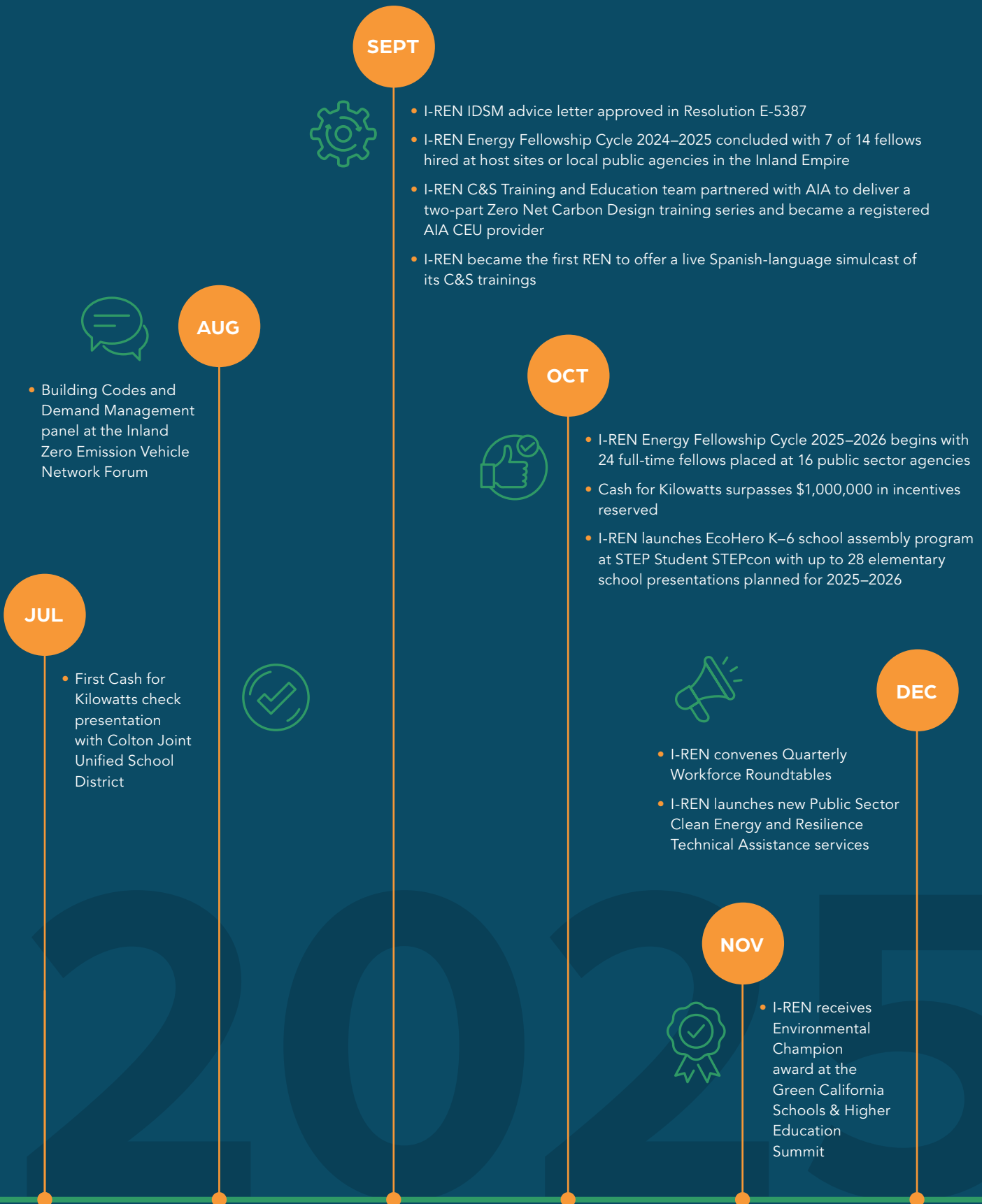
DEC



- First Cash for Kilowatts project completes construction
- I-REN convenes the second Quarterly Workforce Roundtables
- Draft I-REN Energy Workforce Gaps Assessment developed
- I-REN hosts first REACH Inland Empire forum, led by the CCEC and the Strategic Growth Council

I-REN Accomplishments





Public Sector Summary

I-REN's Public Sector programs help public agencies complete energy efficiency projects.

I-REN offers a comprehensive suite of no-cost services and support—from project identification to completion, including cash incentives. I-REN works alongside agency staff to identify, fund, and complete energy-saving measure installations.

Throughout 2025, I-REN focused on regional engagement and targeted marketing campaigns to increase awareness about available programs and services. More than 60 agencies leveraged public sector program offerings in 2025. I-REN conducted energy audits at 52 facilities and supported five Cash for Kilowatts projects to reach construction completion. Through its strategic energy planning services, such as the Building Upgrade Concierge (BUC) and ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager® (ESPM), I-REN helped agencies benchmark more than 3.8 million square feet of building gross floor area.

In alignment with the purpose of the Equity segment to provide energy efficiency services to HTR or underserved customers, the majority of agencies served by I-REN's public sector programs were equity communities.

Additionally, 95% of energy audits performed, 71% of savings achieved, and 88% of strategic energy planning initiatives supported underserved and/or hard-to-reach communities.

In 2025, I-REN received final approval from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) on the Tier 3 Advice Letter submitted in early 2024, thus authorizing the incorporation of integrated demand-side management (IDSM) activities into the public sector portfolio and opening the door to support agencies with holistic clean energy projects. As part of its new IDSM services launch, I-REN hosted a clean energy-focused program services webinar, drawing 54 attendees, which served as an official entry point for agencies seeking IDSM support. Following the webinar, six agencies signed up to begin receiving IDSM services.

In 2026, I-REN will focus on continued outreach and engagement with new agencies across the region, while emphasizing education, agency success, increased affordability, and the rollout of new IDSM services. These efforts will continue I-REN's priority of turning identified projects into tangible results, with a focus on equity communities.

60+

agencies leveraged
Public Sector program
offerings

52

facilities received
energy audits
conducted by I-REN

3.8M

square feet benchmarked
through I-REN energy
planning services

Codes & Standards Summary

I-REN's Codes & Standards (C&S) programs provide training and technical support to increase understanding of the building energy code, with services tailored for public and private sector building professionals.

The I-REN C&S training program offered 13 trainings and two forums in 2025. I-REN became the state's first REN to offer a live simulcast of its C&S trainings in Spanish, which is part of the C&S training program's efforts to reach more equity participants. I-REN partnered with the American Institute of Architects (AIA) to offer a two-part training series on Zero Net Carbon Design, and I-REN became a registered AIA CEU provider. I-REN also continued to ramp up its technical assistance offerings, including its "Ask an Energy Code Question," which received three times more submissions in 2025 than 2024. In an effort to deepen relationships with jurisdictions, I-REN's C&S team conducted two rounds of in-person jurisdiction visits to better understand building department structure, processes, and needs.

Workforce Education & Training Summary

I-REN's workforce offerings include an Energy Fellowship initiative that provides job opportunities in local jurisdictions to support public sector energy efficiency projects.

In 2024, I-REN increased the number of Energy Fellows it placed, and those fellows began making direct contributions to support the implementation of projects through I-REN's public sector programs. Also in 2024, I-REN conducted an Energy Workforce Gaps Assessment to identify workforce needs and opportunities in the region, including surveying employers to learn more about their hiring and job skill needs related to energy efficiency. In 2025, I-REN continued to grow the number of Energy Fellows it placed at local jurisdictions, and provided additional experiential learning opportunities for the fellows. I-REN will also be working to implement program plans based on the results of the market assessment.

2025 Evaluation, Measurement, and Verification (EM&V) Studies

In 2025, I-REN launched its first EM&V studies. The purpose of these studies was to address needs identified through stakeholder engagement to support current program development.

Results from these studies provided data to inform I-REN's Business Plan Application (BPA) development and are helping inform continuous program improvement for each sector. A description of each study is provided in the following sector sections.

02.

2025

Achievements and 2026 Plans

Introduction

I-REN's EE program portfolio consists of six programs in three sectors: Public Sector, C&S, and WE&T.

The primary purpose of I-REN's public sector programs is equity—to improve access to EE for hard-to-reach, underserved, and disadvantaged communities in the advancement of the California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) Environmental and Social Justice (ESJ) Action Plan Goal 1.¹ I-REN's equity programs also provide corollary benefits such as increased comfort and safety, improved indoor air quality, more affordable utility bills, and climate resiliency, consistent with Goals 2 and 4 in the ESJ Action Plan. One of I-REN's equity segment programs is a resource program that delivers savings via projects in public sector facilities.

The primary purpose of I-REN's WE&T sector is to provide market support toward achieving the long-term success of the EE market by educating customers, training contractors, and building partnerships, in alignment with ESJ Action Plan Goal 7. C&S programs are considered separately from other segments, as directed in D.21-05-031.² I-REN's C&S programs are focused around training, outreach and technical assistance to support private and public sector building professionals in understanding and complying with building energy codes.

Across I-REN's portfolio, enhancing outreach to ESJ communities is a key focus area to ensure these communities can meaningfully participate in and benefit from CPUC programs, in alignment with ESJ Action Plan Goal 5.

I-REN's programs and 2025 activities are detailed in the pages that follow, along with a look ahead to I-REN opportunities in 2026 and beyond.



Public Sector

- Technical Assistance and Strategic Energy Planning Program
- Normalized Metered Energy Consumption Program



Codes & Standards

- Training and Education Program
- Technical Support



Workforce Education & Training

- Training and Education Program
- Workforce Development

¹ www.cpuc.ca.gov/esjactionplan/

² D.21-05-031 at 16.



Public Sector

I-REN's public sector programs deliver customized technical assistance and provide monetary incentives for energy projects at publicly owned facilities in the I-REN service territory.

Through these programs, I-REN is increasing underserved and hard-to-reach agency access to EE and Integrated Demand Side Management (IDSM) strategies. Public sector services include energy use evaluation, facility benchmarking, targeted project development, and incentives in line with local, regional, and state climate and energy goals. Eligible public agencies include:

- Cities and townships
- Counties
- Tribes
- K-12 school districts
- Special districts
- Water and wastewater agencies/districts
- Higher education institutions
- Other public agencies

I-REN's current public sector programs consist of the Technical Assistance and Strategic Energy Planning Program and the Public Buildings Normalized Metered Energy Consumption Program (NMEC Program), publicly known as Cash for Kilowatts. I-REN agencies can access both programs simultaneously to maximize energy and resilience outcomes while minimizing their out-of-pocket project costs.

27,263

square miles

11%

of California's
population

3

COGs

2

counties

52

cities

13

tribal nations

215

special districts

I-REN-PUBL-001: Technical Assistance and Strategic Energy Planning Program

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

I-REN's Technical Assistance and Strategic Energy Planning Program (TA Program) offers energy planning and project development support throughout the lifecycle of EE projects. The program reduces the confusion and administrative burden of public sector EE projects, such as funding/financing and reporting requirements, by delivering no-cost services tailored to each agency's unique goals and needs.

This program offers several energy data collection and analysis services to equip agencies to make informed decisions about their energy future. For example, the program offers facility benchmarking in I-REN's Building Upgrade Concierge software and strategic energy and resilience planning through customized Energy Resilience Roadmaps.

Participating agencies receive a high level of technical and financial assistance for their EE projects. After determining an agency's energy and resilience goals, I-REN helps agencies identify EE projects and secure funding and financing to implement them. The program then guides agencies through applicable energy programs (e.g., I-REN offerings and those of other portfolio administrators (Pas), including the Southern California Regional Energy Network (SoCalREN), Southern California Edison (SCE), and the Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas), helping build capacity and easing the administrative burden of participating in energy programs. I-REN helps agencies use a variety of financing mechanisms available to them for their energy upgrade projects, including through other PAs and non-ratepayer funded offerings (e.g., investor-owned utility (IOU) financing, third-party program incentives, grants).

The TA Program has the following objectives:

- **PROVIDE** local governments with support and resources to develop and implement their strategic energy plans and EE projects, with a focus on prioritizing equity communities or facilities that serve underserved and hard-to-reach regions in the Inland Empire.
- **HELP** local governments afford and finance a range of EE upgrades.
- **ESTABLISH** one-on-one support for local governments' EE projects.
- **DEVELOP** or enhance strategic energy plans to connect local government goals related to climate, resilience, and economic development to EE programs and adoption.
- **CREATE** resources for the public sector to tap into EE and distributed energy resources programs offered by other providers, including IOUs.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2025

Onboarding and Project Delivery

In 2025, I-REN enhanced engagement activities to increase agency onboarding and participation within the region. To streamline ongoing onboarding activities, I-REN developed overview slide deck templates for Regional Energy Network (REN)-wide use during onboarding meetings with agencies. I-REN onboarded 11 agencies largely based on word-of-mouth referrals throughout the region, interest received at conferences, or through targeted engagement via State of the City/County events. Eight newly onboarded agencies serve underserved and/or hard-to-reach communities within the Inland Empire.

Through this targeted engagement via State of the City/County events, I-REN created agency profiles highlighting key milestones and program participation metrics such as receiving strategic energy planning support or completing facility audits. The profiles were shared with either elected officials on Council of Governments (COG) committees or directly with staff at State of the City/County events to support continued delivery of services for engaged agencies or to encourage program uptake for non-engaged agencies within each COG. Additionally, more agencies that are not members of I-REN’s three COGs began leveraging I-REN’s public sector program offerings in 2025, particularly with increased participation of educational institutions. These agencies will bolster I-REN’s growing project pipeline in 2026 and beyond.

