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New Report: 7,100 Clean Energy Workers in South Dakota

State's 5 Percent Projected Growth Rate, Number of Geothermal Jobs Both High For Midwest; Sioux Falls a Hub for Jobs; Clean Power Plan, State Standards Could Create Even More Jobs

PIERRE (March 22, 2016) – More than 7,100 South Dakotans work in the state's clean energy industry, according to a comprehensive analysis unveiled today by Clean Energy Trust (CET) and Environmental Entrepreneurs (E2).

The analysis – available at www.CleanJobsMidwest.com – is based on U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data and a comprehensive survey of thousands of businesses across South Dakota and the region. The Clean Jobs Midwest report provides detailed breakdowns of clean energy jobs not available previously – including job totals for every county and state legislative district in South Dakota.

"I can drive a five-mile radius from my home and I can see how clean energy creates jobs," said E2 Midwest chapter director David Kolsrud, founder of Brandon, S.D.-based DAK Renewable Energy Inc., a company that manages investments in renewable projects, and founder of The Funding Farm, a company that invests in start-ups.

"There are manufacturers making stems for wind turbines, workers installing energy efficient technologies in homes and companies that help farmers develop clean fuels," Kolsrud said. **"I am not surprised that South Dakotans are particularly optimistic that clean energy jobs will keep increasing in the state."**

According to the findings, energy efficiency is by far the largest clean energy sector employer in the state, with more than 5,400 people, or nearly 77 percent of the clean energy workforce, employed in areas such as high-efficiency lighting, Energy Star appliance manufacturing and high-efficiency HVAC services to reduce wasted energy in homes, schools and businesses.

The projected clean energy jobs growth rate this year of 5 percent is tied with Nebraska for third in the Midwest. The projected growth rate is based on interviews with clean energy employers. Renewable

energy generation jobs account for more than 1,300 jobs – about 600 in solar, 500 in wind, and 250 in geothermal. Michigan, Iowa, and Minnesota are the only other Midwestern states with more geothermal jobs.

“In a short amount of time, clean energy has become a huge part of our nation’s workforce and our economy,” said Bob Keefe, E2’s executive director. **“Smart policies helped jump-start this industry, and smart policies will keep these made-in-America jobs growing – and help our environment along the way.”**

According to Keefe, state energy efficiency and renewable standards, federal tax incentives and other policies have helped drive the exponential growth in clean energy jobs in recent years. To keep these jobs growing, lawmakers should continue to support policies driving growth in the clean energy sector, including state standards in South Dakota incentivizing energy efficiency and renewable energy, the federal Clean Power Plan, and the recent international climate agreement reached in Paris.

The report also found:

- Most of South Dakota’s clean energy workers – more than 3,500 – are found in non-metropolitan areas, followed by nearly 2,200 workers in the Sioux Falls area.
- Small businesses drive the state’s clean energy sector – nearly 75 percent of South Dakota clean energy businesses employ fewer than 25 individuals.
- Almost three-quarters of the clean energy jobs in South Dakota are in installation.
- Clean energy employs nearly 569,000 people across the 12-state Midwest region (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin).

“Clean energy is a dynamic sector and central to economic growth in the Midwest,” said Erik Birkerts, Chief Executive Officer of Clean Energy Trust. **“Smart public policy will further accelerate the clean energy sector’s growth, which means thousands of new jobs created across the region and which will confer economic advantages on South Dakota,”** Birkerts continued.

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***Clean Energy Trust (CET)** fuels clean energy innovation in the Midwest. A Chicago-based non-profit, CET helps launch, fund and grow Midwest clean energy companies to ensure a more prosperous, sustainable future for generations to come. It does this through direct investment, commercialization assistance, mentorship, access to its broad partner network and the promotion of a supportive clean energy community and business climate. Learn more at <http://www.cleanenergytrust.org>.*

***Environmental Entrepreneurs (E2)** is a national, nonpartisan group of business leaders, investors, and professionals from every sector of the economy who advocate for smart policies that are good for the economy and good for the environment. Our members have founded or funded more than 2,500 companies, created more than 600,000 jobs, and manage more than \$100 billion in venture and private equity capital. For more information, see www.e2.org or follow us on Twitter at [@e2org](https://twitter.com/e2org).*