



IMPA KeyNote

News for key accounts from the Indiana Municipal Power Agency

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New Solar Park to Power 800 Homes

IMPA's drive to supply environmentally-responsible energy took another step forward this summer when the Columbia City Solar Park began generating clean, emission-free electricity.

The 4.3-megawatt (MW) project took about six months to build and is expected to produce enough electricity to power about 800 homes. All the electricity will go to homes and businesses within Columbia City.

The Columbia City Solar Park is among the solar power projects in IMPA member communities providing customers access to cleaner energy without having to build new transmission lines. Further, this will keep property taxes in IMPA member communities. This is unique to IMPA.

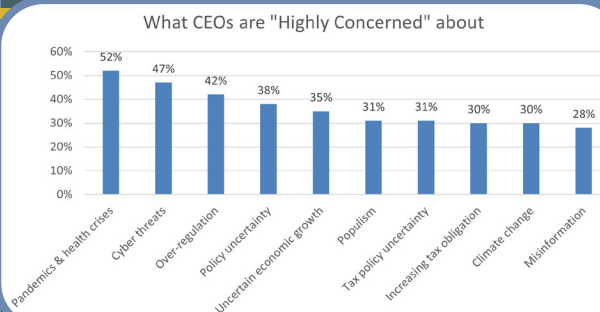
The 30-acre park utilizes a tracking system that allows the solar panels to follow the movement of the sun, maximizing electric generation throughout the day.

The Columbia City Solar Park is the 33rd community solar project built by IMPA in one of its member communities. All told, those projects can generate up to about 130 megawatts of electricity, enough to power about 23,500 homes.

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INSIDE

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In early 2021, as the COVID-19 pandemic was raging, CEOs around the world said cyber threats are the second-most important issue they face, after the pandemic and health crises.

Source: PwC

WORKSHOP HIGHLIGHTS PROTECTIONS AGAINST CYBER THREATS

In an early-2021 survey of chief executive officers around the world, nearly half — 47% — said they were “highly concerned” about cyber threats, trailing only pandemics and health crises but ahead of over-regulation, tax policy changes, and climate change. Consulting firm PwC conducted the survey.

Business leaders and local governments are increasingly worried about cybersecurity, which is why IMPA held a day-long workshop on July 22 on how to protect a company's physical and digital assets.

Over 60 people from 19 different IMPA member organizations attended IMPA's July 22 workshop, all sharing the same concern: How can I best protect my digital and physical assets from cyberattack?

In leading the workshop, cybersecurity expert Steven Dyer said companies could reduce their cybersecurity risk with multi-factor authentication and intrusion detection software.

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CYBER THREATS

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Multi-factor authentication is an electronic security enhancement that requires an employee to provide two or more pieces of authentication before being granted access to workplace devices, networks, and applications. Intrusion detection systems monitor workplace networks for malicious activity and report suspicious activity to a designated administrator.

Increasingly, customers and utilities are being forced to act more aggressively to protect their digital and physical assets from cybercrooks.

Cybercrooks often obtain access to a company's network by sending employees emails with links

or attachments that contain malware. When the employee clicks on that link or opens the attachment, it downloads software that allows malevolent actors to access all of a company's networks, both operational technology (OT) and information technology (IT).

Fortunately, cybersecurity training can remedy most of the problem. Companies must become more vigilant, and more consistent, in educating employees of the potential dangers of opening an attachment from an unknown source.



"In addition to multi-factor authentication and intrusion detection, staff training is imperative," said Dyer. "Employees

pose the greatest risk to companies if they're not trained, which is why utilities have to understand the importance of training staff members about cybersecurity and holding them accountable." This July's ransomware attack against customers of the software provider Kaseya put several attendees on edge as they learned about the 800 to 1,500 U.S. small and medium-sized businesses who became vulnerable. In that attack, a foreign actor, believed to be Russian, gained access to Kaseya networks and froze them, demanding \$70 million in ransom payment.

Earlier this year, a crude oil pipeline providing nearly half of the gasoline and diesel to the East Coast had its systems compromised by cybercrooks. The company paid a \$4.4 million ransom to regain access to its digital networks. The FBI later recovered most of that ransom.

In a ransomware attack, a malevolent actor gains control over a customer's digital networks, including customer lists, and encrypts them so they cannot be accessed by the business until it pays a ransom.

"As an essential service provider, IMPA fully realizes the importance of protecting the Agency's assets," said Chris Rettig, IMPA's Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer. "We're working with our staff and community members to take more aggressive measures in the never-ending fight against cybercriminals."