In 2025, I-REN conducted no-cost audits for 19 agencies at 52 facilities and **identified a potential lifetime savings of more than 40.7 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) and 186,260 Therms, as well as \$10 million in utility bill savings and more than \$2.2 million in incentives** for agencies within the region. I-REN built a project pipeline in 2025 that will channel 19 projects into I-REN’s Cash for Kilowatts program and 8 projects into other energy efficiency programs offered by Portfolio administrator resource acquisition programs in I-REN territory. In 2025, I-REN supported **7 projects to complete construction, resulting in an estimated lifetime savings of more than 2.1 million kWh and approximately 128,000 Therms. Five of which completed projects are in equity communities.**

19
agencies
received audits

52
facilities
received audits

Potential Lifetime
Savings

40.7M
kWh

186,260
Therms

\$10M
utility bill savings

\$2.2M
incentives

Key Program Services Delivered

Activity	Count	% Equity
Onboarding meetings held	11	73%
Site visits performed	52	85%
Initial measures lists presented	35	89%
Project intent forms received	5	100%
Incentive applications submitted	18	78%
Projects completed construction	7	71%

Case Study: Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino (HACSB) Administrative Offices

I-REN supported HACSB in identifying energy efficiency retrofit opportunities within two of its administrative offices in the cities of San Bernardino and Victorville. While I-REN was unable to support the residential customers that HACSB serves, public sector services were leveraged to make its administrative offices more resilient.

San Bernardino Office

Completed construction in December 2025

Installed measures:

- Replaced existing rooftop units (RTUs) with high-efficiency heat pump RTUs
- Reprogrammed Thermostats to follow building operations
- Replaced exterior fluorescent lights with light-emitting diode (LED) lamps
- Replaced interior fluorescent lights with LED lamps
- Installed occupancy sensors for offices

Victorville Office

Completed construction in February 2026

Installed measures:

- Installed programmable Thermostats
- Replaced RTUs with high-efficiency RTUs
- Replaced interior lighting with LEDs
- Replaced exterior lighting with LEDs
- Installed occupancy sensors
- Replaced roof with cool roof
- Replaced windows with new high-efficiency windows

Combined Annual
Project Impact

82,700+
kWh

11.6
kW

115
Therms

\$32,230
incentives



Highlights of facility audits completed in 2025



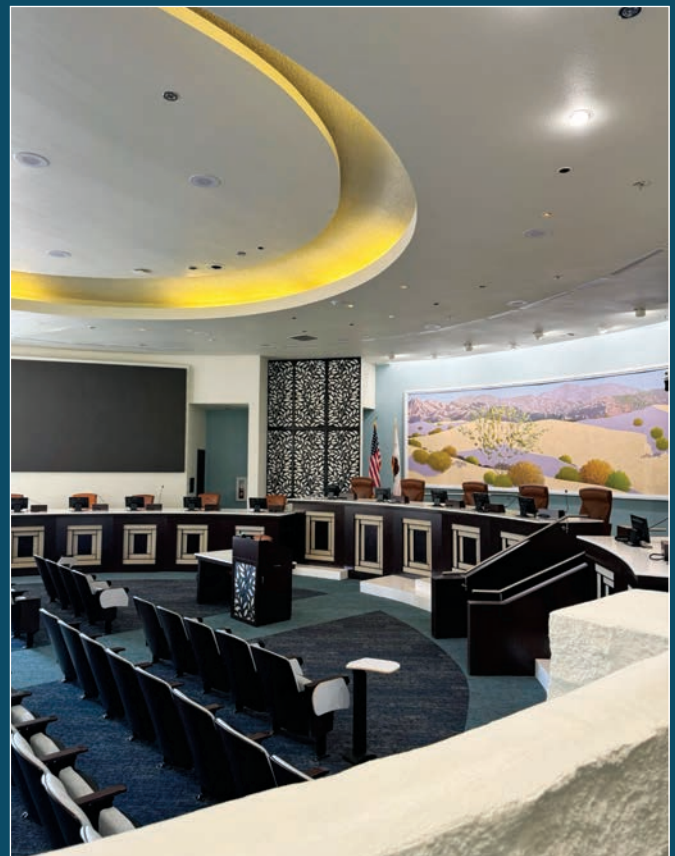
Murrieta Valley High School



Northwest Mosquito and Vector Control
District Headquarters



Desert Willow Golf Resort
City of Palm Desert



City of Palm Desert City Hall

STRATEGIC ENERGY PLANNING

Energy Resilience Roadmap

I-REN continued developing and delivering innovative reports to help agencies improve their energy efficiency and climate resilience.

Sample Energy Resilience Roadmap



The preliminary Energy Resilience Roadmap examines an agency's climate plans, energy goals, community vulnerabilities, and energy performance across its portfolio. It also identifies energy-intensive buildings and pumping sites for potential EE and IDSM upgrades. While presenting the preliminary roadmap, I-REN invites agency stakeholders to share their progress on energy goals and priorities, identify critical facility needs, and collaborate on actionable next steps to build energy resilience in their community. The conclusion of a preliminary roadmap allows agencies to choose between proceeding with a Final Energy Resilience Roadmap or conducting facility energy audits.

The Final Energy Resilience Roadmap builds on the preliminary roadmap and provides high-level EE, resilience, and electric vehicle project recommendations at up to three sites. Final roadmaps commonly include a mix of previously audited and yet-to-be-audited facilities, providing a holistic view of potential project opportunities across all priority facilities. The final roadmap concludes with practical next steps, such as facility energy audits or pump tests, to seamlessly incorporate recommendations into an agency's current and future energy plans. This ensures that agency stakeholders and decision-makers are well-prepared to tackle and enhance energy resilience in their community.

As part of the Energy Roadmapping development process, I-REN’s utility bill analysis discovered upwards of eight meters billed under incorrect tariff or rate classifications, resulting in customers paying more than necessary. I-REN supported customers in taking steps to correct these classifications, directly reducing utility bills for participating agencies. These efforts supported cost savings and affordability outcomes in the I-REN region.

In 2025, I-REN introduced a greenhouse gas (GHG) impact metric to Energy Resilience Roadmaps to quantify the total metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent CO₂e that would be reduced if all proposed energy projects were implemented. I-REN also calculates the percentage of the agency’s overall GHG reduction goal that these projects would achieve, based on their published Energy or Climate Action Plan. This added metric helps show how these projects support broader agency and regional climate targets.

Sample Energy Resilience Roadmap Energy Efficiency Potential



84% of Energy Resilience Roadmaps that I-REN provided in 2025 went to agencies that serve underserved and/or hard-to-reach communities.

2025 Energy Resilience Roadmap Development

	PRELIMINARY Energy Resilience Roadmaps	FINAL Energy Resilience Roadmaps
Presented	13*	4
Developed	13	4

*Includes two roadmaps that were developed in 2024

Energy Benchmarking

ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager® (ESPM)

I-REN helps agencies add their building portfolio to ESPM, an online management tool created by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which allows building owners and facility managers to track and assess energy use. I-REN ESPM benchmarking services include creating new portfolios or updating existing portfolios with facility characteristics, such as square footage and year built, as well as automating the uploading of monthly energy consumption from on-site utility meters. I-REN helps agencies determine whether their facilities require California Assembly Bill (AB) 802 building benchmarking compliance and guides agencies that meet the compliance requirements through the submittal process.

*I-REN benchmarked **more than 3.8 million square feet** in ESPM in 2025.*

In 2025, I-REN adopted an online tool called Measurabl, which is a reputable benchmarking platform that can serve as a reliable backup for ESPM data. Measurabl connects directly to ESPM using existing login credentials and enables full account syncing on a continuous basis. Should ESPM be discontinued, Measurabl would ensure that there is no disruption to data access, with their customer success team available to support tailored data sourcing strategies. The Measurabl backup ensures that I-REN safeguards the valuable years of energy and facility data that we have stored in ESPM.

Building Upgrade Concierge (BUC) Software

The BUC tool is a web-based solution offering advanced analytics, modeling, and measurement and verification. I-REN continued offering the tool for I-REN's public agencies, facilitating benchmarking and project development for local governments, special districts, and tribal communities. BUC leverages site-specific parameters to identify and display energy-saving opportunities in a Measures List, providing agencies with high-level recommendations.

I-REN developed 33 facility profiles on the BUC platform across 4 agency portfolios. This effort provided actionable insight into energy-saving opportunities tailored to each agency's building portfolio.

2025 Energy Benchmarking Facility Support

New ESPM Portfolio Development	10	Facilities completed
Existing ESPM Portfolio Refresh	4	Facilities completed
AB 802 Compliance Support	29	Facilities completed
BUC Agency Portfolios Created	4	Portfolios completed
BUC Facilities Created	33	Facilities completed

86% of the benchmarking support that I-REN provided in 2025 focused on facilities that are owned or operated by public agencies serving underserved or hard-to-reach communities.

Streamlined Data Collection

In 2025, I-REN established and launched a streamlined data collection process with SCE and SoCalGas per CPUC Decision 23-02-002, which clarified that RENs can access disaggregated utility data to successfully implement ratepayer-funded EE programs.

As a result, I-REN worked closely with SCE and SoCalGas to establish a streamlined and secure process for requesting monthly and interval energy consumption data on behalf of public agency participants.

Throughout 2025, I-REN utilized this process to obtain more than 220 datasets from SCE and 380 datasets from SoCalGas.

Streamlined access to this data has reduced the customer confusion and capacity constraints previously associated with the utility data collection process and improved I-REN program delivery by enabling faster, more reliable data access.

2025 Streamlined Utility Data Collection Summary

121

SCE interval
datasets

101

SCE monthly
datasets

39

SoCalGas interval
datasets

342

SoCalGas monthly
datasets

BENCHMARKING SUPPORT AND TRAINING RESOURCES

The I-REN team created a comprehensive multi-part video training series to guide users through the benchmarking process, enabling them to more effectively track and manage their energy data. The videos provide step-by-step instructions on how to navigate and utilize the ESPM and BUC tools. Each video focuses on a specific aspect of benchmarking, offering clear guidance to ensure that viewers can confidently apply what they learn.

The training series launched in 2025 to help agencies achieve greater efficiency and accuracy in their energy management efforts. The videos, which have earned **more than 167 views**, cover the following:

- **ESPM Benchmarking (six videos):** Detailed guidance on using ESPM for tracking and managing building energy use effectively.
- **BUC Tool Features (three videos):** Tutorials on navigating key functionalities, including the BUC Dashboard, Analytics Charts, Analytics Reports, and Opportunity Register.

MARKETING AND OUTREACH

I-REN's public sector marketing strategies focused on the employees of eligible public agencies in the Inland Empire, agency motivation, and overall brand awareness. Some marketing materials were directed toward our secondary target audience, elected officials in the Inland Empire (e.g., COG executive committees and boards).

Our 2025 public sector marketing objectives were as follows:

- **BUILD** awareness of I-REN public sector services within target audiences, as well as build awareness of other non-I-REN resources available to the region.
- **ENCOURAGE** agency participation in I-REN services, including by highlighting program successes.
- **DEVELOP** implementation templates and marketing resources for new and/or expanded I-REN services, including IDSMS audits.

I-REN continued to build its project pipeline and stack achievements based on the progress made in 2024 through targeted marketing campaigns and outreach events. In early 2025, I-REN hosted an in-person workshop focused on Community Resilience Centers with the California Strategic Growth Council, highlighting available no-cost resources and sharing regional and statewide opportunities for support. This workshop was the public sector program's first opportunity of the year to provide education and energy insights to participating public agencies.

Additionally, I-REN embedded public sector representation at 16 industry events through event sponsorship, poster presentations, and panel discussions. The public sector programs were represented at multiple conferences throughout the region and notably participated in a panel discussion at the Inland Empire/Desert Regional Consortium Third Annual Energy & Infrastructure Sector Showcase, featuring successful program participants furthest along in I-REN's TA and NMEC programs. Public sector staff from the San Bernardino Community College District and Colton Joint Unified School District shared case studies and highlighted both the energy and non-energy benefits of participating in I-REN.



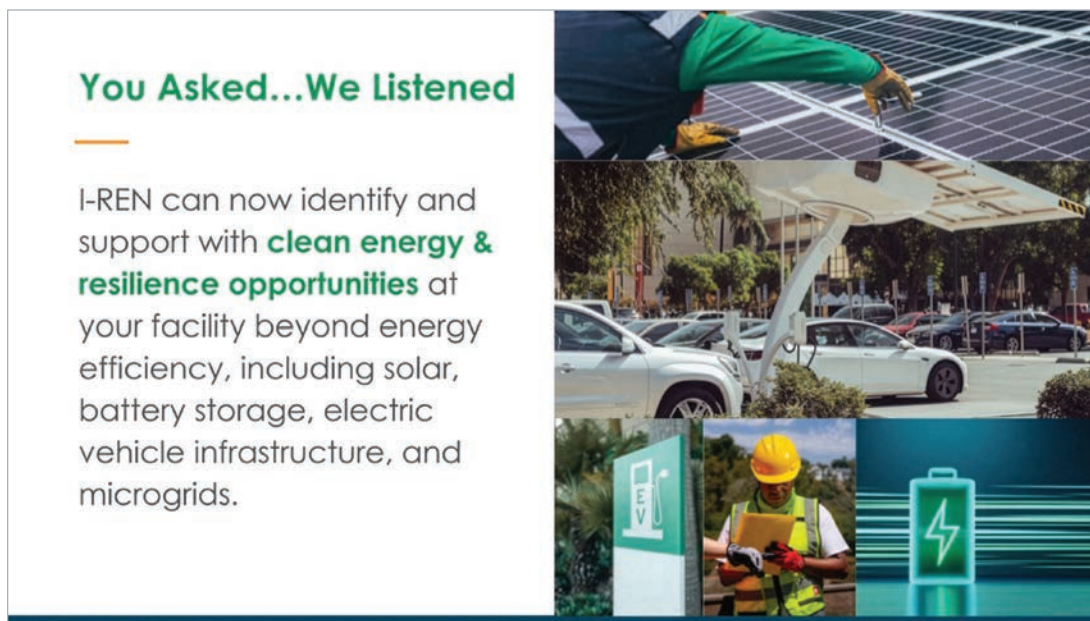
Public Sector Staff Presenting on the "Cash for Kilowatts" Panel at the Inland Empire/Desert Regional Consortium Third Annual Energy & Infrastructure Sector Showcase

I-REN hosted its first Public Sector working group in the third quarter of 2024, which provided insights into the region's needs and where future energy-related support in the Inland Empire was most needed. In 2025, I-REN leveraged the data collected from this working group on IDSM support needs and began planning its rollout of IDSM services. In December 2025, I-REN hosted an IDSM service launch webinar: Powering Resilient Communities: I-REN's New Public Sector Services. The webinar focused on how TA Program services will evolve in 2026 to support additional IDSM projects and regional resiliency efforts.

