PRESS RELEASE

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Wisconsin Clean Cities has obtained the Charging Infrastructure Connection Simplification Resource Grant

$15,000 awarded

The Charging Infrastructure Connection Simplification Resource (CIISR) is a project sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy. The purpose of CIISR is to develop best practices regarding the service connection procedures utilities use when providing (or upgrading) service for their customers' EV (electric vehicle) charging equipment, as well as develop support resources for small fleet and MFH (multi-family housing) customers. CIISR is designed to include small, medium-or heavy-duty fleet businesses as well as MFH propriety managers or operators, located in HUB (historically underutilized businesses) Zones or disadvantaged communities.

As EV adoption continues to surge, the demand for accessible, reliable charging infrastructure grows in parallel. But for many, especially small fleet operators and residents of MFH, getting chargers connected to the electric grid can be a needlessly complex process.



To help both utilities and customers navigate this critical part of the EV transition, the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) recently released two reports that dive into the barriers and offer actionable solutions to streamline charger service connections. The EPRI is a non-profit organization that conducts research and development for the electricity sector. EPRI focuses on a wide range of topics related to electricity generation, delivery, and use, aiming to improve the safety, reliability, affordability, and environmental responsibility of electric power.

To support the rapid scaling up of EV infrastructure, various U.S. electric utilities are examining their processes to seek efficiency improvements for connecting new EV charging infrastructure to the grid. Utility processes for new or upgraded electric service are often lengthy and require extensive technical information and stakeholder coordination, partly necessitated by the complexity and criticality of the electric grid. Such complex processes can, however, lead to inefficiencies and redundancies, especially when applied to diverse use cases that are not always well-suited to a one-size-fits-all approach.

The following are key findings from the EPRI report:

- Small fleets and MFH properties, particularly those in disadvantaged communities (DACs), possess characteristics that need consideration in EVSE (electric vehicle supply equipment) energization projects.
- Current EVSE service connection processes present a unique challenge to widespread charger deployment compared to other types of new load connecting to utility systems, particularly as the volume of requests grows locally.
- Challenges to EV service connections can include utility and customer staffing limitations, supply chain delays, unforeseen upgrade costs,

customer education and awareness, and service connection processes that do not allow for special considerations associated with EVSE service connections.
- Customer-identified preferred practices include the ability to readily find where they are in the connection process to know what's needed of them and what's coming.
- Some leading practices with utilities include creating working groups to examine and propose process improvements.
- For organizations that have a role in these processes, there are a range of approaches from low-cost options to options requiring more investment that may be taken to address identified challenges cost-effectively and in a collaborative manner.

The EPRI has identified 44 solutions to address these key findings. Several of them include:

- Develop an online library of information and resources specifically for small fleets and MFH customers, easily accessible from each utility's homepage.
- Provide a list of managed charging programs and solutions.
- Provide education on EV rates.
- Provide educational resources on "what to expect" for project costs.
- Provide an EVSE service connection process checklist and process flow chart for each stage of the journey, with average timelines for each stage.
- Provide detailed explanations to customers on the information that is required for permits, changes to easements, and other approvals.

As the EV market continues to develop and grow, there will likely be a need for continued streamlining and optimization of the energization journey. It is envisioned that utilities can use the solution ideas from the EPRI research as they explore options for addressing their current challenges and streamlining their energization processes. As EV charging infrastructure is installed to keep pace with customer needs, electric utilities must be prepared for the increase in service requests for new or upgraded services.

For more information, check out the full reports on EPRI's website:

- Report 1: Simplifying Utility Service Connections for Small Fleet and Multi-Family Housing Electric Vehicle Charging
- Report 2: A Grid Connection Roadmap for Utilities to Support Small Electric Vehicle (EV) Customers

Wisconsin Clean Cities

Wisconsin Clean Cities is a nonprofit organization that works to move Wisconsin towards cleaner fuels and technology in the transportation sector. We educate the public about the various cleaner alternative fuels, how to adopt them, what funding incentives there are to help them acquire transition, etc. Please see our list of current projects & events section to get a better understanding of some of the work we do.