

Top 100 Employers, Municipal, and Local Government Research

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Research Findings Overview

Blue CSR analyzed the top 100 employers in Ohio to assess their commitments to renewable energy, greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction, and/or net zero goals. Companies with *formal* targets – such as a specific percentage of renewable energy or emissions reduction by a target year, or a goal to become carbon neutral by a certain date – were identified as having *formal* commitments, and those goals were recorded. Companies with informal aspirations related to renewable energy, GHG reductions, and carbon neutral targets were also noted for a holistic view. In addition, local governments were evaluated based on their commitments to the same environmental indicators.

Key Findings/High-Level Talking Points

- Of the top 100 employers analyzed, 66 had either a *formal* renewable energy commitment or other initiatives related to renewable energy infrastructure and sourcing
 - 29 of those companies had *formal* renewable energy commitments, with their combined (average) targets amounting to 83% renewable energy by 2030
- Additionally, 64 of the top 100 employers in Ohio had either a *formal* Scope 1 and 2 GHG reduction goal or other commitments related to emissions reductions
 - 51 of those companies had *formal* Scope 1 and 2 GHG reduction goals, with their combined (average) targets resulting in a 48% reduction by the year 2030
- A total of 44 companies among the top 100 employers in Ohio have committed to either a carbon neutral or net zero target
 - A majority of companies are aligned with the Paris Accord and climate science consensus by selecting 2050 as their target year to reach net zero emissions
 - Meeting carbon neutral or net zero targets requires a transition to 100% renewable energy
- The three largest cities in Ohio which make up a total population of ~1.62 million people have all committed to reaching 100% renewable energy by 2050 at the latest, indicating a concrete need for more renewable energy infrastructure in the state of Ohio

Top 100 Ohio Employers Trends

To develop a more comprehensive understanding, the top 100 employers were divided into smaller industry subcategories for closer evaluation. Key findings for each of the three critical environmental indicators for each industry are shown below:

Auto and Industrial Manufacturing (15 companies)

- Of the 100 top employers in Ohio, 15 are part of the auto and industrial manufacturing sector
 - Of those 15 companies, 80% have either set a *formal* renewable energy target or have demonstrated commitment through initiatives like installing microgrids, signing solar sourcing contracts, or investing in on-shore and off-shore wind projects
 - Additionally, 87% of these manufacturing companies have Scope 1 and 2 GHG reduction goals or are pursuing ongoing initiatives aimed at reducing emissions year over year
 - With 73% of these companies having committed to carbon neutrality or net zero emissions goals, it is evident that both operations are being aligned with long-term sustainability goals, recognizing the strategic importance of the energy and emissions transition

Retail and Consumer Goods (31 companies)

- Retail and consumer goods companies represent the largest portion of the top 100 Ohio employers, accounting for 31 businesses
 - Of the 31 businesses, 71% have made either formal or informal commitments to renewable energy. While 32% have *formal* commitments, 39% are advancing the transition through other means such as onsite solar generation, purchasing RECs, signing PPAs, and sourcing from wind farms
 - In parallel, 71% of the retail and consumer businesses have made promises to reduce their GHG emissions with 65% of them having created formal Scope 1 and 2 GHG reduction goals to reduce emissions in large percentages by various future milestones
 - Despite the strong focus on emissions reduction, only 35% of these companies have committed to net zero goals, suggesting an emphasis on achieving near- and mid-term carbon reduction targets before setting long-term neutrality goals

Logistics and Supply Chain (5 companies)

- A significant percentage (80%) of the top employing logistics and supply chain companies in Ohio have either *formal* renewable energy commitments or are supporting renewable energy adoption through efforts such as setting sourcing targets or reducing electricity consumption across sites
- Likewise, 80% of these logistics and supply chain companies are reducing their GHG emissions with *formal* goals and major projects to transition to lower fuel and no-fuel forms of massive transport (cars, planes, trucks, etc.)
- Three of the five major logistics and supply chain companies have committed to being carbon neutral or net zero within the next 25 years

- As battery storage technology and electric vehicle capabilities continue to improve, energy demand is expected to increase, prompting more companies in this sector to prioritize renewable energy sourcing

Telecommunications (3 companies)