This webinar resulted in **73 registrations and 54 attendees** (74% attendance rate). The survey results and key takeaways are as follows:

- **4.875 rating out of 5** from eight survey participants.
- Survey participants found the case study and description of new program offerings most valuable.

Featured Slide from I-REN's "Powering Resilient Communities: I-REN's New Public Sector Services" Webinar



I-REN Public Sector 2025 Marketing Results

- **Social media outreach:** Published seven public sector-focused posts; public sector content was also incorporated into eight additional REN-wide and cross-sector posts.
- **Evergreen marketing materials:** Developed 14 public sector success resources, such as videos, fact sheets, and agency profile templates.
- **Email outreach:** I-REN delivered 14 targeted email campaigns to public sector contacts, with the strongest performance driven by workshop and webinar registration emails.

Celebrating I-REN Successes

Several marketing activities were completed to help share agency and network successes to inspire increased participation in I-REN services.

Event Resource: Region-Wide Impacts Featured on a Website Landing Page



STAKEHOLDER AND PORTFOLIO ADMINISTRATOR COORDINATION

As additional EE programs launched within the region, I-REN remained committed to the public sector coordination approaches outlined in the 2024-2025 Joint Cooperation Memo among I-REN, SoCalREN, SCE, SoCalGas, and the Tri-County Regional Energy Network (3C-REN) to ensure prudent and impactful use of ratepayer dollars in the delivery of customer programs. I-REN participated in multiple coordination venues to discuss potential program overlap, synergies for collaboration, and mechanisms to prevent duplication of services and double-dipping, including bi-monthly Portfolio Administrator Sector Coordination meetings and SoCalREN coordination meetings. In 2025, I-REN refined the I-REN/SoCalREN coordination protocols established in 2024 to discuss high-level project development among co-enrolled agencies across both RENs. Additionally, I-REN consistently refers engaged agencies to the SoCalGas Public Direct Install Program when opportunities arise. These coordination activities enable streamlined, cohesive service delivery across overlapping PAs with EE programs operating in the Inland Empire, while limiting customer confusion.

Based on direction from the I-REN Executive Committee to increase awareness of existing non-I-REN programs and services available in our service territory, I-REN collaborated with the CPUC, SCE, SoCalGas, SoCalREN and other PA's to develop a plan to broadcast those programs and services throughout the I-REN service territory. These available services include programs such as the Energy Savings Assistance (ESA) program and Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Sectors programs which I-REN doesn't serve in its current portfolio. This continued collaboration has allowed I-REN to strengthen its relationship with these agencies, reducing duplication of efforts, and helping fill gaps in I-REN's current portfolio.

I-REN Cross-Sector Collaboration

In 2025, extra emphasis was placed on cross-sector collaboration across the public, WE&T, and C&S programs in line with I-REN's mission to build a stronger clean energy economy and community throughout California's Inland Empire by connecting residents, businesses, and local governments to a wide range of EE resources. Implementers from all sectors meet quarterly to discuss new avenues and opportunities for collaboration. I-REN leveraged synergies among WE&T fellows, potential project opportunities, and relationship building. Many I-REN agencies throughout the territory host an I-REN Energy Fellow and actively facilitate participation in public sector programs on behalf of their host sites. Agencies with I-REN Energy Fellow placements have more capacity to engage, with noticeable dips in program uptake when Fellows are no longer at a host site with identified projects.

*At present, this cross-sector overlap between public sector project identification/development and workforce fellow host sites has resulted in public sector projects totaling almost **\$7.4 million in lifetime utility bill reductions** and more than **\$2.1 million in incentives** if completed.*

The synergies between the public sector and WE&T sectors were highlighted during the "Filling Energy Workforce & Energy Project Pipelines: Cross-Sector Collaboration in the Inland Empire" panel at the California Climate and Energy Forum which brings together several hundred local government staff, elected officials, and community organizations, to collaborate and learn from each other as they work to advance fair and equitable climate change and energy practices. The panel was well attended and featured current and former participants of I-REN's Energy Fellowship program and one site host.

Select Slides from I-REN's "Filling Energy Workforce & Energy Project Pipelines: Cross-Sector Collaboration in the Inland Empire" Panel



I-REN's public sector program delivered a successful "Building Codes and Demand Management" panel at the 2025 Inland Zero Emissions Vehicle Forum in August. The collaboration focused on expanding regional resources, code compliance, and connecting the dots between EE and demand-side management, including a spotlight on I-REN's upcoming IDSM services. Additionally, there has been a dedicated effort to ensure cross-promotion of programs across the sectors, regardless of which sector is present. A more holistic understanding of I-REN's suite of offerings proved to be beneficial at events such as the Green California Schools & Higher Education Summit in November 2025.

OPPORTUNITIES IN 2026 AND BEYOND

Agency Engagement & Support Services

In 2026, I-REN will identify new avenues to educate and engage public agencies in the region and encourage their participation in I-REN's services. Capitalizing on the significant work across the region related to project identification and development, I-REN will focus on project implementation, helping agencies realize energy and cost savings, and roll out new program services. I-REN will leverage targeted engagement materials developed in 2025 to highlight agency participation and successes. Leveraging these materials in 2026, I-REN can ensure continued and increased participation in the TA Program, strengthen agency buy-in throughout the project implementation lifecycle, and reach new decision-makers.

As I-REN engages with a growing number of agencies across the region, some confusion remains around available program offerings within the broader EE public programs landscape, including services provided by RENs and third-party programs. To better support agencies in navigating these options and to encourage appropriate program uptake, whether through I-REN or other offerings, we will continue coordinating with overlapping program administrators to minimize duplication and maximize customer benefits.

Launch of IDSM Services

Historically, I-REN has not been able to offer IDSM support; however, public agencies have consistently expressed a strong need for this assistance and interest in exploring IDSM projects. In response to a growing interest and awareness of agency needs, I-REN is launching IDSM TA services to help agencies identify and implement comprehensive energy strategies tailored to their facilities.

I-REN will help agencies identify EE and IDSM opportunities, catalog existing technology, and assess which measures are best positioned for future advanced energy initiatives, such as microgrids and virtual power plants. This also includes a customized project implementation plan and incentive application support for available regional and state EE and IDSM funding and financing pathways.

I-REN's IDSM audit services will help agencies uncover opportunities for the following:

- Renewable energy systems, such as solar photovoltaic + battery storage
- Electric vehicle charging infrastructure
- Load flexibility and demand control technologies to improve grid resilience and mitigate peak loads
- Building electrification
- Microgrids and advanced energy systems

The integration of EE and IDSM services will enable I-REN agencies to take additional steps toward bolstering community and regional energy resilience.

Refining Strategic Energy Planning Tools

Many agencies that previously received an Energy Resilience Roadmap have advanced beyond initial recommendations and are looking for refreshed planning tools and opportunities to set new benchmarks. Moving into 2026, I-REN will shift its focus to providing updated Final Energy Resilience Roadmaps for agencies that have already received an initial roadmap in the past one to two years. The updated Final Energy Resilience Roadmaps will provide a clear review of project progress since the original report, identifying completed, ongoing, and deferred efforts. They will incorporate the most recent utility data to refresh analyses and ensure that recommendations reflect current energy use, available incentives, and emerging IDSM technologies. Updates will also address new agency priorities and support ongoing engagement, helping agencies maintain momentum toward long-term energy resilience goals.

Limited flexibility within the current Energy Resilience Roadmap platform has constrained report development, delivery timelines, and user experience. To address this, I-REN will complete its migration to a new software platform to streamline report development and improve delivery. This enhancement will enable more flexible, interactive report formats that can be accessed online or exported as needed, resulting in clearer, more consistent roadmap reports, faster delivery timelines, and an improved experience for partners and stakeholders using IDSM planning information.

I-REN-PUBL-002: Public Buildings Normalized Metered Energy Consumption Program

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

I-REN's Public Buildings Normalized Metered Energy Consumption (NMEC) Program, publicly known as Cash for Kilowatts, provides technical support (such as eligibility screening and measurement and verification) and incentives for meter-based energy savings. The program uses an NMEC approach to measure energy savings at the meter, incentivizing savings that have historically been excluded from EE programs or from technologies that are considered industry standard practices. The program places a special focus on whole building improvements to community-serving buildings by offering enhanced incentives for deep energy savings at critical facilities, cooling centers, and resilience centers.

Cash for Kilowatts has the following objectives:

- **SUPPORT** comprehensive lighting and whole building projects to improve the comfort and safety of vulnerable populations. The program will focus on critical facilities and emergency or cooling centers.
- **DELIVER** deep energy savings for public agencies at high visibility locations, positioning local governments as EE leaders within their communities and helping to meet local and state EE and GHG reduction goals.
- **PROVIDE** technical expertise and training to facility personnel to maximize the persistence of energy and bill savings. The program will deliver savings reports to public agencies to monitor and communicate post-project energy usage.

Using an NMEC approach to calculate energy savings will protect agencies from a mismatch between forecasted and actual savings. Combined with technical assistance and reinforcement of operations and management best practices, Cash for Kilowatts will maximize public agencies' savings for their communities.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2025

In 2025, I-REN's Cash for Kilowatts program built on the strong project pipeline established in 2024, marking several important program milestones. Key achievements included the completion of the program's first quarterly savings report and the disbursement of the first incentive payment for the Colton Joint Unified School District's completed project. In addition, five projects successfully completed construction and entered the NMEC performance period, during which energy savings will be measured directly at the meter. The program also approved its first multi-meter project, demonstrating that facilities with more complex metering configurations can participate in a program pathway that has historically included only single-meter projects.

Cash for Kilowatts 2025 Gross Program Savings Verified***117,939**kWh savings
100% equity**12**kW savings
100% equity**0**Therms savings
100% equity**\$220,872**incentives disbursed
100% equity

*Savings are based on the final savings report metrics for projects that have completed the 12-month performance period. Equity status is determined at the project site level.

Cash for Kilowatts 2025 Construction-Complete Savings Anticipated*

Metric	Savings Anticipated	% Equity
First-year gross kWh	181,741	91%
First-year gross kW	24	96%
First-year gross Therms	0	N/A
Incentives committed	\$278,738	97%

*Savings are based on installation report approval metrics for projects that completed construction in 2025. Equity status is determined at the project site level.

Cash for Kilowatts Program Pipeline Developed*

Metric	Post-Application Approval		Pre-Application Approval	
	Potential Savings	% Equity	Potential Savings	% Equity
First-year gross kWh	590,815	90%	4,377,595	96%
First-year gross kW	103	94%	–	–
First-year gross Therms	-15	100%	13,408	100%
Potential incentives	\$547,929	95%	\$4,250,674	97%

*Savings are based on forecasted construction completion timelines. The program pipeline includes total savings projected for 2026 and beyond. Equity status is determined at the project site level.

Cash for Kilowatts Project Details*

Metric	Number of Projects	% Equity
Projects verified	1	100%
Projects construction complete	5	60%
Projects post-application approved	11	91%
Projects in pipeline: pre-application submittal	45	91%

*Equity status is determined at the project site level.

These milestones are reflected in tangible project results, including the energy efficiency projects completed by the Colton Joint Unified School District (CJUSD) and San Bernardino Community College District (SBCCD). CJUSD partnered with I-REN to complete an interior LED lighting retrofit at Joe Baca Middle School, improving efficiency across 72 classrooms. Through benchmarking support, AB 802 compliance assistance, and project coordination, I-REN helped CJUSD increase equipment efficiency and secure incentives, covering approximately 80% of total project costs. To mark the milestone, CJUSD and I-REN celebrated the project's momentum with a check presentation for the first incentive. The presentation highlighted the district's early progress toward energy savings and reinforced the partnership's role in helping secure critical funding.

72
classrooms upgraded

80%
of costs covered

First Check Presentation with the Colton Joint Unified School District



SBCCD leveraged Cash for Kilowatts incentives to implement a comprehensive interior LED lighting retrofit project, anticipated to deliver approximately 1.48 million kWh in lifetime electric savings and an estimated \$353,412 in avoided lifetime utility costs. Incentives totaling \$226,579 covered approximately 74% of total project costs, significantly reducing upfront financial barriers and demonstrating the program’s ability to improve project affordability while supporting large-scale public sector energy efficiency investments.



San Bernardino Valley College Cash for Kilowatts Case Study

San Bernardino Valley College Interior LED Lighting Retrofit



SBCCD is upgrading the interior lighting at
San Bernardino Valley College North Hall and Library

Lifetime Electric Savings 1,481,352 kWh Cars Off the Road 232 cars per year	Lifetime Electric Cost Savings \$353,412	Incentives Secured \$226,579, ~74% of gross project cost
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Cash for Kilowatts also implemented several strategic program improvements to better serve its territory and streamline project delivery. Post-installation inspections were shifted to occur immediately after construction completion and prior to the development of the full installation report, to most cost-effectively use ratepayer funds by minimizing documentation revisions. This streamlined approach was successfully applied to SBCCD's projects, which received installation report approval at the end of 2025.

