



2025

See How Good Fuels Great™

NICOR GAS COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT

Table of Contents

1
Page 5
Who We Are



2
Page 8
Strategic Objectives



3
Page 22
Our Foundations



4
Page 25
Building on Our Impact



5
Page 29
Pillar Grants



6
Page 35
Volunteerism and Employee Giving



Letter from Wendell Dallas

At Nicor Gas, our purpose is rooted in the people and communities we serve. Keeping customers at the center of everything we do shapes not only how we deliver energy but also how we show up across Northern Illinois every day. We are inspired by the families, businesses and neighborhoods who trust us to provide warmth, comfort and peace of mind, and their stories remind us why our commitment to service matters so deeply.

In 2025, that commitment meant delivering safe, reliable and affordable natural gas to more than 2.3 million customers across over 650 communities. It also meant being there when our communities needed us most: keeping homes safe during winter storms, supporting customers through hardship and working alongside local partners to meet basic needs and strengthen neighborhoods.

We believe everyone deserves access to dependable energy and the support necessary to thrive. Through customer assistance programs, community partnerships and targeted investments, Nicor Gas helps bring resources, relief and opportunity closer to those who need them most. Whether helping a neighbor pay their bill, partnering with nonprofits to deliver food and shelter or investing in programs that open doors to economic mobility, our impact extends beyond energy — it's about building stronger, more resilient communities.

That impact is powered by our people. Across Northern Illinois, Nicor Gas employees give their time, talents and expertise in service to others, working alongside community leaders and residents to create lasting, visible change.

This report highlights that work in action. It reflects how Nicor Gas delivers Fuel for Life — not only by providing the energy people depend on, but by helping bring stability, support and possibility to communities across Northern Illinois. It is a privilege to lead an organization so deeply committed to service, and we are proud of the collective impact reflected in these pages.

Wendell Dallas

Wendell Dallas

President and Chief Executive Officer, Nicor Gas



Letter from Meena Beyers

At Nicor Gas, our purpose goes far beyond delivering energy. It is about how we show up every day — for our customers, our communities and the future of Northern Illinois. I am proud to share our 2025 Impact Report, which highlights the ways our charitable giving, partnerships and community initiatives create meaningful, lasting impact.

This report shares stories of that impact in action. Through our corporate and foundation giving, we support nonprofit partners that address basic needs, protect the environment and expand economic opportunity. From emergency shelter and food access to environmental restoration and STEM education, our giving is rooted in listening to communities and responding with purpose and care.

Impact also means helping customers navigate challenges and access resources that support stability and comfort. Across our service territory, we work alongside trusted community organizations to connect families with bill payment assistance, energy efficiency programs and wraparound services that help make homes safer and more affordable. Our resource fairs brought these services directly into neighborhoods, while initiatives like Smart Neighborhood and Healthy Homes uncovered ways to make efficiency and sustainability more accessible and affordable.

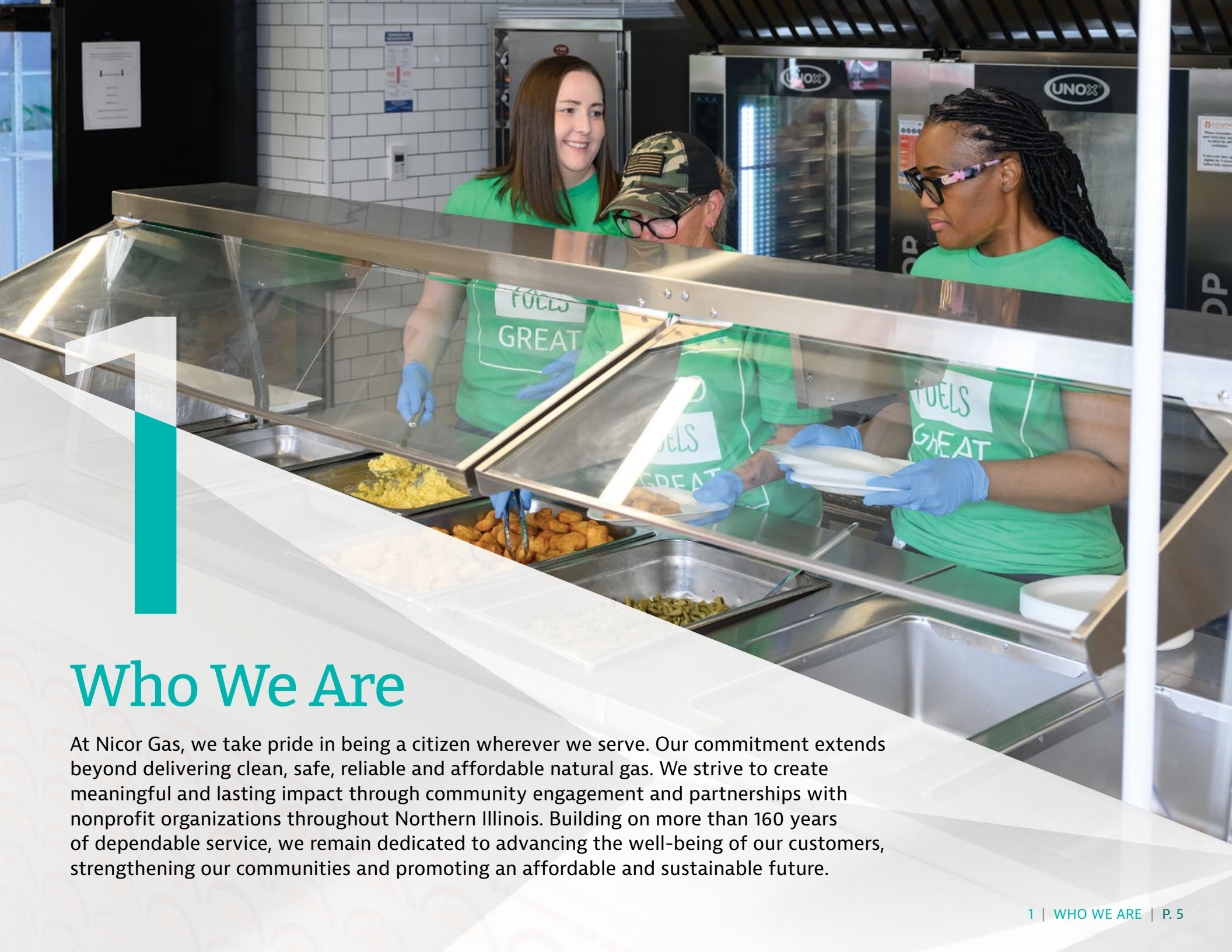
As an energy company, we also recognize our role in strengthening the region's economic vitality. Nicor Gas partners with economic development groups, workforce organizations and educational institutions to help build pathways to careers, support small businesses and foster economic growth.