- Of the three top employing telecommunications companies in Ohio, all have either *formal* renewable energy commitments or support renewable energy generation through measures such as purchasing RECs, onsite solar installations, and transitioning to EV fleets
- Spectrum, AT&T, and Verizon also all have either *formal* GHG emission reduction goals or other initiatives aimed at lowering their carbon footprint
- All three of the top employing telecommunications companies in Ohio have publicly stated goals to obtain either carbon neutrality or net zero by mid-century indicating internet and communication service providers are facing higher pressure to decarbonize
 - With an increased demand for fast streaming and data services, especially driven by advancements in AI, these companies face heightened pressure to enhance energy efficiency and sustainability across their operations

Energy (3 companies)

- Although none of the top employing energy companies in Ohio have explicit renewable energy commitments specifying a certain percentage of renewable energy by a target year, the three energy companies represented all have other commitments to energy infrastructure such as participation in the Energy Star program, and investing in renewable energy sources
- Marathon Petroleum, AEP, and FirstEnergy have all committed to reducing their Scope 1 and 2 emissions (by varying percentages) by the end of 2030 with two of the three companies committing to net zero or carbon neutral by 2050
- Energy companies are critical partners for the rest of the business sectors to achieve their targets

Healthcare (22 companies)

- As largely non-profit providers, these groups do not have the same investor / customer pressures as other large publicly traded companies and are slower to adopt renewable energy, GHG emissions reduction, and net carbon goals and efforts
 - Approximately 23% of Ohio's top healthcare employers have a *formal* renewable energy commitment or other programming in place to reduce/transition energy use
 - 27% of the healthcare employers have *formal* GHG emission reduction goals or progress with only 14% having committed to a net zero target
 - Many healthcare sectors are facing scrutiny or backlash from the current administration on their climate-related goals, forcing them to be removed or hidden from public documentation or face the possibility of losing federal funding

Financial Services (11 companies)

- A large portion (64%) of the top employing financial service companies in Ohio have both renewable energy commitments aiming to achieve anywhere from 50-100% renewable energy by 2050 and concrete Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions reduction targets
- Approximately 46% of these top employing financial service companies have either a net zero or carbon neutral aspirations

Universities (8 institutions)

- Virtually all the top employing universities in Ohio have made commitments to transform the way their institutions view energy sourcing and efficiency:
 - 25% of universities have *formal* 100% renewable energy goals while the other 75% have some other forms of energy commitment such as sourcing solar energy, increasing energy efficiency, purchasing PPAs, etc.
- Additionally, 75% of the top employing universities have *formal* GHG emission reduction goals or other forms of GHG emission reduction effort such as converting vehicle fleets to EVs and switching to alternative fuels to reduce their footprint year over year
- Rather than commit to net zero goals, 88% of the top employing universities in Ohio have publicly facing goals to reach carbon neutral operations by the end of the century

Note: Wright Patterson Airforce Base and the NASA Glenn Research Center were both in the top 100 employers list but were categorized as public sector/government and as such did not have goals

Local Government

The three *largest* cities in Ohio (Columbus, Cleveland, and Cincinnati) in addition to Dayton have all committed to **100% renewable energy** to be achieved by mid-century. With the total combined population of these cities reaching over ~1.756 million people the demand for renewable energy is expected to drastically increase as local governments strive to reach their publicly stated goals:

City	Population	Commitment(s) to Renewable Energy
Columbus	~939.9k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% municipal and residential clean energy procurement by 2030 • 100% commercial clean energy procurement by 2050

Cleveland	~363.8k	• 100% clean and renewable energy sources by 2050
Cincinnati	~316.2k	• 100% renewable energy by 2035
Dayton	~136k	• 100% renewable energy by 2050

Columbus, Cleveland and Cincinnati are also formal members of *Power a Clean Future Ohio* (PCFO). PCFO supplies expert guidance on creating and implementing critical energy and carbon reduction plans to 50 member communities located across the state of Ohio. While the communities have varying levels of commitment, each is part of a larger movement to reduce carbon emissions, develop clean energy infrastructure, implement equitable policy, and decrease energy costs for all community members. Some key projects of note include:

Lakewood, OH

- Committed to 100% carbon-free electricity by 2035 and a 50% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030
- Full-fledged climate action plan with an aim to achieve net zero by 2050
- Renewable energy infrastructure growth through rooftop solar, parking lot solar, community solar gardens, wind generation partnerships, offshore wind generation, various co-ops, purchasing of RECs

Athens, OH

- Solar development both on individual houses and through solar cooperatives
- Electrical aggregation through Southeast Ohio Public Energy Council (SOPEC)
- Tax incentives for renewable energy use