Cash for Kilowatts also offered its enhanced incentive rate for any project that submitted an application to encourage program uptake and maximize the benefits to participating public agencies.

Additionally, Green Button Connect, a platform providing ongoing, real-time access to energy usage data, was successfully integrated into the BUC software. This enhancement enables projects to securely and seamlessly share data with the Cash for Kilowatts program, reducing the time required to request and receive data from utilities, thereby helping agencies receive incentives more quickly. To further strengthen program delivery, I-REN developed 12 new tools and templates to streamline and improve program processes.

OPPORTUNITIES IN 2026 AND BEYOND

Building on the momentum of 2025, Cash for Kilowatts will continue to expand its project pipeline in 2026 by extending the enhanced incentive rate, including the newly added \$2 per Therm component, to agencies that submit project applications during the year.

As additional projects complete construction and advance through the 12-month NMEC performance period, Cash for Kilowatts anticipates increased incentive payments in 2026. To ensure that projected energy savings are fully realized, the program will enhance post-installation support by increasing engagement during the performance period. Planned improvements include monthly check-ins with participating agencies, the development of targeted educational resources for building operations staff, and the use of the BUC software in conjunction with Green Button Connect to issue alerts when actual energy use deviates from the approved projections.

Finally, the Cash for Kilowatts team is researching more affordable and accessible alternatives to the California Advanced Lighting Controls Training Program and the interNational Association of Lighting Management Companies (NALMCO®) for agency contractors, thus addressing a key barrier that has limited participation and slowed project implementation.

Public Sector EM&V Studies

I-REN conducted two studies for the Public Sector. A description of the studies, methodologies used, and the results are below.

STUDY 1: BARRIERS TO PROJECT PIPELINE

This study aims to identify and analyze the barriers that prevent agencies from making progress through the project pipeline. The primary objective is to determine the specific obstacles that jurisdictions encounter during the project exploration phase. By understanding these barriers, I-REN can develop strategies to overcome and facilitate smoother project progression.

Results: This study was combined with Study 3 with the goal of obtaining more survey responses. A quantitative survey analysis was combined with qualitative interview findings to complete this study. In the survey, jurisdictions were asked how important I-REN's Public Sector programming is to their organization. Strategic energy planning support was rated as most important, with financing and affordability support and one-on-one project support being ranked the next most important factors. The survey also asked which barriers to engagement with I-REN Public Sector Programs exist, and lack of funding was ranked as the most significant barrier. Identifying these challenges for I-REN's jurisdictions gives I-REN's Public Sector the opportunity to address these barriers with strategic energy planning and connections to energy efficiency funding opportunities.

STUDY 2: JURISDICTIONS MEETING EQUITY CRITERIA

This study aims to assess which jurisdictions have engaged with I-REN's Public Sector programs and meet the equity criteria defined by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) in D.23-06-055. The primary objective is to evaluate the number of equity jurisdictions participating in the public sector, ensuring that these programs are reaching and benefiting communities that meet the CPUC-defined equity standards.

Results: This study looked at various equity factors including HTR criteria, Equity-eligible incomes, Disadvantaged Communities, Free or Reduced-Price Meals, and Tribal Communities. The results of this study demonstrate that jurisdictions meeting equity-criteria are prevalent in I-REN's territory, however these equity jurisdictions disproportionately show limited or no engagement with I-REN's resources. This demonstrates an opportunity for I-REN to strengthen its outreach to equity jurisdictions.

This finding reinforced what I-REN Executive Committee stakeholders have communicated as an urgent need for greater awareness of EE benefits and opportunities throughout the inland empire, and in particular these equity communities.



Codes & Standards

I-REN's service territory includes a wide range of Authorities Having Jurisdiction (AHJs), many of which continue to face structural challenges in enforcing the Energy Code due to limited staffing, dispersed geographies, varying permitting processes, and unique regional climate and environmental burdens.

Many of I-REN's jurisdictions are smaller and often lack dedicated building department personnel, rely on third-party plan-checking providers, or have minimal permitting infrastructure, all of which make consistent code compliance difficult. These barriers are further compounded by persistent air quality issues, high heat conditions, and historically under resourced communities across the Inland Empire. As a result, I-REN continues to play a critical regional role in strengthening local capacity for effective code compliance, improving awareness of Energy Code requirements, and supporting AHJs in becoming aware of energy-saving measures.

To address these needs, I-REN's C&S initiatives provide locally tailored training, education, and technical assistance that directly respond to the needs and realities of jurisdictions within I-REN's region. Trainings and educational resources are informed by in-person outreach, jurisdiction engagement, and building department assessments completed throughout the year, thus ensuring that training content aligns with the topics that are most important to jurisdictions. I-REN also expanded accessibility to its trainings by offering live Spanish simulcasts. I-REN's technical assistance program increased its use of the "Ask an Energy Code Question" service and developed jurisdiction-specific tools. To maintain statewide alignment and consistency in compliance-improvement strategies, I-REN collaborates with the statewide C&S team and meets quarterly with the California Climate and Energy Collaborative. These coordinated efforts advance reliable Energy Code implementation while supporting the region's long-term capacity for equitable code compliance.

I-REN-CS-001: C&S Training and Education Program

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Inland Regional Energy Network's (I-REN) Codes & Standards (C&S) Training and Education Program supports the needs of the local building industry through ongoing, accessible training events; access to no-cost educational resources; continuing education credits; certification opportunities; and in-language technical trainings. Resources increase and support understanding of Title 24, Parts 6 and 11 (the Building Energy Efficiency Standards in the California Code of Regulations and the California Green Building Standards Code [CALGreen], respectively). Locally focused interventions equip jurisdiction staff and private-sector professionals to improve compliance, streamline the permitting process, and cultivate the associated energy savings from code compliance.

Outreach for this program leverages I-REN governing agencies, regional local government networks, and industry associations, thus ensuring that trainings reach both public and private

sector professionals. I-REN collaborates with statewide industry leaders, codes experts, and local governments to design and deliver effective messaging, particularly during code update cycles and transitions. This includes partnerships with organizations such as the American Institute of Architects (AIA) In 2025, I-REN also continued expanding training accessibility through Spanish language support and engagement with regional industry partners.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2025

Training Overview

I-REN’s C&S Training and Education Program continued its upward trajectory of engagement in 2025, delivering 13 trainings and maintaining strong registration levels across the region. The program saw steady participation, reflecting its impactful reach.

In 2025, we saw some significant bright spots:

- I-REN became the first REN to offer live Spanish simulcasting of trainings.
- The program’s AIA partnership elevated professional credibility, and we became an AIA continuing education unit (CEU) provider.

The challenges were equally important. San Bernardino County engagement fell sharply. After several months of data collection, the team discovered this was due to differences in fellowship cycles. Initially, the fellowship cohort was actively engaged with I-REN’s C&S trainings, with high participation from fellows in San Bernardino county. Once this cohort ended, the next cohort did not attend as many C&S trainings as the previous cohort. It is also noteworthy that the fellowship program also had new supervisors, thus changing the point of contact that the C&S team would conduct outreach to for the trainings. This challenge highlights the need to establish lasting jurisdiction contacts and relationships beyond just the CivicSpark cohort. The team also discovered through in-person visits that many small jurisdictions lack physical building departments and outsource permitting, which structurally limits our traditional outreach model. Solutions to remedy this matter will be explored in 2026.



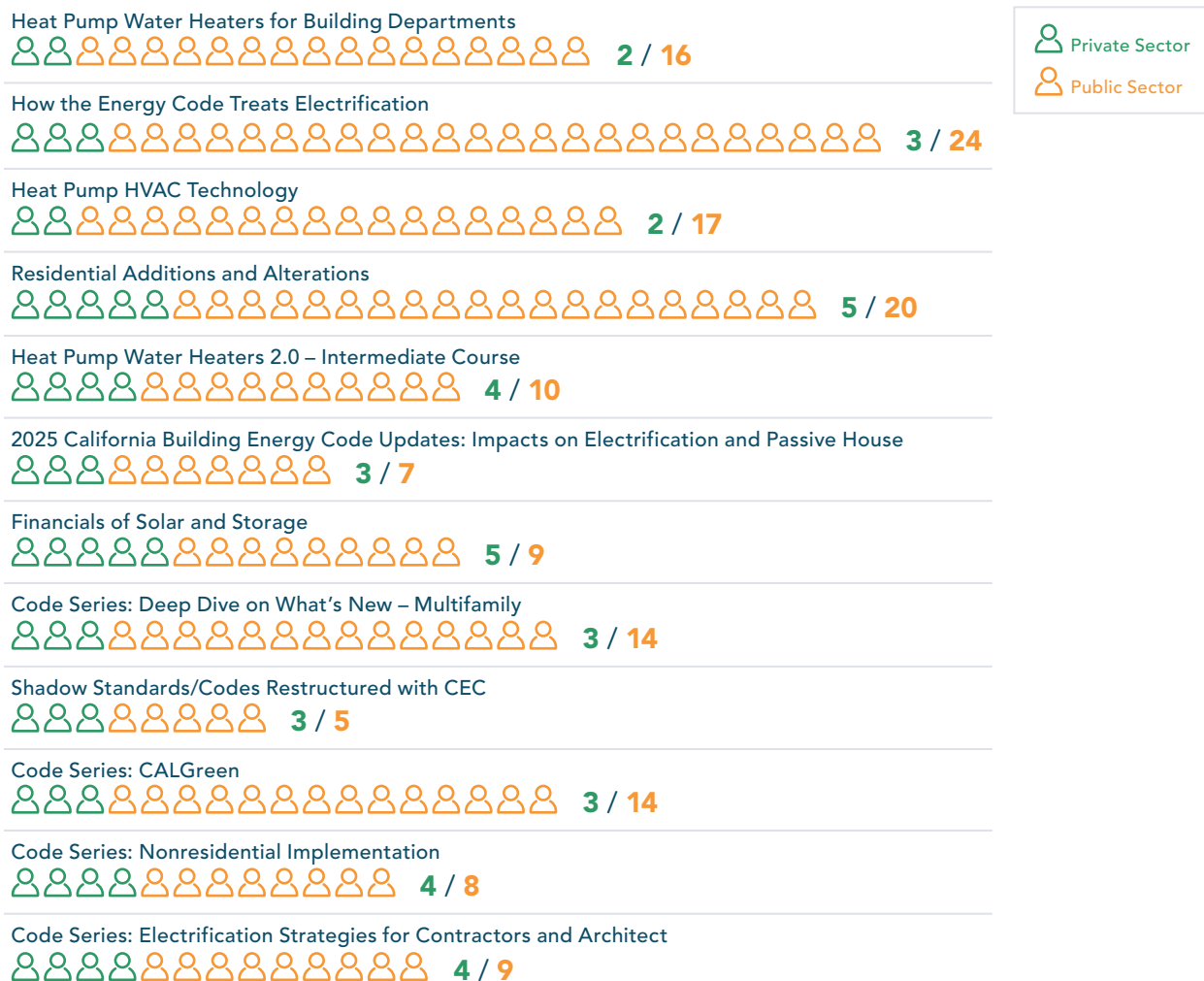
Training Course	2025 Dates
Heat Pump Water Heaters for Building Departments	Tuesday, January 14
How the Energy Code Treats Electrification	Thursday, February 13
Heat Pump HVAC Technology: Commercial and Residential Applications	Wednesday, March 5
Residential Additions and Alterations	Thursday, March 6
Heat Pump Water Heaters 2.0 – Intermediate Course: Design, Installation, and Review	Thursday, April 24
Forum: The State of Compliance Ahead of 2025 Energy Code Updates	Wednesday, May 28
2025 California Building Energy Code Updates: Impacts on Electrification and Passive House	Thursday, June 5
Financials of Solar and Storage	Thursday, July 24
2025 Code Series: Deep Dive on What’s New – Multifamily	Thursday, August 28
2025 Shadow Standards/Codes Restructured with California Energy Commission	Thursday, September 25
2025 Code Series: CALGreen	Thursday, October 23
2025 Code Series: Nonresidential Implementation	Thursday, November 13
2025 Code Series: Electrification Strategies for Contractors and Architects	Tuesday, December 9

In 2025, the program held 13 trainings, with 366 total registrants—a 0.27% increase from 2024—but 207 attendees, which reflects a 3.7% decrease from 2024. This was a result of the San Bernardino County drop-off. The attendance-to-registration ratio was 57%, showing good intent to participate but room to improve conversion. Notably, 43% attended more than one training, suggesting strong satisfaction and repeated value for ongoing participants.

Equity participation remained meaningful: 40% of the attendees were equity participants, even without a dedicated equity-focused code workshop in 2025. Knowledge gain remained exceptionally high, with 94.7% reporting increased understanding of the Energy Code.

In 2025, Riverside County’s public sector attendance increased significantly to 107 unique attendees, while San Bernardino County’s public sector attendance fell to 15, down from 61. Private sector numbers remained relatively stable in both counties despite targeted cross-promotion with incentive programs—around 10 in San Bernardino and 30 in Riverside. Expanding connections with contractor and building professional associations will be part of I-REN’s targeting strategy in 2026 to expand this audience.

I-REN C&S Training Participants by Sector



In 2025, I-REN continued to administer post-training surveys following all C&S offerings to support CPUC metrics reporting and inform continuous improvement in program offerings. In 2025, I-REN collected 133 completed surveys, with 94.7% of respondents reporting increased knowledge of the Energy Code. Survey feedback reflected high levels of satisfaction with instructor expertise, the relevance and clarity of the training materials, and the overall quality of instruction.