None of this impact is achieved alone. It is fueled by trusted nonprofit and community partners and, most importantly, by our Nicor Gas employees — who bring our commitment to service to life every day. Through hands-on volunteerism, employee-led fundraising and dedicated board service across Northern Illinois, our people extend our purpose well beyond our day-to-day operations and into the communities we serve.

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about how Nicor Gas is building on its impact. We are proud of what we have accomplished together — and even more excited about the work still ahead.

Meena Beyers

Vice President of Business and Community Development, Nicor Gas



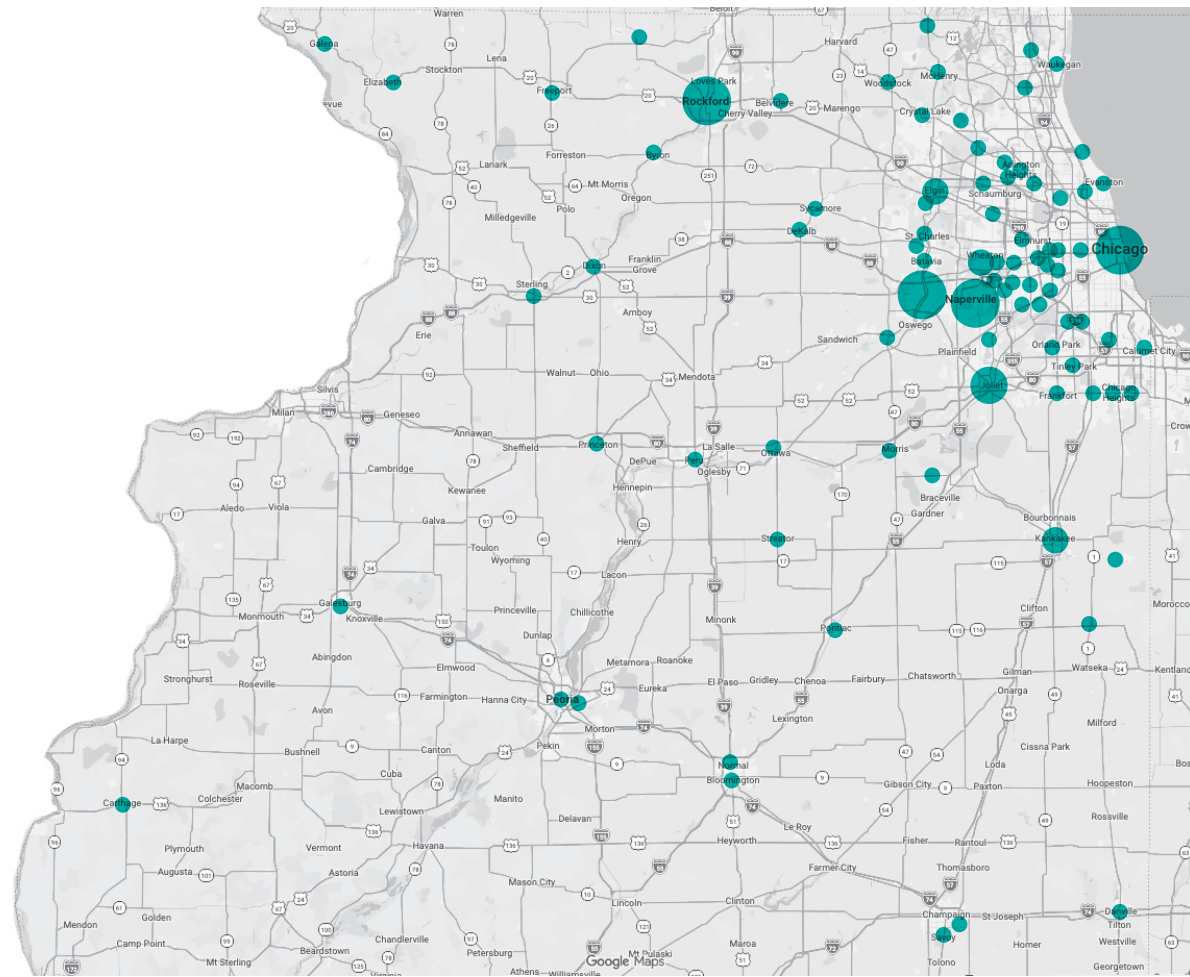
Who We Are

At Nicor Gas, we take pride in being a citizen wherever we serve. Our commitment extends beyond delivering clean, safe, reliable and affordable natural gas. We strive to create meaningful and lasting impact through community engagement and partnerships with nonprofit organizations throughout Northern Illinois. Building on more than 160 years of dependable service, we remain dedicated to advancing the well-being of our customers, strengthening our communities and promoting an affordable and sustainable future.

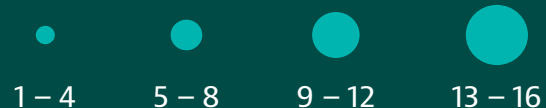
How and Where We Give

At Nicor Gas, our values shape how we care for our customers and give back to our communities. We strive to create a more resilient region by investing in the growth and potential of people and organizations throughout Northern Illinois.

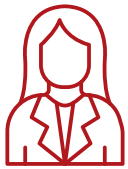
- **Corporate giving** is our primary mechanism for supporting local nonprofit organizations that align with our strategic initiatives and pillars of giving. On an annual basis, Nicor Gas provides upwards of \$2.5M in corporate grants.
- **The Nicor Gas Foundation** allows us to broaden our charitable reach, focusing on Illinois-based nonprofits that support community enrichment, economic mobility and environmental stewardship.
- **Nicor Illinois Community Investment (NICI)** is a standalone foundation established by Nicor Gas in 2021. NICI supports bold economic development initiatives that help local communities. NICI's place-based approach prioritizes investments in Joliet, Rockford and South Suburban Cook County.



NUMBER OF GRANTS PER AREA



About Nicor Gas



2.3M

Customers



\$6M

in Donations



650+

Communities



160+

Years Serving
Illinois



2,300

Employees



336

Organizations
Supported





2 Strategic Objectives

In 2021, we established three strategic initiatives and set defined goals to guide our corporate giving and strengthen our community impact.

