



County Of Dane

Office Of The County Executive

Joe Parisi
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Dane County Recognizes 38 Local Entities as 2023 Climate Champions

Today, County Executive Joe Parisi joined the Office of Energy and Climate Change (OECC) to recognize local entities leading on climate action through Dane County's Climate Champions program. A part of Dane County's Climate Action Plan is to recognize local entities that are making significant efforts to address climate change. It is the collective effort of groups like these that make Dane County's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions 50% county-wide by 2030 and being carbon-neutral by 2050 within reach.

This year, a total of 43 Climate Champions awards will be presented across 38 entities. The Office of Energy & Climate Change recognizes achievements across ten categories, including:

- Building Energy Use -for entities with very energy-efficient buildings
- Building Design -for facilities still being planned or built that are projected to be very energy efficient
- Fleet Operations -for entities with a fleet powered by clean fuels
- Employee Commuting -for entities whose workforce commutes via bike, foot, transit, or telecommuting
- Water Saving Practices -for entities that have implemented practices to reduce water consumption
- Waste Diversion Practices -for entities that have strong waste diversion practices
- Sustainable Land Use Practices -for farms and land with strong sustainability practices
- Catalysts -for entities that help others take climate actions
- GHG Emissions -for entities that have reduced their carbon footprint
- Other -for entities that have taken actions that don't fit into other categories

Entities that achieve Climate Champion status receive signage and recognition on the [OECC website](#).

"This year's variety of Climate Champion organizations demonstrates that the pace of change is accelerating across all sectors," said Dane County Executive Joe Parisi. "Like Dane County itself, these organizations are leading by example. These Champions are an inspiration to their customers, their employees, and their peer organizations. This is how we spur climate action at scale."

Eight of the ten Climate Champions categories use a four star distinction, more stars indicating higher achievement in that category. This year, three entities are receiving four stars, including Children's Community School, Hoffman Manufacturing Corp, and Zoe's Pizzeria.

Furthermore, two entities earned Climate Champion stars in more than one category. These entities are Hoffman Manufacturing Corp and Madison Computer Works, Inc.

“The Climate Champions program is an important way for us to recognize how organizations across the county are accelerating climate action. Each of these Champions is helping us achieve our countywide climate action goals.” Parisi added.

The full list of 2023 Dane County Climate Champions:

- **Aldo Leopold Nature Center** - Aldo Leopold Nature Center (ALNC) achieved 2023 Climate Champion (Other) status. ALNC is empowering current and future generations to protect, respect, and enjoy the natural world through its inclusive education efforts and wildlife conservation.
- **C-Motives Technology** - C-Motive Technologies, Inc achieved 2023 Climate Champion (Catalyst) status for commercializing sustainable, high-efficiency, and decarbonized motors using static forces that deliver higher energy efficiency and torque density than other motors on the market.
- **Children’s Community School** - Children's Community School achieved 2023 Climate Champion (4 stars/Building Design) status for their net-zero school. This facility is planned to be all-electric and will include solar arrays alongside energy-efficient lighting and insulation. Project partners include OPN Architects and NCI Roberts.
- **City of Monona** - The City of Monona was recognized as an emerging 2023 Climate Champion in the fleet category for their sustainable vehicle upgrades within the Parks Department and the Police Department, which have helped decrease the Police Department’s annual fuel usage by 16%.
- **Creative Learning Preschool** - Creative Learning Preschool achieved 2023 Climate Champion (Other) status for the dedicated work of their Green Team. Some of their 2023 efforts include achieving Green & Healthy school certification through the WI Department of Natural Resources, introducing the Grow at Home, Eat at School effort to incorporate local produce in dishes served at school, and evaluating their energy use with Focus on Energy to promote energy efficiency.
- **Dane County High School Climate Conference Organizers** - Dane County High School Climate Conference Organizers achieved 2023 Climate Champion (Other) status for their efforts to empower young people to lead on climate action. These volunteers have organized countywide climate conferences for three years and have partnered with students to develop a newsletter and website of youth-oriented climate news.
- **Emmi Roth Specialty Cheeses**- Emmi Roth Specialty Cheeses achieved 2023 Climate Champion (3 Star/Building Design) status for the design of a new all-electric cheese manufacturing facility. Project partners include Strand Associates, Quam Engineering, and J.F. Ahern.
- **Everlight Solar** - Everlight Solar was named an emerging 2023 Climate Champion in the fleet category for adding nine battery electric vehicles to their fleet.
- **Forest Products Lab** - Forest Products Laboratory achieved 2023 Climate Champion (2 stars/Water Saving Practices) status for their efforts to reduce winter salt use, which they have achieved by installing a brine collection system to collect chloride discharge from water softeners and by having all of their snow removal crew members SaltWise Certified.
- **Green Neighbor Challenge** - Green Neighbor Challenge achieved 2023 Climate Champion (Catalyst) status for their free online tool that assists people in shifting to energy-efficient options for their homes.
- **Hoffman Manufacturing Corp** - Hoffman Manufacturing Corporation achieved 2023 Climate Champion status (3 stars/Energy Use, 4 stars/Fleet) for reducing their facility's energy use through solar arrays, as well as their entirely electric fleet vehicles.