Many participants continued to attend multiple sessions throughout the year, with 43% taking more than one training. This demonstrates sustained interest in I-REN's offerings and trust in the program's value. Positive feedback received from I-REN's trainings was captured in the post-training surveys, with one participant saying, "Thank you for the well organized and detail[ed] presentation!" and another saying, "Great class, thank you for keeping us on the up and up."

“Great class, thank you for keeping us on the up and up.”

Forums

In 2024, I-REN hosted its first two virtual forums, featuring diverse panels of speakers and reaching many of I-REN's jurisdictions. In 2025, I-REN expanded on its forum offerings and hosted another two virtual forums. Sixty-nine people attended I-REN's two 2025 forums, which was a 57% increase from 2024. For both forums, 100% of the respondents indicated increased knowledge of the Energy Code.



I-REN's first forum in 2025 was "The State of Compliance Ahead of the 2025 Energy Code." I-REN had 53 participants for this forum, which focused on existing needs, studies, and the status of code compliance. A diverse set of speakers, representing both government and the private sector, discussed the 2025 Energy Code updates, permitting and compliance rate studies, and resources to help improve compliance.

I-REN's second forum in 2025 was "Resiliency in a Changing Energy Landscape." I-REN had 26 attendees for this forum, which had four speakers, representing both government and the private sector, and discussed current and upcoming changes to the building energy space in California. This included existing methods that can be implemented to increase building efficiency, occupant comfort, and safety during stresses such as extreme heat. I-REN showcased its resources to support these efforts for its jurisdictions.

Across the two forums, I-REN had 17 unique jurisdictions with staff participating in the forums. In 2026, I-REN aims to increase participation to 32 unique jurisdictions. For 2026, I-REN's C&S program will increase the number of forums it hosts to four for the year, one quarterly. I-REN's preliminary forum topics will include: Air Quality and Building Design, Solar and Storage Opportunities, the Energy and Water Nexus, and Energy Code Applications for the Inland Empire's Climate Zones.

Launch of Multilingual Offerings

I-REN recognizes the demographic and linguistic composition of its territory, allowing it to expand its multilingual strategy in 2025. The 2020 Census identified Hispanic Californians as the largest ethnic group, making up 39.4% of the state's population. In the Inland Empire alone, the Hispanic population comprises a majority of the region at 51.5%, amounting to around 2.37 million people (University of California Riverside).³ Available code and technical training offerings are mostly conducted in English,

³ Source: [aqui-estamos-r4-digital-distribution.pdf](#)

but may not be accessible to contractors who primarily speak Spanish. Statewide, these contractors are crucial in meeting California's energy efficiency goals, especially its goal of installing 6 million heat pumps by 2030.

Building on its efforts in 2024, I-REN offered live simulcast trainings in Spanish for its Energy Code trainings throughout the year, becoming the first REN to provide no-cost CEU-eligible trainings in Spanish. Program partners emphasized the long-term importance of this offering for reaching workers often excluded from statewide technical training. Cross-promotion with the Institute of Heating and Air Conditioning Industries, TECH Clean California, and the Quality Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) program helped generate strong early traction for Spanish-language offerings.

In 2026, I-REN plans to continue promoting multilingual training options and will begin tracking on-demand Spanish content to further expand accessibility.

Improved Equity Data Collection Practices

In 2025, 40% of I-REN's total training attendees were equity participants, showing a 17% increase from 2024 in reported equity participants. I-REN's improved data collection framework ensures that I-REN can more accurately assess trends over time and continue expanding access for priority communities in 2026.

To meet CPUC equity reporting requirements and better understand who the program is serving, I-REN continued strengthening its equity data collection methods in 2025. I-REN evaluates participants for the following:

- Disadvantaged Worker, defined in D.18-10-008
- Disadvantaged Community, defined by Senate Bill (SB) 350, discussed in D.18-05-041, and measured using the California Environmental Protection Agency's CalEnviroScreen analytical tool
- Hard-to-reach, as defined by CPUC and most recently modified in D.23-06-055
- Underserved Community, defined by CPUC in D.23-06-055

These categories, each supported by CPUC definitions and statewide equity frameworks, enable I-REN to track its progress in engaging priority populations. However, tracking equity data often necessitates requesting sensitive information such as home address, phone number, household size, household income, and language most frequently spoken at home. For programs such as I-REN C&S Training & Education that gather equity information from individual members of the public completing training and forum event registration forms, this has posed a barrier to participation. Previously, the C&S Training and Education Program received multiple complaints or opt-outs due to the length of registration forms and the invasiveness of the information requested to verify equity participation.

To address this barrier, I-REN's C&S program team undertook an effort to streamline the registration form and provide context for equity-related questions. Previously, in July 2024, I-REN updated its form to include simplified fields, plus an "Equity Tracking Disclaimer and Acknowledgment" that informs

registrants about why they are being asked the questions and assures them that their data will not be shared other than as required for reporting by CPUC. Doing so has reduced complaints, increased registration counts, and enabled I-REN to definitively measure equity participation.

OPPORTUNITIES IN 2026 AND BEYOND

The variety, accessibility, and reach of offerings will continue expansion to serve the needs of jurisdictions, building professionals, and contractors. This includes more introductory-level training topics that proved to be in demand, and opportunities to bring regionally pertinent topics to light more frequently. An on-demand platform will host all trainings in both English and Spanish and will continue offering no-cost CEUs and AIA credits.

I-REN also recognizes the importance of certifications for building professionals within its region. Opportunities to support certification will include Energy Code Compliance (ECC) Rater, California Energy Analyst, Certified Building Official, Plan Examiners, and related International Codes Council certifications.

To deepen engagement with its jurisdictions, I-REN will increase and improve outreach to its jurisdictions. I-REN will conduct up to three additional in-person jurisdiction visits to establish contacts, understand permitting processes, and promote offerings. I-REN will also research and develop a central reference list of third-party permitting and plan checking services used by jurisdictions that can be engaged in code compliance offerings in order to increase compliance. Additionally, I-REN will continue to increase its private sector engagement and support cross-cutting efforts with its WE&T Program by developing cross-promotional relationships with regional contractor associations and connecting regional ECC Raters with resources.

I-REN-CS-002: C&S Technical Support Program

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Inland Regional Energy Network's (I-REN) Codes & Standards (C&S) Technical Support Program provides technical assistance tools and resources that assist building departments and the building industry with understanding, evaluating, and permitting the energy codes. The program aims to identify and address the areas of greatest need for improved permitting processes, code compliance, and the success of energy efficiency projects.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2025

A comprehensive suite of strategies, services, and tools designed to increase energy code compliance across the region will be delivered with a particular focus on underserved, hard-to-reach, disadvantaged, and environmental and social justice communities. Program delivery will combine research, jurisdictional engagement, tailored technical assistance, and coordinated training to help local governments and the building industry understand, permit, and enforce the Energy Code more effectively.

Notable aspects include the following:

- Engagement grew significantly with 10 questions resolved, up from 3 in 2024.
- We improved visibility through updates to the Energy Code Support page, distributing new collateral during visits to 14 jurisdictions, and conducting direct calls and emails to all of I-REN's jurisdictions in the second and third quarters.
- Palm Springs' Reach Code (explained below) continues to progress with the support of David Freedman, I-REN's local reach code expert, demonstrating how jurisdictional support often spans multiple years.

Energy Code Support

The increase in interest for the Energy Code Support service was supported by updating the Energy Code Support page at [iren.gov](https://www.iren.gov) with the "Ask an Energy Code Question" resource as well as permit guides.

Additionally, I-REN increased in-person outreach efforts in order to make jurisdictions aware of the technical support offered by I-REN. I-REN developed collateral to promote its technical support offerings and delivered the collateral in-person to 14 jurisdictions. This in-person outreach to jurisdictions helped I-REN determine building department status, processes, and support needs. I-REN also promoted the offering through partner channels such as AIA and California Energy Alliance.

Reach Codes

Reach codes serve as methods that enable jurisdictions to implement policy that goes above and beyond statewide standards for energy efficiency and building electrification. In 2025, I-REN continued to support the City of Palm Springs with its Reach Codes for two in-progress ordinances:

- Supporting the early adoption of 2025 code-controlled environment horticulture lighting efficiency measures.
- Supporting the enhancement of existing home EE requirements, based on an updated 2023 cost-effectiveness study for home EE.

The City of Palm Springs Reach Code ordinance was approved by the Sustainability Commission and is currently awaiting approval by the Indian Planning Commission and Tribal Council. I-REN remains active in these Reach Code developments to support the City of Palm Springs.

OPPORTUNITIES IN 2026 AND BEYOND

In 2026, I-REN's C&S Technical Assistance Program will continue to expand and strengthen its offerings for its jurisdictions. A major shift is the addition of a central reference list of third-party plan check and permitting firms, which is a direct response to the finding that many jurisdictions outsource these services. The team will also conduct more jurisdiction visits and expand private sector engagement through new partnerships with contractor and rater associations.

In 2026, I-REN will explore the development of an integrated platform to host program management dashboards, training and forum registration information, outreach and engagement data, audience lists, and reporting metrics. This platform would centralize C&S activities and improve both internal coordination and external reporting. This system will streamline reporting for CPUC requirements, enhance visibility into participation trends, and support more data-driven decision making across the C&S program.

To deepen its understanding of regional permitting practices, I-REN plans to conduct an exploratory permitting study to assess how jurisdictions manage plan review, the types of permitting software in use, the availability of permitting data, and common barriers to Energy Code compliance. With many of I-REN's jurisdictions lacking traditional building department structures or relying on third-party plan checkers, this study will provide foundational insights to inform future training, technical assistance, and resource development.

Building on the increased use of the "Ask an Energy Code Question" service and jurisdiction feedback collected through in-person visits in 2025, I-REN will begin designing enhanced technical assistance offerings. These may include direct, long term support for local agencies requiring deeper expertise in Energy Code modeling, software navigation, and advanced compliance topics. Additionally, I-REN will continue cross-promoting the statewide ECC Rater Program (formerly Home Energy Rating System) to ensure that regional building professionals have access to recognized certification pathways.

As more jurisdictions pursue advanced energy projects, such as the City of Eastvale's microgrid initiative, I-REN will provide support by developing tailored resources, targeted trainings, or a dedicated workshop focused on Energy Code implications for microgrid infrastructure. These insights will also help inform broader regional guidance on distributed energy resources and code compliance for emerging technologies.

Codes & Standards EM&V Studies

I-REN conducted two studies for the Codes & Standards Sector. A description of the studies, methodologies used, and the results are below.

STUDY 3: LOW ENGAGEMENT JURISDICTIONS

This study aims to identify the characteristics of jurisdictions that have little to no participation in I-REN's program offerings. By understanding these characteristics, the study seeks to uncover the underlying reasons for low engagement and develop strategies to address them. The primary objective is to increase both the number and diversity of jurisdictions participating in I-REN's C&S services, thereby ensuring a more inclusive and widespread adoption of these programs.

Results: This study was combined with Study 1 with the goal of obtaining more survey responses. A quantitative survey analysis was combined with qualitative interview findings to complete this study. In the survey, jurisdictions were asked which barrier was the most significant to participating in I-REN's energy code trainings. Limited staff time was ranked as the most significant barrier. I-REN's C&S program has the opportunity to provide on-demand trainings to its jurisdictions to help address this barrier.

STUDY 4: TRAINING FORMATS

This study aims to review the current training formats and survey I-REN's jurisdictions to identify their preferred training methods. The primary objective is to understand the training preferences of participants and offer a variety of formats that cater to their needs.

Results: This study surveyed training participants to determine which training mode is the most preferred. I-REN's current format of online live trainings was ranked as the most preferred training format and this format is planned to continue in 2026 and beyond.





Workforce Education & Training

Through its WE&T cross-cutting sector programs, I-REN will serve as a vital link between workforce skills and training providers such as community colleges and employers to build a more robust market and increase the number of skilled EE contractors in the Inland Empire.

These activities will promote job market recovery and progress toward statewide goals regarding EE, air quality, and support for hard-to-reach, underserved, rural, tribal, and disadvantaged communities. Both SB 350 and SB 535 prioritize these communities for initiatives to improve air quality, increase EE, and address economic conditions. SB 350 emphasizes workforce development and increased project penetration in underserved communities. I-REN has an opportunity to support these goals through its WE&T initiatives.

I-REN-WET-001: WE&T Training and Education Program

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

In its Training and Education Program, I-REN will assess the current training marketplace in the Inland Empire and work with local providers, including higher education providers, high schools, adult schools, and professional training companies to tailor content to be relevant to the region's needs and ensure that disadvantaged communities are a focus. I-REN will collaborate with training providers to improve access to a broad spectrum of training opportunities in person, online, and in the field.

The Training and Education Program creates a robust local network of training programs that increase capacity and knowledge related to EE in the building industry. I-REN focuses mostly on entry-level offerings in Riverside and San Bernardino counties. I-REN and these offerings raise the value of EE training and career paths within high schools, community colleges, and universities; encouraging more people to enter an industry involving or related to EE.

I-REN WE&T Training & Education Program Overview



COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Help diverse job seekers find employment opportunities.



NO-COST TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Energy efficiency topics and trends.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Create job pathways to local companies.



BENEFIT

Improve access to training opportunities in person, online, and in the field.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2025

Through collaborations with the Riverside and San Bernardino County Workforce Development Departments in December 2024, I-REN released an Energy Workforce Gaps Assessment, which analyzed energy workforce gaps, employer needs, and existing training opportunities in Riverside and San Bernardino counties. Findings from the assessment highlight significant energy job growth (25% by the year 2030), high retirement rates and transfer rates (75%), and skill gaps among job seekers, emphasizing the need for training in clean energy technologies and equitable access to programs.