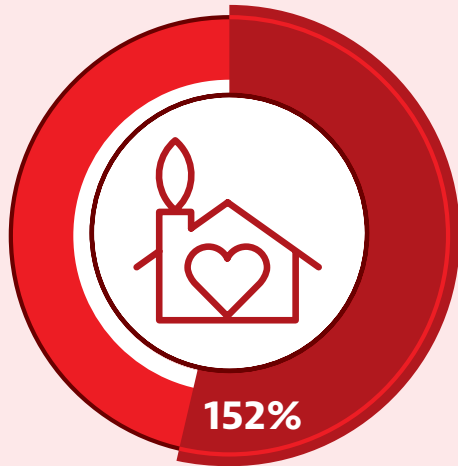
As of 2025, **we have officially exceeded all three of our goals across all objectives.** These results demonstrate the effectiveness of our strategic framework and reinforce our commitment to evidence-based investments that deliver tangible, long-term benefits for the communities we serve.

Progress to Goals

Support Basic Needs

Our Goal

Support the basic needs of 250K families in Illinois with food, clothing and shelter



Our Progress

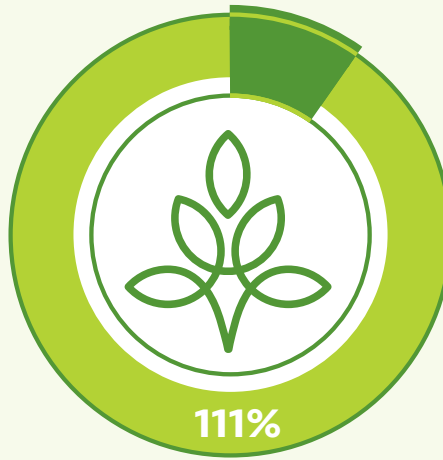
381K

Families Supported

Protect the Environment

Our Goal

Protect 10K acres of open space in Northern Illinois and expand access to green spaces



Our Progress

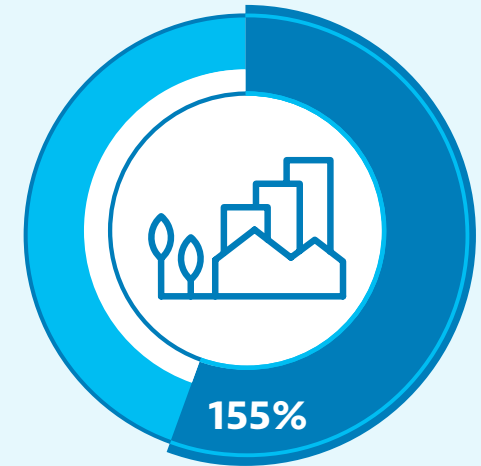
11.1K

Acres Protected

Enable Economic Opportunity

Our Goal

Infuse \$5M into communities to unlock economic opportunity



Our Progress

\$7.76M

Infused in Communities



Support Basic Needs

Access to clean, safe, reliable and affordable energy is essential to our customers' well-being — and delivering that energy creates a deeply personal connection with the communities we serve. That connection drives our responsibility to help address other critical needs, from bill payment assistance to food security.

Across Illinois, more than 11 percent of residents live in poverty, a number that has grown amid ongoing economic pressures. Our Support Basic Needs focus prioritizes programs that provide immediate, life-stabilizing assistance for individuals and families facing urgent challenges. Through partnerships with trusted organizations delivering food, shelter, clothing and disaster relief, we help ensure our communities have the foundational resources they need not just to get by, but to recover and thrive.

Current Impact



16.6K

Coats and Other Resources



646K

Nights of Shelter



22.5M

Meals Provided



Turning Shelter into Opportunity in Aurora

Across Northern Illinois, the need for housing support continues to grow, with more families and individuals seeking pathways to stability and self-sufficiency. Behind these numbers are stories of resilience and hope — people working to rebuild their lives and strengthen their communities. As Illinois faces one of the fastest-rising demands for housing assistance, our nonprofit partners are responding with compassion and innovation, providing safe shelter, supportive services and long-term solutions that help individuals and families achieve lasting stability.

Nicor Gas is proud to support these vital efforts by partnering with organizations that provide emergency and transitional housing across Northern Illinois. Through grants, volunteer engagement and energy assistance programs, Nicor Gas helps ensure that shelters and housing providers can maintain safe, comfortable environments for individuals and families in crisis. By investing in programs that address both immediate housing needs and long-term stability, Nicor Gas strengthens the foundation for resilient communities and helps neighbors move toward secure, independent futures.



Partner Spotlight **Hesed House**

Organizations like Hesed House in Aurora, Illinois, support individuals and families experiencing homelessness by providing resources that help them regain independence and stability. As the second-largest homeless shelter in Illinois, Hesed House offers both emergency and supportive housing services tailored to meet each family's unique needs. In addition to housing services, Hesed House operates the area's largest comprehensive resource center for case management, counseling services, financial guidance, legal support and other wraparound services. **Nicor Gas has committed \$60,000 over two years** to support the mission of Hesed House.



Last year, Hesed House provided 35,173 nights of shelter to 237 families.

“ I’m thankful for Hesed House because it was more than a shelter — it was a place of safety and new beginnings. During a difficult season, it gave me stability, compassion and hope. The kindness I experienced there reflected true Hesed — love in action — and I will always be grateful for that. ”

— Hesed House Client

Amber's Story

Nine years ago, Amber and her family made a courageous decision to leave California for Illinois, hoping for a fresh start. But from the moment they stepped off the train, challenges met them at every turn. Life in Illinois was tough, and in March 2024, an unexpected series of hardships — her husband losing his job and their family car breaking down — led them to Hesed House in search of support.

Amber, a devoted mother of six, has battled anxiety and depression, and there were moments in the shelter when panic attacks overwhelmed her. But she never faced those struggles alone. The compassionate staff at Hesed House were there to comfort and support her through the toughest times. Amber shared:

“I am grateful for them because the stress of trying to figure out how we are going to come up with money from this week to next week, it was really straining on us.”

As she settled into the Family Shelter, Amber found more than just a safe place — she found a community. She made friends, embraced opportunities to help others and even became known for her famous sweet tea, which she loved serving at lunchtime. During their time at Hesed House, her children experienced joyful milestones — an 8th-grade graduation, a 10th birthday and even a homecoming dance. This past November, Amber and her family moved into a home of their own, stepping into a new chapter filled with hope and stability.



