

## Solar Policies

Any electric generating facility, whether renewable energy or not, that generates 100 megawatts of power or more must be approved by the [Public Service Commission of Wisconsin](#).

Renewable energy-powered electrical generating facilities under 100 megawatts go through a conditional use permit ([CUP](#)) process under county zoning. Towns may adopt policies for renewable energy CUPs, as part of their town/county comprehensive plan. The town could then use the plan language to recommend conditions on any CUP. Since the county zoning ordinance already requires that CUPs be consistent with adopted town/county comprehensive plans, this may be easier, and have a stronger legal framework, than the town adopting an independent ordinance.

These are the Farmland Preservation Standards. [LINK](#)

Support development of alternative energy, heat or cooling sources, including solar, wind, geothermal, biomass and wood. Make sure land use plans do not place unnecessary impediments to alternative energy projects.

The Town should investigate the feasibility of providing for and utilizing alternative energy sources to meet the needs of Town residents. Such alternative sources of energy may include, but are not necessarily limited to, solar, wind, geothermal, and biomass (ethanol, biodiesel, landfill gas and others).

Policies for Renewable Energy Facilities in Farmland Preservation Areas (could also be adopted as part of town/county comprehensive plans)

1. To minimize the need for new electrical transmission lines, locate new renewable energy installations as close as possible to existing transmission facilities.
2. Where practical, manage density and size of utility-scale installations to minimize impacts to adjoining agricultural land uses and rural character.
3. Except where required for aviation or other safety concerns, encourage setbacks, vegetative screening, berms, or other practices to minimize visual impact.
4. Encourage multiple- or dual-use facilities that allow for agricultural, natural resource, habitat and/or soil and water conservation uses to coexist with energy generation.
5. Arrange energy infrastructure, fencing and berms to allow for equipment movement, habitat, wildlife corridors and pervious cover to minimize runoff.
6. Make sure all installations comply with county erosion control and stormwater standards during construction, operational, maintenance and decommissioning phases.
7. Encourage adaptive reuse of operating or closed mineral extraction or other rural industrial sites for renewable energy use.
8. To the extent possible, follow the siting criteria for this plan, to avoid productive farm soils.
9. Make sure landscaping and other vegetation is maintained to continue to serve its intended purpose and does not create sources for invasive species.
10. Require decommissioning plans for all renewable energy facilities, with financial instruments sufficient to cover the cost of equipment removal and reclamation. Lands should be reclaimed to agricultural or natural resource use.