The assessment recommended:

- **CONNECT** job seekers to training
- **ENHANCE** support services
- **STRENGTHEN** the education-to-career pipeline
- **FOSTER** collaboration between employers and training providers to meet the region's growing energy workforce demands

In 2025, the results of this assessment were presented to the I-REN Workforce Roundtable and the I-REN Executive Committee. The recommendations were affirmed and prioritized to foster collaboration between employers and providers, strengthen the education-to-career pipeline, connect job seekers to training, and enhance support services.

Using these recommendations, I-REN collaborated with both the Riverside and San Bernardino County Workforce Development Departments to enhance existing energy career pathways within the region. These partnerships are expected to provide 180 individuals with access to energy-related training opportunities within a two-year period. Participants receive no-cost or low-cost trainings, support services, and employer engagement opportunities throughout their participation, with a goal of reducing the skills gap within the region.

Quarterly Workforce Roundtables

In 2025, I-REN hosted a total of 10 working group roundtables at each of the unique subregions of the I-REN territory (Eastern Riverside County: Coachella Valley, Western Riverside County, and San Bernardino). Nine were held in-person at their respective subregions and one was held virtually to allow all subregions to participate at one time.

Roundtable participation included 56 participants from 45 organizations. Organizations included cities, chambers of commerce, both I-REN counties' workforce departments, both counties' economic development departments, SCE, SoCalGas, local educational institutions (both public and private), and various local workforce and training organizations. Each of the roundtables provided an opportunity for I-REN and its partners to share their work within the region and enable collaboration among organizations. I-REN hosted both County Workforce Development Departments to share their work, as well as Inland Economic Growth & Opportunity and the Inland Empire/Desert Regional Consortium. All of these presentations provided valuable insight into potential collaboration and aided in the prevention of duplication of efforts across agencies within the Inland Empire.

I-REN Energy Science Fair Awards

In 2025, I-REN supported the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools by sponsoring the I-REN Energy Science Fair awards at the San Bernardino, Inyo, and Mono Counties Science and Engineering Fair, which is an annual science project competition for students who attend the schools in each county. I-REN evaluated projects in the energy category at the elementary, junior, and high school divisions. Evaluations included five projects in the elementary division, three projects in the junior division, and four projects in the senior division in the energy, sustainable materials, and design category.

The following project teams received I-REN Energy Science Fair awards and joined I-REN at the April 2025 I-REN Executive Committee meeting, where the students received recognition for their hard work and dedication on their projects in the field of energy

- **Junior Division:** Watt a Waste: Using Microbial Fuel Cells to Produce Electricity
- **Senior Division:** Effect of Dust on Solar Panel Efficiency

I-REN WE&T Partnership Opportunities



EXPLORE resources and potential partnerships for K–12, Community Colleges, and Universities for energy career pathways.



CREATE and provide job training, certifications, and innovations related to the energy field with industry stakeholders.



HOST an energy efficiency job fair.



DEVELOP a virtual training learning center for energy efficiency.

Inland Empire Desert Regional Consortium (IEDRC)/I-REN 2025 Energy and Infrastructure Sector Showcase

In partnership and collaboration with IEDRC, I-REN hosted an event with more than 180 attendees, which was a one-stop shop within the energy workforce system that brought together Inland Empire community colleges, local agency staff, and workforce organizations that focused on issues, barriers, and resources to help connect, identify, and have conversations to further develop the local workforce training initiatives.

Science and Technology Education Partnership (STEP)

STEP was developed 25 years ago to “inspire students to pursue careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)” across the Inland Empire. On March 7, 2024, I-REN received the exemplary STEP participation award from the STEP organization. In 2025, I-REN continued supporting STEP programs as they seek to expand their offerings within energy and to schools and areas considered to be more hard-to-reach or underserved. Each year, STEP hosts three annual STEPCon events — one each for students, educators, and counselors. In 2025, STEPcon reached and provided resources and services to 5,100 students (1,600+ in person, and 3,500 virtual), 200 educators, and 100 counselors.

5,100

students reached

200

educators engaged

100

counselors engaged

Local Government Sustainable Energy Coalition (LGSEC)

LGSEC is a statewide membership network representing local government interests related to EE, clean energy, and climate resilience to state regulatory agencies. Together, LGSEC members advance sustainable energy and climate solutions to meet California's decarbonization goals through knowledge exchange, targeted learning opportunities, and statewide collaboration. I-REN offers its member agencies a sponsored one-year membership in LGSEC. As of February 2025, I-REN has enrolled 12 agencies as members in LGSEC and encourages their participation in the energy policy landscape. Participants include the cities of Canyon Lake, Colton, Corona, Jurupa Valley, Lake Elsinore, Palm Springs, Rancho Cucamonga, San Jacinto, Temecula, and Twentynine Palms; the County of Riverside, and the Town of Apple Valley.

CPUC Supplier Diversity Workshop

In April 2025, I-REN held a workshop that brought speakers from CPUC and utilities to share supplier diversity information to many of the local chambers of commerce and diverse businesses in the I-REN region. A total of 179 attendees from 131 local businesses, community-based organizations, and local organizations received information and guidance on how to participate in the CPUC Supplier Diversity Clearinghouse program and gain access to the resources that are available to them within the region. The event has become an annual part of I-REN's event schedule, with a second event planned in Spring 2026. Thirty-seven attendees participated in a survey. All reported that the event was very good or excellent and they wanted more information about CPUC Supplier Diversity Clearinghouse opportunities. Seventeen of the surveyed participated were certified by the CPUC Supplier Diversity Clearinghouse and they appreciated the additional networking opportunities, the remaining 20 survey participants expressed interest in the information presented and in learning more about certification.

CPUC Supplier Diversity Workshop



OPPORTUNITIES IN 2026 AND BEYOND

Workforce Market Assessment (Implementation)

Based on the I-REN Workforce Roundtable and the I-REN Executive Committee's prioritization of the recommendations identified in the I-REN Energy Workforce Gaps Assessment, staff will work to implement program development or enhancements that support education and training in energy pathways in the I-REN territory.

Energy Savings Assistance (ESA) Pipeline Program & Collaboration

I-REN identified seven contractors within the Inland Empire that partner with the SCE and SoCalGas ESA Program to provide income-qualified homeowners and renters with no-cost energy-efficient home improvements. In collaboration with the County Workforce Development Departments and community colleges, I-REN is planning to engage in additional training and support services for these seven contractors through the coming years. These additional training opportunities are intended to assist in filling an identified gap in hiring and retaining qualified job seekers for specific energy roles. As participants in the energy career pathways complete their trainings, they may have opportunities to be employed through these ESA contractors and close the loop for their training pathway. I-REN believes that a pipeline program and collaboration such as this one can be scaled and offered to other energy service industries, in the future.

I-REN-WET-002: WE&T Workforce Development Program

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

I-REN will convene and collaborate with state, regional, and local stakeholders, including workforce investment boards (WIBs) and economic development departments to develop a unified mission around the region's EE workforce, highlighting pathways for job seekers to enter the green jobs market and increase access for disadvantaged communities. I-REN will facilitate identifying opportunities for employers and local workforce partners to network and connect.

With its governing agencies' existing networks of contractors and training providers, I-REN is well positioned to help bridge the gap between the energy industry and the workforce. I-REN is building partnerships with local community colleges, local universities, and local WIBs to establish a comprehensive network of WE&T offerings. I-REN also brings close connections with local government planning and building departments across the region. I-REN's WE&T initiatives offer important opportunities for collaboration across other sectors through its work in the public sector and C&S — both of which are important drivers of EE and advanced energy activity and employment in the region.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2025

I-REN Energy Fellowship

In 2025, the I-REN WE&T Program deployed a total of 32 I-REN Energy Fellows with public sector agencies. Historically, public sector agencies in the I-REN region have lacked the capacity to track, monitor, implement and comply with various energy and environmental statewide goals and requirements. The I-REN Energy Fellows address this barrier by supporting and filling organizational capacity needs related to EE project identification, energy building identification and benchmarking, climate/energy action planning, outreach of workforce, education and training into the communities, and other sustainability initiatives. Of the 14 fellows who participated in the 2024–2025 cycle, seven were able to use the experience and knowledge they received through the fellowship to obtain full-time work within either their site host, another local public agency, or through the connections they made during their time as an I-REN Energy Fellow.

32	40	\$717,430	2,844,110
I-REN Energy Fellows deployed	projects from 22 agencies	estimated annual energy bill savings	kWh/year overall energy savings

As of February 2026, there are 40 projects in I-REN's public sector Cash for Kilowatts incentive program queue from 22 agencies where an I-REN Energy Fellow has direct involvement in the project and process for completion. Five agencies that had utilized a fellow in a previous cycle requested another fellow and are moving forward with energy efficiency projects that their current I-REN Energy Fellow is actively coordinating. These 40 projects total an estimated annual energy bill savings of \$717,430, and an overall energy savings of 2,844,110 kWh/year, and 8,028 Therms/year. The most impressive result of having fellows working within the agencies is the incentive dollars that they have been able to secure for their respective site hosts.

Currently \$2,163,113 in savings has been allocated to agencies for energy efficiency projects utilizing a Fellow.

That figure is expected to rise as 10 of the projects are still in the initial project identification phase and incentive dollars have not yet been fully factored in. Currently, nearly 52% of all the incentive dollars within the public sector pipeline are allocated to projects utilizing an I-REN Energy Fellow. In line with that figure, 63% of the annual energy savings within the total public sector pipeline is tied to projects utilizing an I-REN Energy Fellow.

The I-REN Energy Fellowship Program is not only providing valuable support for agencies within the region, but is also providing an avenue to increase energy savings and participation in I-REN's public sector project pipeline. The host sites are receiving no-cost project management as well as potential energy savings through their involvement in the public sector arm of I-REN. As a whole, the I-REN Energy Fellowship Program was designed to place highly engaged individuals into public

sector positions to gain experience and an opportunity to practice energy-related work; however, the end result has affected both the site agencies and the energy efficiency landscape in a much more significant manner. The collaboration among sectors allows the WE&T Program to directly support the realization of energy savings. This underscores the opportunity and need for more fellows to be placed within the region, which is part of I-REN's Workforce Development plans for 2026.

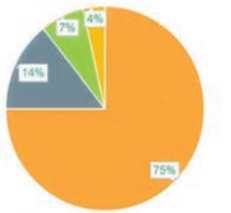
I-REN WE&T Energy Fellowship Overview




- Partnership with CivicSpark an AmeriCorps Program
- Minimum Associates Degree
- Fellowship Project Examples:
 - Facility Audits
 - Billing Rate Analysis
 - Community Outreach
 - Energy Efficiency Facility Identification






THROUGHOUT THE YEARS	SAMPLE PROJECTS	Fellow Projects										
• 1st Cycle – 2023/2024 • 11 Fellows @ 11 host sites • 2nd Cycle – 2024/2025 • 13 fellows @ 12 host sites • 3rd Cycle – 2025/2026 • 24 fellows @ 16 host sites • 8 (8-month fellows) - 10 host sites	- Energy benchmarking, Facility audits - Identify and analyze Energy Efficiency projects - Climate Action Plans or Energy Action Plans - Capital Improvement Plans or Facility Equipment Replacement Plans	 <table border="1"> <caption>Fellow Projects Distribution</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Energy Efficiency</td> <td>75%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Electric Vehicle</td> <td>14%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Water / Energy Nexus</td> <td>7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Renewables</td> <td>4%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Percentage	Energy Efficiency	75%	Electric Vehicle	14%	Water / Energy Nexus	7%	Renewables	4%
Category	Percentage											
Energy Efficiency	75%											
Electric Vehicle	14%											
Water / Energy Nexus	7%											
Renewables	4%											

Job/Career Fairs and Events

I-REN attended approximately 41 events in 2025. Through these job/career fairs and community events, the I-REN team collected more than 270 interested job-seeker forms from individuals interested in the I-REN Energy Fellowship, or hearing about I-REN workforce resources. Some of these job fairs were conducted in partnership with Energy is Everything. I-REN has a system to collect interested job-seeker forms from prospective candidates. The information is compiled into a listserv. I-REN notifies the candidates who are registered in the listserv when the I-REN Energy Fellowship application is open, which may result in an Energy Fellow placement with a member agency.

Experiential Learning for I-REN Energy Fellows

During the first year of the I-REN Energy Fellowship (2023 –2024), the I-REN team provided the fellows with an opportunity to participate in a tour of a local software company, Esri, focusing on energy planning and infrastructure. After surveying the first year I-REN Energy Fellows, I-REN received positive feedback on this tour and determined that pursuing similar opportunities would support the fellows with experiential learning that develops their expertise in the industry and illuminates high road career paths in alignment with ESJ Action Plan Goal 7. As such, the second cycle of Fellows for 2024-2025 Fellowship program year received the opportunity to participate in the following events and tours:

- December 2024: Regional Energy and Climate Hub (REACH) Inland Empire
- January 2025: I-REN Community Resilience Center Workshop
- February 2025: I-REN Energy Fellow Esri Tour
- March 2025: Inland Empire/Desert Regional Consortium and I-REN Energy & Infrastructure Sector Showcase
- March 2025: I-REN Energy Fellow California Air Resources Board Tour
- April 2025: I-REN Energy Fellow CR&R Environmental Services' Anaerobic Digester Tour
- May 2025: I-REN Energy Fellow GRID Alternatives Tour
- July 2025: California Climate and Energy Forum Fellowship participation opportunity
- August 2025: San Bernardino Valley College – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certified Building Tour
- August 2025: Zero-Emissions Vehicles Forum

These opportunities were so impactful for the 2025 cohort that the 2026 cohort will continue to have tours and experiential events throughout 2026. As of February 2026, there are nine events scheduled for I-REN Energy Fellows to participate and gain further industry knowledge.