Holiday celebrations at Hesed House

“ Nicor Gas has been phenomenal in caring for its homeless neighbors, with both financial resources and employee volunteerism. ”

— Ryan Dowd
Interim Executive Director
of Hesed House



Protect the Environment

At Nicor Gas, we understand that protecting the environment is vital to the well-being of our communities. Our goal to Protect the Environment focuses on programs that encourage customers and employees to engage with nature through conservation and sustainable practices. We support projects that advance cleaner fuels, improve air and water quality, conserve natural resources and preserve green spaces. By partnering with organizations that promote environmental stewardship — from ecological restoration and pollinator habitat creation to environmental education and expanded access to natural areas — we help build a cleaner, more sustainable future for Northern Illinois.

Current Impact



12K

Trees Planted



15K

Volunteers Engaged



16.5K

Pollinator Plants
Installed



Planting Change Together in Bloomington-Normal

Protecting our environment is a shared responsibility — one that demands coordinated action to preserve Illinois' natural resources and strengthen community resilience. Planting trees offers one of the most powerful and lasting solutions, strengthening ecosystems, improving public health and creating greener, more resilient neighborhoods. Through the dedication of our partner organizations, tree-planting initiatives are helping restore natural habitats, reduce carbon emissions and work toward future generations inheriting a cleaner, healthier Illinois.

Nicor Gas is committed to helping advance conservation and sustainability across Northern Illinois by supporting programs that protect natural resources and promote environmental stewardship. Through partnerships with local nonprofits, community organizations and environmental groups, Nicor Gas invests in initiatives that encourage energy efficiency and enhance green spaces. Whether through funding tree-planting projects, supporting energy education or hands-on volunteerism, Nicor Gas works to create lasting environmental benefits that contribute to a healthier, more resilient Illinois for generations to come.



Partner Spotlight

Ecology Action Center

The Ecology Action Center (EAC) is leading the way with their innovative and effective Tree Corps program. EAC serves as the nonprofit environmental sustainability agency for Bloomington, Normal and McLean County, leading efforts that make measurable, lasting improvements to local ecosystems. Through its Tree Corps program, EAC aims to plant thousands of trees each year to improve air quality, expand wildlife habitat, sequester carbon and protect local watersheds. Since its launch, Tree Corps has planted nearly 40,000 trees in and around McLean County, transforming landscapes and advancing community-wide sustainability goals.

In 2025, with the help of Nicor Gas funding, Tree Corps successfully planted 5,542 trees across five publicly owned sites with the assistance of 179 local volunteers.

In support of this vital work, **Nicor Gas has committed a \$70,000 grant over two years** to help the Ecology Action Center grow the Tree Corps program's reach and impact.

Planting locations included Illinois Department of Transportation medians, areas around Evergreen Lake, the Bloomington-Normal Water Reclamation District and Lake Bloomington. Each site was carefully designed to feature **19 native species**, including oaks, walnut, hickory, pawpaw and persimmon, to maximize ecological value and provide extended habitat for wildlife, particularly pollinators such as native moths and butterflies.

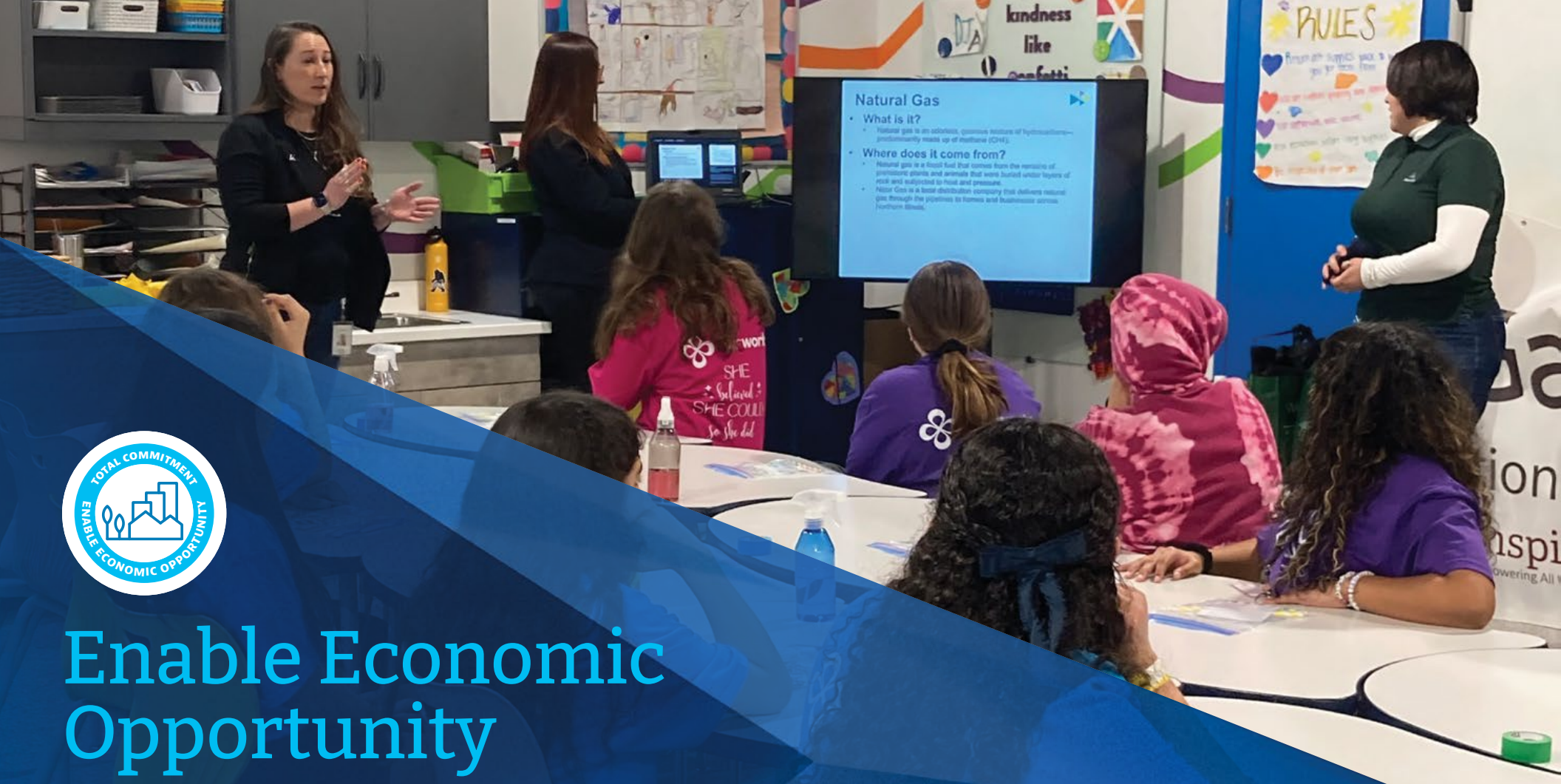


The lifetime impact of these trees is significant: an estimated 84 million gallons of avoided water runoff, 55 million pounds of carbon sequestered, and nearly 300,000 pounds of air pollutants removed. These outcomes demonstrate how strategic environmental investments can help deliver measurable benefits to both people and the planet.