- **Home Energy Consulting** - Home Energy Consulting achieved 2023 Climate Champion (Catalyst) status for encouraging their customers to choose climate-friendly options by providing an estimate of energy savings utilizing software that calibrates homeowners utility bills under various circumstances based on energy decisions.
- **Hooper** - Hooper Corporation achieved 2023 Climate Champion (1 star/Building Design) status for their new corporate office. The campus features geothermal heating and cooling, solar hot water, stormwater reclamation systems, and more. Project partners include Kahler Slater.
- **J.H. Findorff & Son, Inc.** - J.H. Findorff & Son, Inc. achieved 2023 Climate Champion (Catalyst) status for collaborating with owners, design teams, and other project partners on sustainability goals for building projects, such as discussing potential goals for energy use or renewable energy production and grants, incentives, and tax credits that are available.
- **Madison Children's Museum** - Madison Children's Museum achieved 2023 Climate Champion (Catalyst) status for their ongoing climate education and advocacy. This includes taking leadership among museums to build a climate action network to improve resources in the field, as well as their efforts to model sustainability in their facilities and educate users about their environmental impact while encouraging connection with the natural world.
- **Madison Computer Works, Inc** - Madison Computer Works, Inc. achieved 2023 Climate Champion (1 Star/Energy Use, 3 Stars/Fleet Operations, Emerging/Waste Diversion) status for their solar arrays, battery electric vehicles, and their commercial office implements a waste management plan, which diverts over 60% of their waste.
- **Mt. Horeb Area Community Garden** - Mt. Horeb Area Community Garden achieved 2023 Climate Champion (Other) status for their organic community garden. The garden was strategically planned to conserve water, includes native perennial pollinator plants, practices no-till gardening and collects garden waste for composting.
- **Oregon Library** - Oregon Library achieved 2023 Climate Champion (2 Stars/Building Design) status for their new all-electric library building, which will feature geothermal and solar arrays. The building will also include sustainable and durable materials as efficient lighting, stormwater capture, and prairie restoration. Partners include OPN Architects, IMEG, and JSD.
- **People's United Methodist Church** - People's United Methodist Church achieved 2023 Climate Champion (Other) status for their persistent efforts toward climate action. Some of their work includes hosting an annual Green Fair, hosting seminars on the climate emergency, promoting composting, installing solar panels on top of the church, hosting a Solar group buy, holding annual Earth Day celebrations with tree plantings, and setting a commitment to become carbon neutral by 2030.
- **Promega** - Promega was named an emerging 2023 Climate Champion in Building Design for their new facility, which will include a number of high-efficiency features, such as high efficiency boilers and a recovery chiller. Project partners include Flad Architects, Affiliated Engineers, Inc., MEP Engineering, and Davis & Irwin, Inc.
- **Rooted** - Rooted Wi, Inc. achieved 2023 Climate Champion (3 Stars/Sustainable Land Use) status for their various sustainable practices at their Troy Farm and Troy Community Gardens. These include reduced and no-till agriculture, maintaining year-round vegetative cover, implementing increased nitrogen use efficiency, practicing active tree planting, maintenance & disease prevention, conducting prairie and wetland restoration, and installing a new solar array to power their energy use on the farm.
- **Sookie's Veggie Burgers** - Sookie's Veggie Burgers achieved 2023 Climate Champion (Other) status for their commitment to reducing climate emissions through more sustainable plant-based food sources and for reducing waste through the use of biodegradable packaging.
- **Stokes** - Stokes LLC are recognized as emerging 2023 Climate Champions in Building Design for their all-electric Iron Horse Residence & Artistry building. The building will include heat pumps, energy-efficient