Fellows at the California Air Resources Board in March 2025



OPPORTUNITIES IN 2026 AND BEYOND

In 2026, the I-REN WE&T team plans to expand opportunities for I-REN Energy Fellowships at public agencies in the region, to support the growing pipeline of public sector NMEC projects in the I-REN's Cash for Kilowatts program. There will also be expansion of I-REN Energy Fellowship opportunities to include water-energy nexus opportunities with water and special districts, and energy education at public educational institutions and school districts. I-REN will also expand educational offerings for Energy Fellows and the K–12 community.

March 2026 Energy & Infrastructure Sector Showcase (planned in partnership with the Inland Empire/Desert Regional Consortium)

The purpose of the event is to be a one-stop energy workforce ecosystem that will bring together Inland Empire community colleges; local agency staff; and workforce organizations that will focus on the issues, barriers and resources to help connect, identify, and have conversations to determine training opportunities that will assist in developing a green energy pathway for job seekers in the region.

Partnership with EcoHero for Elementary Education

EcoHero provides assembly style conservation education for children in grades K–6. I-REN partnered with EcoHero to provide up to 27 school assembly presentations to elementary schools within the Inland Empire. I-REN also provided additional input for a specific I-REN Clean Energy careers book, "Power Up Your Future," and song. Both provide educational awareness of the types of energy careers that can be impactful for their future career pathway goals. The children are able to sing about energy awareness, conservation in general, and uncover their potential to be an EcoHero in their everyday lives. The first presentation of EcoHero was at STEPCon in October 2025 with 17 additional presentations scheduled so far for the 2026 school semester.

EcoHero Elementary Education Read and Rap-Along Book



Sector-Wide Workforce Collaborations

In alignment with I-REN's workforce objectives from its business plan, I-REN serves as a facilitator and convener, bringing together a wide variety of workforce development and educational providers in the region to address the region's workforce needs related to energy efficiency, decarbonization, and resiliency. I-REN workforce collaborations have continued to grow year over year as shown below.

I-REN WE&T Sector-Wide Collaborations, 2023–2025

I-REN Partner	2023	2024	2025
Associated Builders and Contractors Inland Empire Branch	X		
Barstow Community College	X		
California Baptist University	X		X
California Employment Development Departments – Veterans Division		X	
California State University, San Bernardino	X	X	X
Center for Employment Training		X	X
Chino Valley Chamber of Commerce	X		
CivicWell Climate Adaptation Forum	X		
College of the Desert		X	X
Construction Trades Workforce Initiative	X		
Desert Valley Builder Association		X	X
Eastvale Chamber of Commerce		X	
Energy Code Ace	X		
Energy is Everything		X	X
Esri			X
Goodwill Career Resources Inland Empire	X		
Greater Coachella Valley Chamber of Commerce		X	X
GRID Alternatives		X	X
Inland Economic Growth & Opportunity		X	
Inland Economic Growth & Opportunity			X
Inland Empire Community Colleges Job Developers	X		
Inland Empire Community Foundation			X
Inland Empire Economic Partnership		X	X
Inland Empire Labor Institute		X	X
Inland Empire/Desert Regional Consortium	X		
Inland Southern California Collaborative		X	X

I-REN Partner	2023	2024	2025
Institute of Heating and Air Conditioning Industries		X	X
International Facility Management Association			X
James Irvine Foundation	X		
Launch Apprenticeship Network	X		
Local Employment Development Department Veterans Division	X		
Local Government Sustainable Energy Coalition		X	X
Mount San Jacinto College	X		
Norco Community College		X	X
Public Health Institute / CivicSpark		X	X
Redland Chamber of Commerce		X	X
Riverside City College Guardian Scholars	X		
Riverside County Office of Economic Development		X	X
Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE)	X		
Riverside County Workforce Development Department		X	X
San Bernardino City Unified School District	X		
San Bernardino Community College District			X
San Bernardino County Economic Development Agency		X	X
San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools	X		
San Bernardino Valley College		X	X
San Bernardino Workforce Development Department		X	X
San Geronimo High School (Jobs 4 California Graduates)	X		
Science and Technology Education Partnership (STEP)		X	X
Southern California Energy Innovation Network	X		
Thrive Inland SoCal		X	X
Time for Change Foundation	X		
Tomorrow's Talent	X		
U.S. Green Building Council			X
University of California, Riverside		X	X
Uplift San Bernardino		X	X
Victor Valley College Career and Technical Education		X	X
Youth Action Project	X		
Total	24	28	32

Workforce Education & Training EM&V Studies

I-REN conducted two studies for the WE&T Sector. A description of the studies, methodologies used, and the results are below.

STUDY 5: FELLOW RETENTION

This study aims to identify and assess the factors that contribute to fellow retention following I-REN's Fellowship Program under Workforce Education and Training (WE&T). The primary objective is to evaluate the needs of site hosts to hire fellows after the completion of the fellowship program. By understanding these factors, the study seeks to develop strategies to improve retention rates and ensure the long-term success of the fellows in their respective roles.

Results: This study looked at a mix of past fellows that completed their fellowship cycle, current fellows in their fellowship cycle, and host agencies that have hosted fellows in the past. For host agencies, barriers to hosting a fellow were identified as lack of awareness of programs as well as not having the staff capacity to supervise a fellow.

Fellows' responses indicated the fellowship clearly supports skill-building in both soft and technical domains. Fellows indicated a self-reported increase in communication and public speaking skills due to training sessions and project responsibilities during the fellowship. Fellows reported an increase in their development of technical areas such as energy auditing, energy code compliance, and project management. Supervisor responses aligned with fellow responses and cited the professional growth and development of fellows.

Importantly, the Fellowship program has already led to permanent employment for several graduates, with two past fellows reporting having been hired on at local agencies.

STUDY 6: PERFORMANCE METRICS

This study aims to identify and develop metrics that effectively track the success and performance of the Workforce Education and Training (WE&T) program. The primary objective is to create a comprehensive set of metrics that can be used to measure various aspects of the program's success, including participant outcomes, program efficiency, and overall impact.

03.

Energy Savings and Total System Benefit

Savings and Total System Benefit Claims

I-REN has one program that is specifically designed for delivering claimable energy savings and TSB for equity customers: the IREN-PUBL-002: Public Buildings NMEC Program, within the equity sector, known as Cash for Kilowatts. This program strongly relies on support from I-REN's other equity segment program, IREN-PUBL-001: Technical Assistance and Strategic Energy Planning Program, as well as the IREN-WET-002: WE&T Workforce Development Program in the market support segment, to supplement local agencies' staff capacity to move NMEC projects forward through I-REN's equity resource program.

Because the public agency NMEC program generally provides comprehensive projects to these agencies, all of which must be monitored over a 12-month period after construction completion in order to confirm actual energy saved, I-REN anticipates that its TSB claims will increase in the years between application submittal and the start of the new portfolio period. As of December 2025, I-REN has steadily built a robust pipeline of committed NMEC projects, with over \$1 million in incentives reserved and/or distributed, and an estimated 12.4 million kWh in lifetime energy savings, which will be realized in the coming years. I-REN anticipates that this number will continue to grow with changes to the outreach approach for public agencies and the increase in the Fellows program.

\$1 million+

in incentives reserved or distributed

12.4 million

kWh in lifetime energy savings

2025 Total System Benefit, Net First Year Savings and Goal Attainment

	Total System Benefit (TSB)	GWh	MW	MMTherms
	Portfolio – Non C&S	Codes & Standards (C&S)		
2025 TSB and Total Installed Portfolio Savings	\$79,146	n/a	n/a	n/a
Adopted 2025 Targets (D.23-08-005)	\$572,750	n/a	n/a	n/a
Percentage of goal attainment	14%	n/a	n/a	n/a
2024–2027 Cumulative TSB and Total Installed Portfolio Savings	\$181,009	n/a	n/a	n/a
Adopted 2024-2027 Goals (D.23-08-005)	\$2,442,661	n/a	n/a	n/a
Percentage of Progress Towards 4-year Goal	7%	n/a	n/a	n/a

Electricity and Natural Gas Savings and Demand Reduction (Net)

Program ID	Annual Energy Savings (kWh)	Lifecycle Energy Savings (kWh)	Peak Demand Savings (kW)	Annual Natural Gas Savings (Therms)	Lifecycle Natural Gas Savings (Therms)
IREN-PUBL-002	143,389	1,420,367	23	0	0
Total Portfolio Savings	143,389	1,420,367	23	0	0

Non-Claimed/Referred Savings

There are additional benefits that I-REN has contributed to the region through its other programs. Through I-REN's TA Program, I-REN identifies holistic energy projects that deliver deep, persistent savings that result in maximized TSB delivery for the NMEC program. Since program inception, I-REN has developed 80 Initial Measures List (IML) for public agencies which includes identifying potential energy efficiency upgrades, estimated project costs, Cash for Kilowatts Incentive eligibility, and other possible funding sources.

The majority of projects supported by the TA program are going through the NMEC program (Cash for Kilowatts). Through ongoing collaboration, projects that I-REN has been tracking but have not gone through NMEC, are channeled through other PA programs (i.e., SoCalGas' Public Direct Install program or SoCalREN's Rural-HTR Direct Install program). See table below for savings channeled to other PA programs in 2025.

I-REN Project Referral Examples

City of Colton

Program: SoCalGas Public Direct Install program

Project Scope: 13 tankless water heaters and 200 inches of pipe wrap insulation

Annual Gas Savings: 5,200 Therms

Lifecycle gas savings: 127,995 Therms

City of Blythe

Program: SoCalREN Hard to Reach Direct Install program

Project Scope: Replacement of 3 gas storage heaters with two tankless gas water heaters and one HPWH

Annual Gas Savings: 3,871 Therms

Lifecycle gas savings: 22,713 Therms

04.

Savings by End Use

Savings by End Use

2025 Annual Net Savings by End Use

End-use Category	kWh	Percentage of Total
Whole Building	143,389	100%
Total Portfolio Savings	143,389	100%

05. — Environmental Impacts



Environmental Impacts

Environmental Impact (Net Metric Tons of Avoided Emissions)

Annual CO ₂	Lifecycle CO ₂	Annual NO _x	Lifecycle NO _x	Annual PM10	Lifecycle PM10
49.18	448.13	0.003	0.03	0.003	0.03

Regional Energy Networks are designed to deliver energy efficiency and decarbonization programs to underserved communities, enabling underserved jurisdictions to take part in the energy transition. In I-REN's case, a significant majority (89%) of local governments in their service area are considered underserved. Many jurisdictions in the region have set GHG reduction targets for municipal emissions in their Climate Action Plans, but often lack resources and technical knowledge to enact significant energy efficiency or electrification upgrades for municipal facilities.

I-REN plays a key role in the region by supporting underserved and hard-to-reach local governments, K-12 schools, tribal communities, and special districts in reducing municipal emissions and meeting their overall GHG reduction goals. In the Public Sector, I-REN provides critical energy project identification and implementation support services and connection to financing opportunities to support building decarbonization through its Technical Assistance and Strategic Energy Planning Services. These wraparound services provide customized support to build knowledge and capacity for public agencies to enact energy efficiency and electrification upgrades for building decarbonization.

As mentioned in an earlier section, I-REN introduced a greenhouse gas (GHG) impact metric to Energy Resilience Roadmaps to quantify the total metric tons of CO₂e that would be reduced if all proposed energy projects were implemented. For example, to highlight the direct GHG reduction potential in the City of Wildomar's Energy Resilience Roadmap, I-REN estimated that completing three energy efficiency projects would yield approximately 50,250 kWh in annual energy savings. If implemented, these projects would achieve a first-year reduction of 25.4 metric tons of CO₂e, contributing approximately 1.8% toward the City's goal of a 15% reduction in building-related GHG emissions by 2030. This added metric helps show how these projects support broader agency and regional climate targets.

“These [climate and energy goal] metrics will help guide our CAP development efforts.”

—City of Chino Hills

06. — Expenditures

Expenditures

I-REN's 2025 budget and expenditures are shown below.

I-REN 2025 Budget Forecast

Program ID	Program Name	2025 Budget
IREN-PUBL-001	Technical Assistance and Strategic Energy Planning Program	\$3,100,790.45
IREN-PUBL-002	Public Buildings NMEC Program	\$4,453,361.35
IREN-CS-001	C&S Training and Education Program	\$1,041,232.07
IREN-CS-002	Technical Support Program	\$689,892.89
IREN-WET-001	WE&T Training and Education Program	\$1,275,690.13
IREN-WET-002	Workforce Development Program	\$1,851,668.29
Program Subtotal		\$12,412,635.19
IDSM		\$405,000.00
Portfolio Support PA Costs		\$704,774.52
EM&V		\$563,433.76
Total I-REN 2024 Budget Forecast		\$14,085,843.47

I-REN 2025 Actuals

Program ID	Admin	Marketing & Outreach	Direct Implementation	Incentives	Total
IREN-PUBL-001	\$772,367.16	\$117,601.18	\$3,590,182.55	\$0.00	\$4,480,150.89
IREN-PUBL-002	\$410,106.23	\$67,542.64	\$1,509,105.97	\$270,539.02	\$2,257,293.86
IREN-CS-001	\$41,834.19	\$32,699.11	\$601,773.95	\$0.00	\$676,307.25
IREN-CS-002	\$35,965.23	\$38,750.65	\$304,197.90	\$0.00	\$378,913.78
IREN-WET-001	\$136,091.53	\$36,687.97	\$1,346,432.89	\$0.00	\$1,519,212.39
IREN-WET-002	\$99,899.60	\$25,797.48	\$1,023,138.41	\$0.00	\$1,148,835.49
IREN-EMV-001	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$148,869.36	\$0.00	\$148,869.36
IREN-MS-Portfolio Support	\$17,018.67	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$17,018.67
IREN-CS-Portfolio Support	\$17,018.67	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$17,018.67
IREN-IDSM-Equity-001	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
IREN-Equity-Portfolio Support	\$68,075.18	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$68,075.18
I-REN Total	\$1,598,376.46	\$319,079.03	\$8,374,831.67	\$0.00	\$10,711,695.54

07.