“ The Ecology Action Center is extremely grateful for the support of Nicor Gas and other partners to make the Tree Corps Program successful. ”

— Michael Brown
Executive Director at EAC



Enable Economic Opportunity

Nicor Gas recognizes that access to energy and opportunity go hand in hand. By delivering clean, safe, reliable and affordable natural gas, we help fuel the homes, businesses and industries that drive our region's growth. This connection fuels our broader commitment to enabling economic opportunities, supporting initiatives that create jobs, strengthen communities and foster long-term prosperity.

Through our goal to Enable Economic Opportunity, we invest in building blocks that sustain a vibrant economy: education, job training and economic development. We partner with organizations that promote access to learning, workforce readiness and entrepreneurial opportunities, helping individuals enhance quality of life and contribute to thriving communities across Northern Illinois. By aligning our resources with programs that prepare the workforce of tomorrow and advance local development, Nicor Gas continues to play an active role in fueling the state's economic vitality.

Current Impact



3.2K

Mentors and
Teachers Trained



71K

Hours of Programming
Delivered



158K

Students and Program
Participants



Cultivating Illinois' Future Innovators

Innovation is the engine that drives progress, and preparing the next generation of STEM talent is essential to sustaining that momentum. Across Northern Illinois, industries are evolving rapidly as technology reshapes the way we live, work and connect. Yet, the demand for skilled professionals in science, technology, engineering and mathematics continues to outpace supply. By investing in education, mentorship and hands-on learning opportunities, our partners are helping young people build the skills and confidence needed to lead in tomorrow's economy. Together, we're cultivating creativity, advancing innovation and ensuring that Illinois remains a leader in shaping the future of STEM.

Nicor Gas is dedicated to empowering students and workers across Northern Illinois by supporting education and workforce development programs that open doors to opportunity. Through partnerships with secondary education programs, nonprofits and community organizations, Nicor Gas invests in STEM education, technical training and career readiness initiatives that prepare individuals for success in an evolving energy and technology landscape.



Partner Spotlight

Illinois Science and Technology Institute

The Illinois Science and Technology Institute (ISTI) provides project-based experiences that help young people build confidence and employability skills. Last year, Nicor Gas provided a \$25,000 grant to support two initiatives through ISTI — the STEM Challenge and the Mentor Matching Engine. Through the STEM Challenge, Illinois high school students work with company mentors to design and present solutions to real industry problems. At the conclusion of the challenge, students present their innovative energy-focused solutions to their mentors and Nicor Gas representatives, with one team from each classroom advancing to the statewide showcase in April. The STEM showcase is a celebration of creativity, collaboration and the next generation of STEM talent.

In 2025, the program engaged 420 students, 16 teachers and 13 schools with 97 mentors. 94% of participants gained confidence in their STEM skills.



As part of this partnership, Nicor Gas employees serve as mentors for students in ISTI programs, sharing their expertise and helping guide meaningful, hands-on learning experiences.



“Volunteering as an engineering mentor for ISTI has been very rewarding. I’ve learned that it’s never too early to teach problem solving with the technical and creative mindset of an engineer. This is a volunteer opportunity that I look forward to every year.”

— Tito Sanchez
Manager of Transmission at Nicor Gas



The second initiative, the Mentor Matching Engine (MME), provides a virtual platform that transforms mentorship by removing financial and geographic barriers. MME connects students with industry professionals for sustained, project-based interactions that foster ownership, confidence and career readiness. By facilitating meaningful, long-term communication between mentors and mentees, the platform helps students gain valuable insights into professional research and problem-solving while mentors contribute to developing the next generation of innovators. Together, Nicor Gas and ISTI are cultivating a dynamic ecosystem of learning and mentorship that empowers young people, strengthens STEM education and supports Illinois' future workforce.

Photo credit: Zoe Rain

“Participating as a mentor with the Illinois Science and Technology Institute was one of the most rewarding experiences of my year. Spending time with students who are just beginning to explore their place in STEM reminded me why this work matters so much. Their curiosity, their questions and the way they approached challenges with fresh eyes made every session energizing. I loved being able to support them, even in small ways, and it’s exciting that my colleagues and I are continuing as mentors again this year.”

— **Bruce Liu**, Manager of Analytics and Compliance at Nicor Gas

3

Our Foundations



Through the Nicor Gas Foundation, we invest in the strength and vitality of the communities we serve through programs that support the foundation's focus areas of advancing economic mobility, environmental stewardship and community enrichment. The foundation fuels the good work in our communities, creating even greater outcomes for the people and places we serve.

Nicor Gas Foundation Partner Spotlight: Mercy Housing Lakefront

Mercy Housing Lakefront provides program-enriched, affordable housing for families, seniors and people with special needs who lack the economic resources to access safe, quality housing. Mercy Housing delivers a wide range of supportive programs that help residents overcome challenges and build self-sufficiency including health and wellness programs, after school support, financial literacy training, community involvement and housing stability.

Last year, the Nicor Gas Foundation made a \$15,000 grant to Mercy Housing Lakefront. Nicor Gas has built on the success of last year's grant, establishing a new two-year, \$50,000 partnership with Mercy Housing to further support its affordable housing programs and resident services.

Our partnership with Mercy Housing Lakefront has evolved into a robust collaboration that now includes participation in the Multi-Family Energy Savings (MFES) program, an initiative of the Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program. As part of this effort, Nicor Gas' Energy Efficiency Team conducted a comprehensive assessment of potential upgrades at Mercy Housing's Batavia property, identifying opportunities to enhance efficiency and lower costs for residents. In 2025, the project has generated \$125,969.50 in incentives and achieved energy savings of 19,992 therms. With continued expansion over the next year, we anticipate an additional \$280,476 in incentives and approximately 18,894 therms in further savings — amplifying both the financial and efficiency benefits of this partnership.

In 2025, Mercy Housing Lakefront provided housing to 2,087 residents at locations in the Nicor Gas service area, including Countryside, Batavia, Aurora, Elgin, Carol Stream, Wheaton and Kankakee, with 91% of those residents maintaining stable housing.

