



SAG Small Group Meeting #2: IL-TRM Policy Issues



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Solar Thermal

Policy Issue #2, Question 2:

Does the statutory definition of “energy efficiency” allow a solar thermal measure (i.e. solar hot water and solar air heaters) in the Illinois TRM?

MEEA’s position: YES

- Unlike solar PV, solar thermal can actually “reduce the amount of electricity or natural gas consumed in order to achieve a given end use” and as such could be an allowable energy efficiency measure in the TRM.
- The thermal heat captured by a thermal absorber and then used onsite for applications like water heating does directly reduce the amount of kWh or therms needed for those end uses.
- ComEd has raised the fact that combined heat and power (CHP) is not defined as an energy efficiency measure in statute but is included in the TRM while solar PV is not. We believe there is sound reasoning for this. With CHP the thermal energy captured is used for onsite heating applications, and it ultimately reduces the amount of electricity or natural gas consumed to achieve an end use. CHP is more akin to solar thermal than it is to solar PV.