Cost- Effectiveness

California’s statewide EE portfolio, which includes I-REN’s programs, is cost-effective from an overall perspective as described recently by the CPUC’s report⁴ in response to Governor Newsom’s Executive Order N-5-24.⁵

Within the overall EE portfolio, the CPUC has authorized I-REN and other RENs to offer EE programs that are not held to a cost-effectiveness threshold, “because the RENs are inherently designed to take on filling gaps in the other larger portfolios or serving the needs of HTR customer segments/markets that will be naturally less cost-effective to serve.”⁶ Similarly, the IOU PAs and MCE are permitted to dedicate 30% of their budgets toward programs focused on advancing equitable access to EE and supporting the long-term growth of markets for EE—programs which are not subject to cost-effectiveness thresholds. RENs and the equity and market support segments of the portfolio were created in order to ensure that these policy priorities are advanced within the statewide EE portfolio, which is cost-effective on an overall basis.

While not subject to a cost-effectiveness threshold, I-REN strives to manage its portfolio “with an eye toward long-term cost-effectiveness,” as encouraged by CPUC,⁷ as a good steward of ratepayer dollars. As noted in D.21-11-013, the CPUC decision approving I-REN’s Business Plan, CPUC welcomes I-REN’s focus on equity and serving disadvantaged and underserved communities, stating that:

“*Involving the types of customers and communities that I-REN’s Business Plan will serve is important to help California meet its energy and climate goals.*”⁸

⁴ CPUC Response to Executive Order N-5-24. Table A-2. Program list.

⁵ Executive Order N-5-24 (2024). <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/energy-EO-10-30-24.pdf>

⁶ D.19-12-021 at 37

⁷ D.16-08-019 at 12.

⁸ D.21-11-013 Conclusions of Law 7 and 8.

08. — Metrics

Unique Value Metrics

D.19-12-021 directed proponent RENs to “demonstrate new and unique value toward California’s energy, climate, and equity goals”⁹ and then file their progress toward their proposed unique value metrics once they were approved and operating.

I-REN Unique Value Metrics

Percentage of partner jurisdictions that use I-REN guides and tools for code compliance

Codes & Standards

One of I-REN’s key unique strengths is its relationships with local governments through the founding agencies’ work as councils/associations of governments. This metric is intended to show I-REN’s progress on leveraging those relationships to engage with jurisdictions on C&S permitting and code compliance.

Number of BUC registrations in partner jurisdictions (total users)

Public Sector

BUC registration is the entry point to accessing I-REN technical assistance services. The BUC portal allows for exploring possible savings opportunities for projects that Public Sector Program participants could pursue via I-REN NMEC program and/or other PAs’ programs. BUC also offers the ability to establish and maintain ongoing relationships and associated data.

Number of Fellows placed within partner jurisdictions

Workforce Education & Training

I-REN Fellowships are a crucial quick-start activity for WE&T and also provide cross-cutting benefits for Public Sector and C&S. Fellows play a role as EE champions at local jurisdictions to help advance EE projects in coordination with I-REN Public Sector technical assistance, such as benchmarking or strategic energy planning. Fellows can supplement staff capacity to take on NMEC or other incentive projects and support permitting and code compliance with I-REN C&S support.

⁹ D.19-12-021 Conclusion of Law 9.

New UVM: Percentage of C&S trainings offered in Spanish language

Codes & Standards

There is a high density of Spanish speakers within I-REN's territory and the local building industry, demonstrating language barrier. I-REN will overcome equity barriers, advance ESJ goals, and reach more participants with Spanish language offerings.

New UVM: Count of school participants for WE&T projects; Count of student participants for WE&T projects

Workforce Education & Training

Based on I-REN's Workforce Gaps Assessment, projections show more than 75% of workers in critical energy-related roles may retire or transfer by 2030, highlighting the need for immediate recruitment and retention strategies—especially given the growth of the IE region.

I-REN's solution to this assessment: recruit youth participants to encourage greater awareness and interest in EE jobs.

Equity and Market Support Indicators and Goals

D.23-06-055 adopted objectives and indicators for the equity and market support (E&MS) segments and designated how often indicators should be reported (quarterly or annually) and at what level (segment or whole portfolio). I-REN was an active participant in the Equity and Market Support Working Group formed by the California Energy Efficiency Coordinating Committee to clarify the indicators through a stakeholder process, and joined with other PAs and stakeholders to draft the resulting May 1, 2024 joint PA advice letter (I-REN Advice Letter 5-E/5-G) as ordered in D.23-06-055 Ordering Paragraph 11. The joint PA advice letter clarified the equity and market support indicators, proposed modifications to the common metrics adopted in D.18-05-041, recommended a methodology to determine indicator baselines, and laid out a suggested schedule for the tracking and reporting of equity and market support indicator and updated common metrics and indicators.

Resolution E-5351 addressing the joint PAs' advice letter was issued in June, 2025, and established more guidance for PAs to report on equity and market support indicators. E&MS tracking was scheduled to start in October of 2025. I-REN has undertaken efforts to consistently track and report relevant indicators, and continues to collaborate with PAs and the CPUC on the best way to support this effort. In connection to this effort, I-REN has also participated in a joint PA effort to develop Community Engagement Indicators for the Equity Segment, per D.23-06-055 Ordering Paragraph 24. Tracking for these indicators will begin in 2026 and be included in the 2026 Annual Report.

Relatedly, I-REN has also been an active participant in the various other joint PA and stakeholder initiatives ordered in D.23-06-055. Many of those orders focus on developing methodologies to measure progress toward equity and market support objectives, quantify non-energy benefits and encourage community involvement in EE programs. The Commission specifically called out these new efforts as crucial for evaluating REN performance—affirming that REN portfolios are not subject to a cost-effectiveness threshold because their portfolios are limited to specific criteria as described in D.19-12-021 and tend to focus strongly on equity and market support.

The work to develop these methods is ongoing through efforts such as the Market Rate Non-Energy Benefits (MR NEBs) study; the Awareness, Knowledge, Attitudes, and Behavior (AKAB) studies; the E&MS goal constructs; and the development of data tracking and reporting tools for E&MS indicators—all of which will contribute to the launch of these accountability mechanisms between now and 2028 and beyond.

D.18-05-041 Common Metrics

In addition to clarifying the adopted equity and market support indicators, D.23-06-055 Ordering Paragraph 11 also ordered PAs to examine the metrics and indicators adopted in D.18-05-041. I-REN participated in the joint advice letter process as described above, and was an active participant in proposing modifications to these metrics and indicators. Resolution E-5351s significantly reduced the number of common metrics PAs are required to report. I-REN supports statewide efforts to streamline and consolidate EE portfolio reporting.

09. — Commitments



I-REN has planned and budgeted for funds to be committed to numerous activities to support its portfolio in 2026 and beyond, including contracts with implementers, consultants, and vendors.

*A total of **\$755,708.92** in incentives have been reserved in 2025 for disbursement in program years 2026–2027 for projects under I-REN’s Cash for Kilowatts program.*



ITEM 6D

Coachella Valley Association of Governments Energy & Sustainability Committee

June 11, 2026



STAFF REPORT

Subject: Overview of Publicly-Available Information on Specialized Facilities

Contact: Alvaro Valcarcel Jervis, Management Analyst – Energy & Sustainability (ajervis@cvag.org); and Emmanuel Martinez, Assistant Director – Energy and External Affairs (emartinez@cvag.org)

Recommendation: Information

Background: At the request of the Chair of the Environment & Sustainability Committee, this staff report provides a recap of a presentation on specialized facilities and data centers given at the March 16, 2026, meeting of the Coachella Valley Power Agency (CVPA), which is staffed by CVAG. Given the interest in these types of buildings and energy users, staff is also including additional information from public sources in the region. CVAG is taking no position on this item and is simply providing it for members' information.

Data centers are specialized facilities that house servers, data storage systems, and other informational technology (IT) equipment. The projected growth of artificial intelligence (AI) is expected to significantly increase demand for data centers and electricity. California is home to more than 270 data centers, most of which are concentrated in Silicon Valley and the Los Angeles region. However, electricity constraints, land scarcity, and rising AI investment are prompting developers to explore new areas of the State that offer available land, competitive power rates, and reliable water resources.

Given its land availability, relatively low electricity and water costs, and proximity to major metropolitan markets, the potential remains for the Coachella Valley to emerge as a location for data center development. While data centers can generate short-term construction employment and drive infrastructure investment, their large, continuous energy demand presents significant grid planning, environmental, and long-term sustainability considerations.

In the Coachella Valley, the City of Coachella has identified private-sector interest in developing a data center in the eastern portion of the city. The City took preliminary steps to plan for potential load growth, including establishing a municipal utility framework intended to serve undeveloped greenfield areas within its Industrial and Auto-Wrecking zones. On February 11, 2026, the City approved a Municipal Utility Development Agreement with Coachella Valley Power Services, LLC. The agreement outlines the implementation of a Municipal Electric Utility designed to serve industrial customers, including a potential data center load. As initially proposed, the utility infrastructure includes a new interconnection to Imperial Irrigation District's (IID) existing Coachella Valley Substation, associated switchyards and metering equipment, and fuel cell-based microgrid systems planned for a designated "Technology Campus."

Recent reporting from The Desert Sun highlights growing public scrutiny of the proposed technology campus, a hyperscale data center project planned on approximately 240 acres in the

City of Coachella. The initial phase contemplates nearly 1 million square feet of facilities supported by up to 300MW of capacity. While the project was initially touted as a catalytic “anchor tenant” to enable development of a new municipal utility and broader economic growth—potentially generating up to \$20 million annually—community concerns have intensified around water use, energy demand, land use conversion, and overall transparency in the planning process.

The project has attracted intense pushback from the community, as demonstrated at a public town hall held on May 11 and at recent Council meetings. City officials emphasized that the project remains in the early planning stages and would require completion of a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and additional public review before any final approvals are considered. The Coachella City Council retained additional legal counsel to conduct a third-party review of the municipal utility agreement. On June 4, the Coachella Council then terminated the agreement with Stronghold Power, the project developer, and approved a 45-day moratorium on data centers. The City of Indio on June 3 also considered, and passed, a 45-day moratorium on data centers.

Separately, a \$10 billion, 950,000 square foot AI data center campus has been proposed at the City of Imperial. Staff sought additional information from IID staff on this item, but they are not publicly discussing the proposal due to ongoing litigation. On May 15, the IID Board meeting included an information item on a proposed Large Load Tariff. IID is proposing a new Large Load Tariff to establish a standardized process for evaluating and serving customers with 20 MW+ demand and more than 85% load factor, such as data centers. The tariff requires large customers to pay for all incremental costs associated with serving their load, including studies, transmission and distribution upgrades, generation/resource adequacy requirements, deposits, collateral, long-term service agreements, and exit fees. The primary objective is to ensure existing IID customers do not subsidize large new developments. IID indicated it has already received nine large-load proposals or inquiries.

Data centers are among the most electricity-intensive land uses. Nationally, the U.S. Department of Energy estimates data centers could account for approximately 12% of total U.S. electricity consumption by 2028, nearly triple their share in 2023. Their large, concentrated loads can require new transmission, substation upgrades, and generation resources, raising concerns about cost allocation and potential impacts on existing ratepayers. Most facilities rely on on-site backup generators, often diesel-fueled, to ensure uninterrupted operation during outages or grid events.

Many data centers use water-based cooling systems to prevent equipment overheating. Cooling of these systems is essential to maintain optimal operational conditions. While water-efficient and waterless cooling technologies exist, they have not yet been widely adopted due to cost and energy tradeoffs. Studies indicate that a significant share of new data center development is occurring in regions already experiencing high or extreme water stress, raising local and regional planning considerations, particularly in arid areas. In addition, there is a trade-off between water and energy use. For example, [according to U.C. Berkeley](#), data centers water use ranges from 18,000 gallons per day for small data centers, to up to 550,000 gallons per day for large “hyperscale” data centers (pg. 18). The report also references a study by UC Riverside which estimates that “statewide on-site data center water consumption in California will balloon from 351 million gallons in 2019 to between 1.12 and 1.75 billion gallons by 2028.” Some data center proposals have incorporated renewable energy strategies, including geothermal and solar power, which are resources present in the Coachella Valley.

The Little Hoover Commission, an independent State oversight body, has identified data centers as an emerging topic requiring coordinated state attention. In recent briefings, the Commission emphasized the rapid pace of data center growth driven by AI and cloud computing, risks of fragmented permitting and infrastructure planning, and the need for clearer state standards addressing energy reliability, water use, environmental review, and cost responsibility. The Commission's work is intended to provide nonpartisan recommendations to the Legislature and state agencies to ensure infrastructure development aligns with California's climate, water, and ratepayer-protection goals.

In response to growing concerns, State Senator Steve Padilla (D-Chula Vista) introduced legislation focused on data center impacts. Last year, the Governor signed bill, SB 57 (Padilla), which authorizes the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to assess the extent to which data center loads are resulting in a cost shift for customers of electrical corporations. This year, Sen. Padilla introduced two data center related bills. SB 886, the Data Center Ratepayer Protections Act, which would direct the CPUC to establish a special tariff ensuring that the full costs of transmission and grid upgrades needed to serve large data centers are borne by those facilities, rather than shifted to other electricity customers. Padilla also introduced SB 887, the Sustainable Data Center Leadership Project, which would clarify that data centers are not ministerial projects exempt from environmental review. This bill aims to establish a pathway for qualifying projects to receive streamlined environmental review only if they meet enhanced standards related to clean energy use, water efficiency, emissions, labor protections, and community benefits.

Fiscal Analysis: There is no cost to CVAG for this informational item.