- appliances, e-bike charging stations, triple-pane windows, spray foam insulation, exterior paints, locally sourced materials, and labor. Project partners include Legacy Solar, Lifeline Power Systems, Modern Heating & Cooling, Vandewall & Associates, and Bill Montelbano (Architect).
- **Stoughton Utilities** - Stoughton Utilities achieved 2023 Climate Champions (Catalyst) status for their Choose Renewable program, which allows customers to offset part or all of their energy usage with renewable energy. Stoughton Utilities was recognized nationally by the Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory for their commitment and were named 8th in the nation for green power participation.
 - **Sun Prairie Area School District** - Sun Prairie Area School District achieved 2023 Climate Champion status (3 stars/Energy Use) for two primary schools, Horizons Elementary and Royal Oaks Elementary. Both schools demonstrate commitment to reduced energy use, with Horizons Elementary distinguished as Sun Prairie's first school to utilize geothermal energy.
 - **Sun Prairie Utilities** - Sun Prairie Utilities building achieved 2023 Climate Champion (3 stars/Building Design) status for their utility building. This will be an all-electric facility with geothermal, solar arrays, and energy storage for backup power needs. The utility is seeking a LEED Gold certification for this project. Project partners include Kueney Architects.
 - **SunPeak** - SunPeak Power achieved 2023 Climate Champion (Catalyst) status for more than 50 commercial-scale solar installations in Dane County; the electricity from those projects would power more than 500 Wisconsin homes annually.
 - **Terravessa Home Owners Association** - Terravessa Home Owners Association achieved 2023 Climate Champion (Other) status for their housing development that was designed to manage stormwater using green infrastructure to control runoff volume.
 - **The City of Sun Prairie** - The City of Sun Prairie achieved 2023 Climate Champion (Other) status for its materials management. By doubling their recycling pick-up days the city has added about 1.2 M pounds of additional recycling annually, and they reduced their hauling of yard waste to divert about 15,000 cubic yards annually.
 - **Tim O'Brien Homes** - Tim O'Brien Homes achieved 2023 Climate Champion (Catalyst) status for their construction of a home that earned the US Department of Energy's 2023 Housing Innovation Award. The all-electric home received a HERS score of -8 as well as the EPA's Indoor airPLUS certification and EPA/DOE Energy Star Certification.
 - **Tree Canopy Collaborative** - Tree Canopy Collaborative achieved 2023 Climate Champion (Other) status for planting over 150 trees across Dane County, working towards increased climate resilience, public health, and environmental health.
 - **Uplevel Coworking** - Uplevel Coworking achieved 2023 Climate Champion status (1 star/Employee Commuting) for encouraging alternative transportation options such as covered bike storage, on-site showers, and carpool organization.
 - **Upper 90** - Upper 90 has achieved 2023 Climate Champion (Catalyst) status for contributing to emissions reductions by presenting energy-saving projects for public organizations to implement. Their efforts have saved over 6,000 tons of CO₂.
 - **Village of Deerfield** - Village of Deerfield has achieved 2023 Climate Champion (Catalyst) status for their solar installations at their Police Department and Wastewater Treatment Plant.
 - **Willy Street Co-op** - Willy Street Co-op achieved 2023 Climate Champion (3 Stars and 2 Stars/Energy Use) status for four of their buildings. In 2022 their grocery stores combined produced 2,651,698 kWh of electricity via solar installations and their food processing/manufacturing building produced 158,661 kWh.
 - **Wisconsin EcoLatinos** - Wisconsin EcoLatinos achieved 2023 Climate Champion (Catalyst) status for their dedication to inclusive climate change literacy within the Latino community. Their work includes a

project creating a digital platform called "Wisconsin Community Climate Solutions", hosting a bilingual environmental conservation fair, partnering with the Latino Academy Bilingual leadership program to send powerful messages to over 250 people, and advocating for the inclusion of the Latino community in the transition to clean energy city and statewide.

- **Yahara Pride Farms** - Yahara Pride Farmers achieved 2023 Climate Champion (2 Star/Sustainable Land Use) status for implementing reduced and no-till agriculture, maintaining year-round vegetation cover, implementing increased nitrogen use efficiency, and phosphorus reduction.
- **Zoe's Pizzeria** - Zoe's Pizzeria achieved 2023 Climate Champion (4 Star/Fleet Operations) status for transitioning their 7-vehicle fleet to 100% battery electric vehicles.

To learn more about the 2023 Climate Champions, visit the [Dane County Office of Energy and Climate Change](#) website and the related [Climate Champions map](#).

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Dane County Executive Joe Parisi established the Dane County Office of Energy and Climate Change in 2017 to further the county's efforts to address climate change. As a division within the County Executive's Office, the Dane County Office of Energy & Climate Change works with local governments, businesses, community groups and other stakeholders to identify innovative ways to reduce countywide greenhouse gas emissions, consistent with the County's 2020 Climate Action Plan.