Source: Evaluation, Measurement & Verification by Guidehouse



“ Mercy Housing Lakefront relies on strong community partnerships to advance our mission, and we are proud of the impact Nicor Gas is helping us to achieve. Their multifaceted support, including energy efficiency upgrades through the Multi-Family Energy Savings (MFES) program, supportive services grants and hands-on volunteerism, is helping to make our shared community healthier, more affordable and better connected. ”

— Mark Angelini
Mercy Housing Lakefront President



Nicor Gas Foundation Partner Spotlight: Griffin Museum of Science and Industry



The Nicor Gas Foundation is proud to partner with the Griffin Museum of Science and Industry to bring energy innovation and education to life through the Museum's newest major permanent exhibit, Powering the Future. With a \$250,000 grant, the foundation is helping support the development of this dynamic, hands-on experience that explores how energy shapes our daily lives — today and in the years ahead.

Through interactive displays, immersive learning zones and large-scale physical experiences — including a two-story spiral slide and climbing structure — the exhibit invites guests of all ages to discover how energy connects every part of our natural and built world. Visitors can turn their own potential energy into kinetic energy, build working power grids and investigate how sources like natural gas, electricity and batteries fuel modern life.

The exhibit also features energy-centric artifacts spanning more than a century of innovation, from a 1923 Milburn Light Electric Automobile to a modern geothermal panel and interactive elements, such as an ice wall that demonstrate energy's environmental impact.

“ Nicor Gas' support is helping us expand our efforts to inspire the next generation of scientists, engineers and problem-solvers. ”

— Dr. Chevy Humphrey
President & CEO at Griffin Museum
of Science and Industry

Powering the Future continues to tell the story that started with the Coal Mine, Griffin Museum of Science and Industry's very first exhibit that debuted when the Museum opened in 1933. Presented in tandem, these exhibits acknowledge the vital history of both the energy industry and the Museum's legacy exhibits while exploring what's possible in the years and decades to come.

Through this partnership, the Nicor Gas Foundation and the Griffin Museum of Science and Industry are helping spark curiosity and empower future problem-solvers. Powering the Future is more than an exhibit; it's an invitation for every visitor to imagine how we can work together to build a resilient energy landscape for generations to come.

Nicor Illinois Community Investment



Established by Nicor Gas in 2021, the Nicor Illinois Community Investment (NICI) foundation helps strengthen the company's commitment to local communities by funding organizations that drive economic mobility. Using a place-based approach to direct resources where they are most needed, NICI advances its vision of economic opportunity for all in Northern Illinois through three key pillars: economic mobility, commercial development and small business support.



Comprehensive Community Solutions

Comprehensive Community Solutions, Inc. (CCS) is a grassroots organization established in 1992 in Rockford to serve young people transitioning out of the criminal justice system. Since then, CCS has grown to provide workforce development programs that lead participants to sustainable wages, meaningful community engagement and affordable housing.

NICI awarded a \$100,000 grant to CCS to scale its successful youth programs, RockForWork and Alive & Free, to serve adults. The two programs help individuals build resilience, achieve personal goals, secure meaningful employment and build sustainable futures.

“Our partnership with NICI allows CCS to extend trauma-informed care and holistic support to older youth and adults, while they pursue industry-recognized credentials.”

— William Chatman
Executive Director & CEO of CCS

4

Building on Our Impact

Nicor Gas continues to advance its commitment to building stronger, healthier and more resilient communities across Northern Illinois. Over the past two years, the company has accelerated a wide range of initiatives — from pioneering clean energy innovation and improving indoor health and safety, to expanding access to nutritious food and strengthening essential community resources. The following updates highlight the meaningful progress made across these efforts, showcasing how Nicor Gas is investing in people, supporting local partners and delivering sustainable solutions that improve quality of life for families throughout the region.

Sustaining Families with Energy Assistance



Shield of Caring

The Shield of Caring program has become a powerful source of stability for income-eligible Nicor Gas customers, offering critical support during moments of financial strain. Since its launch in 2021, the program has provided \$6,119,204 in energy assistance to 26,119 customers, helping families maintain access to reliable service when facing challenges such as job loss, illness, military deployment or disability. Beyond bill assistance, Shield of Caring has expanded its reach to address broader community needs — supporting 1,540 customers with housing assistance, distributing 30,984 food boxes, providing 9,961 warm winter coats and delivering emergency disaster services to 7,479 individuals. In total, 76,083 families have received some form of support, underscoring the program's far-reaching impact.

Nicor Gas' partnership with The Salvation Army is the driving force behind this success. As the administrator of the Shield of Caring program, The Salvation Army brings deep community expertise and a trusted network that ensures assistance reaches households quickly and compassionately. Nicor Gas' \$10 million investment in Shield of Caring reflects the company's commitment to helping customers navigate financial hardship and maintain essential services. Together, Nicor Gas and The Salvation Army have built a responsive, community-centered support system that strengthens families, enhances stability and demonstrates the power of partnership in meeting urgent needs.



Building Food Security through Partnership



Last year, 12 Community Connection Resource Fairs served 2,969 families and distributed more than 79,584 pounds of food.

Community Connection Center

Nicor Gas established the Community Connection Center (C3) in 2022 as a free service designed to connect customers to bill payment assistance, energy efficiency offerings and basic needs resources through the Community Assistance Navigator (CAN) tool and direct C3 engagement. All tailored to provide meaningful relief and improve household stability. Since its launch in April 2022, C3 has made a measurable impact across the communities we serve. Because of engagement with the Community Connection Center, nearly 41,000 customers have received grants or discounts, resulting in \$26.5 million in financial support. In addition, close to 30,000 customers have participated in energy efficiency programs, with an overall savings of over 950,000 therms.

Over the last few years, we've expanded our outreach by hosting the Nicor Gas Community Connection Resource Fairs – events that connect residents with energy efficiency offerings and access to essential local resources. **Top Box Foods received a \$200,000 grant from the Nicor Gas Foundation** to support food distribution at these fairs. Each two-hour fair brings together community organizations, hospital systems and state agencies that share information about basic needs and support services. Alongside Top Box Foods' grocery distributions, Nicor Gas teams provide guidance on available grants, bill assistance programs and energy efficiency offerings that help customers save money and improve household stability. By combining nutritious food access with education and resource navigation, this collective effort delivers meaningful, localized support, helping families strengthen their economic resilience and build lasting community connections.



Expanding Our Support

In 2025, Nicor Gas and its foundation deepened their commitment to addressing food insecurity across Northern Illinois, awarding more than \$1 million in grants to food banks, pantries and community food distribution partners throughout its service territory. Rising costs of living and ongoing economic challenges continue to leave many families struggling to put food on the table, making the need for reliable, accessible nutrition support more urgent than ever.