AMERI-CAN BRINGS LUXURY TO NECESSITY

You probably have used an Ameri-Can product recently, but you may not have known it.

Here's a hint: the company's products are found at military installations, municipal parks, upscale weddings, sporting events, and outdoor concerts.

Ameri-Can, headquartered in Argos, Indiana, makes customized luxury restroom trailers that are used in all of those settings as well as at movie sets, festivals, disaster relief sites, and construction and industrial job locations.

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SOLAR PARK

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In dedicating the solar park June 4, Columbia City Mayor Ryan Daniel said, "The addition of this park diversifies our generation resources while providing an educational opportunity for our students, residents, and visitors. It is a wonderful community asset to have, and we were excited to partner with IMPA on this project."

Raj Rao, IMPA President and CEO, added: "The Columbia City Solar Park helps IMPA continue its mission of providing low-cost, reliable, and environmentally-responsible power to our member communities."

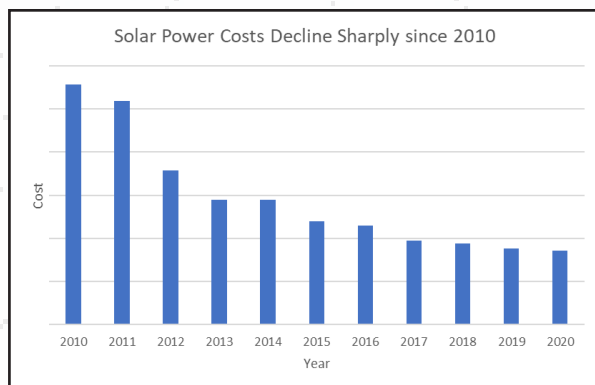
"The output of the park will remain in the community serving the needs of residents and business alike, while enabling IMPA to continue expanding our diverse portfolio through the addition of solar energy," he added.

The cost of solar energy has come down dramatically in recent years, driven largely by increased module efficiency as well as lowered hardware and inverter costs, according to the U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Golden, Colorado.

Solar parks like Columbia City's are becoming more popular, driven by falling costs and rising public concerns about pollution and global warming. Solar power produces electricity with no emissions.

Construction continues on IMPA solar parks in Anderson and Linton, and later this year, construction is anticipated to begin on four more IMPA solar parks in Bremen, Gas City, Peru, and Walkerton. Each is expected to begin operating by 2022, bringing IMPA's total amount of online solar capacity to 185 MW.

IMPA and the communities it serves have a goal of installing 200 megawatts of solar generation by 2023.



Solar power costs have declined about 69% over the last decade for projects like the Columbia City Solar Park.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

AMERI-CAN

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But these are not your low-end, hold-your-nose-and-hope-for-the-best plastic porta-potties. In fact, concerns over hygiene sparked by COVID-19 have led to an increase in demand for Ameri-Can's trailers because they have running water, mirrors, and other sanitary amenities.

Ameri-Can also provides portable shower trailers and other upscale outdoor comfort amenities. Their products come in a variety of floor plans, and they are built to customer specifications.

"Construction companies and event companies increasingly are not allowing plastic porta-potties to be installed on their sites due to concerns over hygiene and the possible spread of disease," Ameri-Can Chief Operating Officer Keegan Campbell told us. "Since the pandemic began, we have experienced a surge in interest from hospitals, COVID-19 testing sites, and homeless shelters."

Thirty employees assemble all Ameri-Can trailers by hand, without the aid of robots.

Like most manufacturers, Ameri-Can has experienced supply-chain bottlenecks since the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020: "Our trailers have, on average, about 750 different parts, and on any given day, something is unavailable," Campbell said. "One month it was doors, the next it was mirrors."

"Still, we kept going. We're a family-owned business — we don't know any other way. We're small enough to pivot quickly, but big enough to have an international clientele." Roughly 25% of the company's trailers are destined for Canada.

Though he and his wife Elizabeth are the owners, they prefer to think of themselves as members of the team. They keep close with employees by walking the floor each day.

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"We're proud of our product, but we're even more proud of our people," Campbell said. "We want to be a good, safe, and fun place to work that gives back to the community. Each month we provide trailers to community and charity events."

"We're really proud that the things we make help people."

Because Campbell also feels strongly about using resources wisely, he had an energy audit done on Ameri-Can's operations. "We want to lower our waste stream, including energy waste," he said. "We know we have equipment running when it doesn't have to, and that some of our lighting needs to be upgraded. I expect the report will have a lot of specific recommendations."

"Sustainability and efficiency are not about saving money, although they often do lower costs," he remarked. "Rather, it's about using all of our resources as wisely as possible."

