



ILLINOIS UTILITIES BUSINESS
DIVERSITY COUNCIL

NEWS RELEASE FOR WEB

IUBDC announces plan to further advance Illinois diverse business community

Council makes great progress in its first year and outlines plan for 2016

CHICAGO (May 9, 2016) – Ameren Illinois, ComEd, Illinois American Water, Nicor Gas, Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas filed annual supplier diversity reports with the Illinois Commerce Commission on April 15, 2016. This filing was the first since the formation of the Illinois Utilities Business Diversity Council (IUBDC) in 2015.

“First, it is important to recognize that this year, we came together to discuss the findings of our individual supplier diversity reports,” said Melvin Williams, chair of the IUBDC Board of Directors and president of Nicor Gas. “That kind of transparency and collaborative spirit demonstrates that the IUBDC is making an impact.”

The filed reports show that overall among Illinois utilities, 2015 spending with diverse businesses increased significantly from the previous years:

Total spending in certified diverse business community by IUBDC member utilities:

2014	2015
\$617.2 MM	\$875.1 MM

Through discussing the findings of the reports and the experiences of each member utility, the Board of Directors identified opportunities where the IUBDC can play a role in supporting and furthering the efforts of each utility.

For example, the IUBDC recognizes that the member utilities can work together to strengthen the bench of diverse businesses trained and ready to meet the unique needs of the energy and water utility sectors. By referring qualified businesses, supporting training events and sharing best practices to onboard new partners, the IUBDC can help its member utilities mitigate the risk of decreased spend with diverse suppliers in the event a small diverse business is acquired by a larger, non-diverse company or when one chooses not to bid or is not the successful bidder on a large project for various reasons.

In less than one year, the IUBDC has created an organizational structure and charter, held two inaugural stakeholder events, launched its website as a central resource, and recently passed its first strategic plan. In addition, the Council made strides to work toward a more uniform reporting structure for annual supplier diversity reports to the Illinois Commerce Commission.

During the year ahead, the IUBDC plans to hold two additional stakeholder events, engage in a roundtable discussion at the American Association of Blacks in Energy National Conference, and continue to share best practices, successes and challenges to advance opportunities for diverse businesses among the member utilities across the state of Illinois.

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The Illinois Utilities Business Diversity Council (IUBDC) members include Ameren Illinois, ComEd, Illinois American Water, Nicor Gas, North Shore Gas and Peoples Gas. The mission of the IUBDC is to serve the Illinois utilities as a forum for best practice sharing and information exchange with the focus on advancing the growth and utilization of utility-based diverse businesses in the state of Illinois.