This year, Nicor Gas and its foundation expanded their reach to better serve communities in the far west and south regions of its territory through new partnerships with River Bend Food Bank and Eastern Illinois Food Bank. These collaborations strengthen local distribution networks and extend resources to new areas. Together with its new and long-standing partners, Nicor Gas and its foundation are helping to strengthen Illinois' food network, connecting families to nutritious meals, enhancing community health and advancing its mission to build stronger, more sustainable communities statewide.



Through these partnerships, Nicor Gas grant recipients provided more than 14,611,057 meals to individuals and families in need — helping ensure that households across Illinois have access to the nourishment they need to thrive.



Partnering with the Health Care Sector for Healthy Homes

Healthy Homes

Through the **Energy Efficiency Healthy Homes Program**, Nicor Gas partners with community-based organizations, health care providers and insurers to deliver a whole-home approach to improving comfort, health and affordability for customers living with respiratory challenges. The program combines traditional weatherization and energy efficiency upgrades with health and safety improvements — helping families experience safer, cleaner and more efficient homes year-round. By leveraging multiple funding sources, including health care partnerships and grant dollars from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois, Healthy Homes is able to address critical health and safety barriers — such as roof issues, mold, moisture and other necessary repairs — that would otherwise prevent a home from being weatherized.

Qualifying customers receive free products and services such as smart thermostats, furnace filters, air sealing, insulation, furnace repairs and other health and efficiency upgrades. Certified Energy Advisors, trained under **Building Performance Institute (BPI) Healthy Home Evaluator** protocols, helping ensure each home meets standards that go beyond efficiency — keeping spaces dry, clean, safe, ventilated and contaminant-free. By addressing both energy and health needs, the Healthy Homes Program reduces household costs while proactively supporting better indoor air quality and overall quality of life. This initiative exemplifies Nicor Gas' commitment to strengthening communities through affordable, sustainable solutions that make homes healthier and more resilient.



Last year, more than 100 individuals benefited from comprehensive weatherization, indoor air quality and health and safety upgrades

through Healthy Homes. The program's environmental impact is equally significant — achieving 62.8 metric tons of CO₂ savings, equivalent to the carbon sequestered by 63 acres of forest in one year.

Source: EPA Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator and Illinois Statewide Technical Reference Manual

2025 NICOR GAS COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT

Advancing Resilience in Affordable Housing in Aurora



The Nicor Gas Smart Neighborhood™

The Nicor Gas Smart Neighborhood™ in Aurora, Illinois, is a first-of-its-kind collaboration with Habitat for Humanity designed to demonstrate affordable, resilient and sustainable homes powered by a blend of natural gas, renewables and smart technologies. The 17-home development features dual fuel systems and connected, energy-efficient appliances that showcase how natural gas complements electricity in a modern, low-emissions home.

To achieve the project's energy goals, the Smart Neighborhood homes will include rooftop solar, battery storage systems and heat recovery ventilation (HRV) systems that improve the homes' efficiency and indoor air quality. Additionally, the homes will be built with insulating concrete form (ICF) walls, which create an efficient building envelope.

Construction advanced rapidly in 2025, beginning with the raising of the first walls in July and progressing to the unveiling of the Aurora neighborhood's Show Home in November. The Show Home serves as an educational hub and reflects contributions from leading technology partners, with additional homes moving through various stages of construction in 2026.

The project demonstrates the potential for replicable, scalable pathways to sustainable, affordable housing through a two-year research partnership with Southern Company Services, GTI Energy and the National Laboratory of the Rockies. Findings will help identify sustainable, cost-efficient building strategies that strengthen community resilience and expand energy equity for families across Northern Illinois. Find out more at ngsmartneighborhoods.com.



5

Pillar Grants

In 2025, our Pillar Grant Program continued to invest in nonprofit organizations across our service territory through a competitive grant process. Funding was awarded in five key focus areas — Basic Needs, Community and Culture, Education and Workforce Development, Environmental Stewardship and Family and Social Services. Last year, the program distributed **\$500,000 in grants to 110 nonprofit organizations**, supporting initiatives that strengthen communities and improve quality of life throughout Northern Illinois.

Basic Needs

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT



“The pantry staff are very welcoming and never act like it’s a bad time or it’s a problem. They’re just always open arms.”

— Michelle
WSCP Neighbor

West Suburban Community Pantry

The West Suburban Community Pantry (WSCP) continues to meet growing community needs with the help of a \$5,000 grant from Nicor Gas. Demand for WSCP’s services remains high, and this funding helped the pantry distribute 3.9 million pounds of food last fiscal year — **nearly 750,000 pounds more than the previous year**. In 2025, **WSCP served 17,700 neighbors, providing nearly 3.2 million meals** to individuals and families experiencing hunger, ensuring that nutritious food remained accessible to those who need it most.

In 2025, **44% of the food distributed was fresh produce and 12% was meat and dairy** — items that are both nutritious and often unaffordable for many families.

Through initiatives like its Online Market, WSCP is breaking down barriers to access by meeting people where they are. The program allows customers to order food online and pick up at convenient community locations throughout the week. Together, Nicor Gas and WSCP aim to ensure that families across DuPage and Will Counties have the nourishment, knowledge and resources they need to thrive.

Community and Culture

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT



Raue Center for the Arts

The Raue Center for the Arts is inspiring creativity and confidence through its dynamic arts education programming, supported by a \$5,000 grant from Nicor Gas. Designed to make the arts accessible to all, Raue's programs provide inclusive, hands-on learning experiences that strengthen social connection and inspire creative expression. In the past year, **more than 10,000 participants engaged in Raue's performing arts education offerings**, which now include expanded programs for adults and children with sensory needs, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to experience the transformative power of the arts.

Through initiatives such as the *Raue Center School for the Arts*, *Sage Backstage* and *Mission Imagination*, students and community members develop performance and production skills while building confidence, empathy and teamwork. Research consistently shows that arts engagement enhances academic achievement and emotional well-being, and Raue's outcomes reflect that impact — **95% of participants report feeling safe, supported and inspired** to contribute to their communities. Together, Nicor Gas and the Raue Center for the Arts are fostering stronger communities by ensuring that creativity and culture remain at the heart of education and community life.

“Your grant is impacting the lives of our entire population base including the addition of Sensory-Friendly events!”

— Richard Kuranda
Executive Director, Founding Artistic Director at Raue Center for the Arts

Education

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT



“My family and I truly enjoyed our experience at the STEM Fest!!! We can't wait to join again next year.”

