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Increasing Sustainability: CHA Switches on the Dearborn Microgrid



Image



CHA celebrated the ceremonial “switching on” of the Bronzeville Community Microgrid this month at Dearborn Homes – one of the nation’s first neighborhood scale community microgrids – and an important milestone in CHA’s sustainability efforts.

A microgrid is a small power grid with electrical boundaries that can operate when connected to the larger electric grid and as an “island” when there’s an interruption on the main grid. This means that the Bronzeville community, including Dearborn Homes, will have greater resiliency in the event of storms, severe weather, or cyber threats.

The installation also has a tangible impact on CHA’s operating budget. Thanks in part to the State of Illinois’ Solar for All program, CHA was able to lock in a low rate to buy the renewable energy produced on site. This makes the energy rate at Dearborn Homes almost 75% lower than our non-solar electricity supply. The rooftop and ground-mounted arrays are generating approximately 10% of the annual electrical usage across Dearborn Homes’ 17 buildings, which are home to 660 families.

“This project is a win-win-win-win for CHA, its residents, and the environment,” CHA CEO Tracey Scott said.

[**Read about the project in the Chicago Sun-Times here.**](#)

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