



## Labor Unions and Clean Energy Go Hand in Hand

Molly Vagle • Aug. 21, 2025

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Clean energy projects create high-quality, good-paying union jobs and employ thousands of labor union workers across the country. The clean energy workforce is highly unionized, with union coverage rates just above 10%, compared to the average national private-sector union coverage rate of 7.20%. Clean energy companies are proud of the family-supporting, fast-growing careers already in place for American's labor union workers.

There are almost 1.4 million Americans working in clean energy right now. In 2023, jobs in clean energy grew by [4.2%, more than twice](#) as much as the job growth rate of the overall economy of 2%. Accelerating the growth of clean energy will benefit American workers with the creation of additional high-paying jobs. Across the top 35 in-demand clean energy jobs, a majority support an annual wage that is [higher than the national average of \\$56,310](#). Clean energy careers are some of the [fastest growing occupations](#) in the country, with wind turbine technicians being the fastest growing job, and solar photovoltaic installers are number two.

The US needs millions of specialized workers to manufacture, build, deploy, and operate batteries, wind turbines, and solar panels. Electricity demand is increasing and expected to [surge 35-50% by 2040](#) due to the expansion of data centers, domestic manufacturing, and mass electrification of cars, buildings, and appliances. In order to meet this rising demand, clean energy companies are stepping up to the plate and building new projects that support reliable and affordable power for Americans.

With this growth, hundreds of new clean energy projects are forecasted to create more than [18,000 construction jobs](#) alone, and millions of jobs will be created in the clean energy industry at large. Estimates show that an additional [4.94-6.01 million job-years](#) will be created over the next five years across multiple industry sectors in clean energy. Many of these new jobs will be in the manufacturing and construction industries that have above average wages and unionization rates. Manufacturing jobs are set to increase as the clean energy industry onshores the supply chain, bringing a new wave of industry jobs. Union rates are also expected to grow with the increased need for more trade workers as additional clean energy is deployed.

*"The renewable industry is creating good local jobs. That's certainly true in Minnesota. We've seen a lot of progress there in terms of both high-quality family supporting jobs and also jobs available to local workers."*  
[Kevin Pranis, Marketing Manager of Great Lakes Regional Organizing Committee for LiUNA](#)

Unions are important to help prepare the highly skilled labor force needed to deploy clean energy and battery storage capacity across the nation. Unions are already deeply entrenched in this work. The Laborers' International Union of North America (LiUNA) has been working in the clean energy field for a decade, building clean energy projects across the nation. Clean energy projects have "employed thousands of LiUNA members, with more jobs coming over the next decade", as [stated](#) on their website.

*"We've seen a really positive shift with good union jobs that pay the same rates that members would make on a conventional energy project,"*

[Kevin Pranis, LiUNA](#)

New members will be joining the ranks in the coming months and years to meet labor needs associated with the influx of new clean energy projects. "As the clean energy industry grows, LiUNA members are stepping up to new challenges and securing careers in the field".

Additionally, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) has been working toward a clean energy future by partnering with industry leaders and shaping cutting-edge training programs. The IBEW is not only working to ensure that clean energy projects get completed, but that these projects create good paying union jobs. The [IBEW believes](#) that "good, clean energy jobs are good for society".

Clean energy brings high-quality union jobs. The buildout of clean energy projects across the country will bring more of these critical, family-supporting jobs to Americans and activate the next generation of workers. The time is now to employ hard-working Americans to usher in a new era of American energy dominance.

Interested in learning more about clean energy job training programs and/or unions in your area? Check out the [LiUNA](#) and the [IBEW](#).

\*a job year represents one year of work for one person.