— STEM Fest Attendee



Northern Illinois University Foundation

Northern Illinois University's STEM Fest is a dynamic celebration of science, technology, engineering and mathematics that transforms the DeKalb campus into a vibrant hub of innovation and discovery. Last year, NIU received a \$5,000 grant from Nicor Gas to support the STEM Fest event. Drawing more than **5,000 visitors from over 100 communities**, STEM Fest ignites curiosity and showcases the power of STEM education to open doors and expand possibilities. At STEM Fest, participants explored everything from a human brain and a race car to a working robot and interacted with exhibits highlighting the wide range of STEM careers shaping our future. The event connects students and families with hands-on learning experiences and career pathways in STEM fields. Nicor Gas employees volunteered at the 2025 STEM Fest, sharing career awareness and safety information while encouraging young learners to explore opportunities in energy and engineering. Together, NIU and Nicor Gas are helping inspire curiosity and spark the next generation of innovators across Northern Illinois.

Environmental Stewardship

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT



Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation

Last year, the Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation (JDCF) received a \$5,000 Environmental Stewardship pillar grant from Nicor Gas to advance conservation efforts at the Rutherford Refuge at Twin Bridges Nature Preserve in Warren, Illinois. The project involved native seed collection and application to a restored prairie. Through mentorship with a native seed program professional from the Northwest Illinois Prairie Enthusiasts, employees and volunteers gained hands-on experience in seed collection, drying and mix development, skills that will help expand native seed preservation efforts across northwest Illinois.

The Rutherford Refuge project has strengthened regional collaboration around native seed conservation and as a direct result, **10.2 acres at Rutherford Refuge were seeded with a diverse mix of 266 native plant species**, all sourced from local genotype seed collected by JDCF staff and volunteers. In total, **more than 50 volunteers contributed over 237 hours to the project** — helping to restore native landscapes, strengthen ecological resilience and inspire future conservation leaders throughout northwest Illinois.



“ Nicor Gas funding resulted in substantial community engagement, broadening the local volunteer base, inspiring learning and connection with the natural world in youth as young as third grade. ”

— Kelly Myers
Director of Development,
Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation

Family and Social Services

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT



“ This is Zane’s first time participating in Math Tutoring and it’s going so well! His first-grade teacher said she sees his confidence with math increasing. ”

— Miranda
mother of GiGi's Playhouse
client Zane

GiGi's Playhouse

GiGi's Playhouse Tinley Park is a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering individuals with Down syndrome in Chicago's south suburbs and promoting a culture of acceptance and inclusion. The Tinley Park location **offers more than 18 programs designed by professional therapists and educators**, advancing speech, literacy, math, motor skills and social development for participants of all ages, from early learners to adults. In 2025, GiGi's Playhouse Tinley Park **served over 500 individuals through 2,770 visits and 4,564 hours of programming.**

Last year, Nicor Gas awarded GiGi's Playhouse Tinley Park a \$5,000 grant to help sustain and expand these vital services. That support contributed to the launch of GiGiMOVE: Crawlers & Walkers, a new program for children ages birth to five that focuses on developing gross and fine motor skills, language and social interaction through engaging, hands-on activities. GiGi's Playhouse continues to grow its impact, empowering individuals with Down syndrome, strengthening families and fostering a more inclusive community across the region.

6

Volunteerism and Employee Giving

Volunteerism and employee engagement are vital drivers of our community impact, reflecting our commitment to giving time, talent and expertise where they can make the greatest difference. Beyond hands-on service projects, many of our team members also contribute through board service, offering strategic leadership and governance support to nonprofit organizations that strengthen our communities.

2025 Volunteer Engagement Partners

- Aurora Area Interfaith Food Pantry
- Boys & Girls Club of North Central Illinois
- Crystal Lake Food Pantry
- DuPagePads
- DuPage Senior Citizens Council
- Ecology Action Center
- FIRST Illinois Robotics
- Greater Chicago Food Depository
- Kendall County Community Food Pantry
- Mercy Housing Lakefront
- Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans
- Mutual Ground
- Northern Illinois Food Bank
- South Holland Community Center
- The Conservation Foundation
- Top Box
- United Way of Lake County
- United Way of Metro Chicago
- West Suburban Community Pantry
- Will County Habitat for Humanity
- WINGS

Volunteer Statistics



4,610
Total Volunteer Hours



143
Total Events



894
Total Volunteer Shifts



423
Unique Employee
Volunteers



43
Fire Department
Open Houses



45
Career
Awareness Events



Annual Volunteer Week

Every year, Nicor Gas employees, together with their families and friends, commit their time to giving back during Nicor Gas' Volunteer Week. This initiative, which originally began as a single-day event in May, has grown into a full week of volunteer activities aimed at enriching the communities Nicor Gas serves. During Volunteer Week in 2025, 257 volunteers took part in 19 events, for 772 service hours. Projects included:

- Sorting and packing food for 35,000 meals with the Northern Illinois Food Bank
- Removing over 1,000 seeds from invasive plants with the Conservation Foundation
- Planting 23 garden beds with fruits and vegetables for residents at Mercy Housing

Holiday Help

During the winter season, employees throughout Northern Illinois come together to organize food drives to collect over 5,000 pounds of food donations, provide toys, hats, gloves and scarves for children, assist local nonprofit groups and more. In 2025, Nicor Gas employees and the Nicor Gas Foundation provided food and monetary donations to the following organizations:

- **Beyond Hunger**
- **Cornerstone Community Development Corporation**
- **Crystal Lake Food Pantry**
- **Greater Chicago Food Depository**
- **Home Sweet Home Ministries**
- **Kendall County Community Food Pantry**
- **Loaves & Fishes**
- **MorningStar Mission Ministries**
- **Northern Illinois Food Bank**
- **PADS to Hope**
- **River Bend Food Bank**
- **Rock River Valley Food Pantry**
- **West Suburban Community Pantry**



United Way Campaign

Every year, Nicor Gas conducts an employee giving campaign to support United Way and its affiliated nonprofit organizations. Throughout the month-long initiative, employees participate in fundraising events, friendly competitions and educational activities that showcase the positive impact the United Way has across our service area.

In 2025,
530 employees
generously
pledged \$325,394
to nonprofit
organizations
throughout the
campaign.



BBQ fundraiser supporting United Way at Yorkville regional office



United Way fundraiser at Nicor Gas Headquarters in Naperville



Impact in Action

Thank you to all
our 2025 partners





At Nicor Gas, we recognize that our success is deeply connected with the strength of our partnerships and our commitment to building thriving communities. By fostering collaborative relationships and investing in community development, we help to ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for all.

For more stories of community impact and to learn about upcoming grant opportunities, visit nicorgas.com/charitablegiving.