

State of the Illinois EPA

Illinois Environmental Regulatory Group Air Seminar
April 2026

James Jennings, Acting Director



2025 Recap

- ▶ Ensured Illinois received its allocation of U.S. EPA funding
- ▶ Environmental Justice Enforcement Strategy
- ▶ Enhanced action to address PFAS in water
- ▶ Brownfields program national recognition
- ▶ Executed agreement to support continued environmental research in Illinois
- ▶ Completed necessary work to procure EIMS



Federal Engagement

“Cooperative Federalism”

Relationship between state and federal environmental regulations

Federal funding status

Work with U.S. EPA Region V

FFY27 Budget Proposal



- Identifies permitting and drinking water investments as priorities
- Reduces U.S. EPA's operating budget by over 50 percent
- Eliminates categorical grant funding to States
- Cuts SRF funding by more than 90 percent

What's Next- Securing Illinois's Environmental Future



Infrastructure Resiliency




Regulatory Modernization



Public Engagement



Infrastructure Resiliency

- ▶ State Revolving Fund administration
 - ▶ Water program capacity development
 - ▶ Climate Pollution Reduction Grant
 - ▶ Expanded Brownfields activities
 - ▶ Energy Efficiency program expansion
 - ▶ Recycling and composting grant growth
- 

Public Engagement

- ▶ Environmental Justice enforcement strategy implementation
- ▶ Expanded application of Illinois EPA's Language Access Policy
- ▶ Heightened public availability and social media presence



IEPA Spring 2026 Legislative Initiatives

- ▶ [HB 5070](#) / [SB 3556](#) Ensures Illinois is not required to adopt weakened federal environmental standards as “identical-in-substance”
- ▶ [HB 5475](#) / [SB 3917](#) Ensures major water pollution source permits include PFAS sampling and reporting data
- ▶ [HB 4886](#) / [SB 3446](#) Ensures closed landfills remain secure indefinitely to prevent future adverse impacts to human health and the environment
- ▶ [HB 4960](#) / [SB 3667](#) Facilitates removal and remediation of abandoned underground fuel tanks, prioritizing remediation activities in underserved communities
- ▶ [HB 4829](#) / [SB 3229](#) Repeals defunct Environmental Laboratory Certification Committee no longer used
- ▶ [HB 5541](#) / [SB 3963](#) Modernizes legal framework for regulating compost facilities to encourage expansion of food waste recovery facilities and anaerobic digesters
- ▶ [HB 4960](#) / [SB 3667](#) Supports local redevelopment of contaminated properties, protecting residents and restoring sites, especially in underserved communities

FY27 Proposed Budget

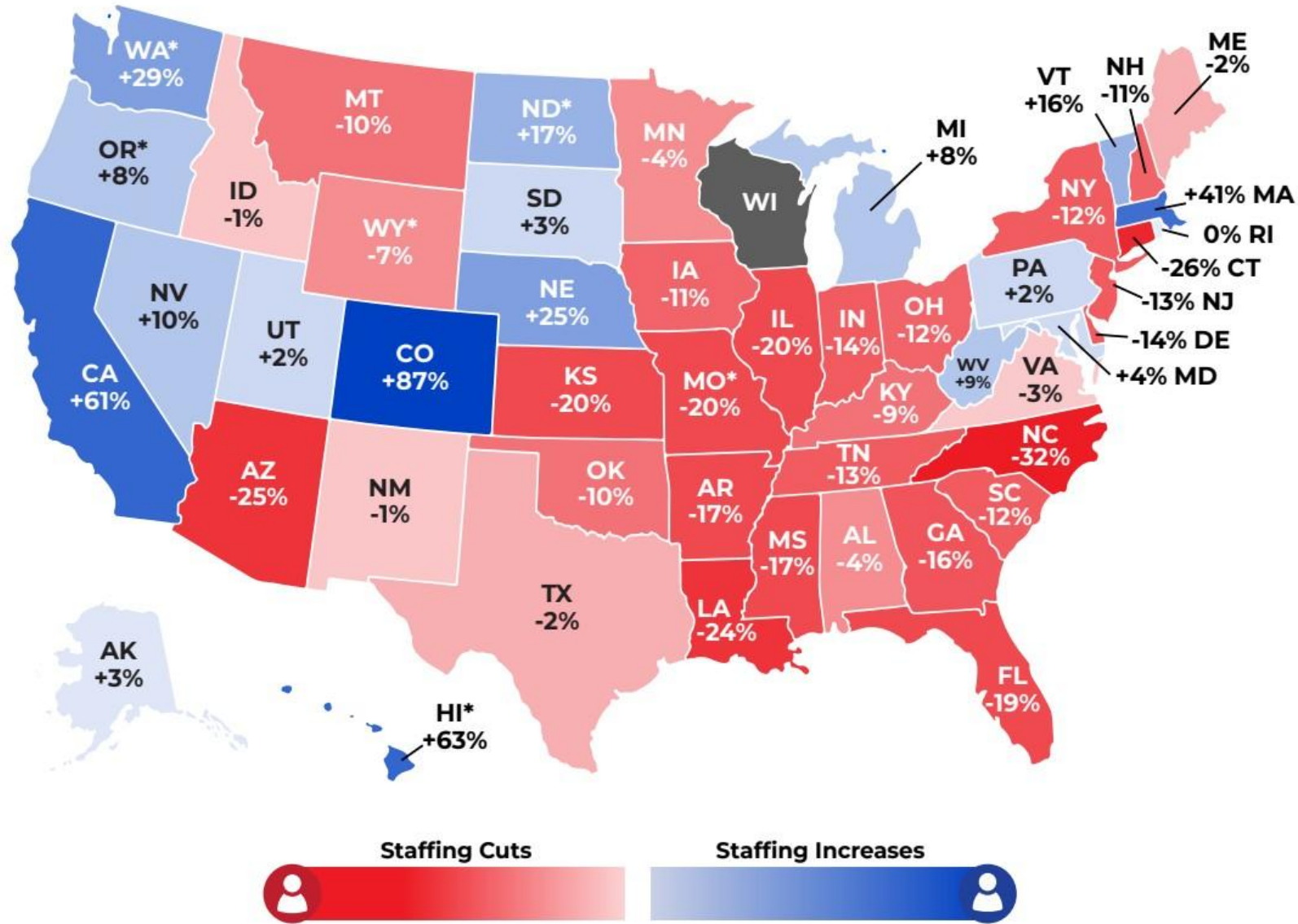
\$663.5 million operations budget

- 0.5% increase in appropriation authority
- New!
 - \$5 million for Brownfields Redevelopment Grant Program
 - \$38 million for Monsanto settlement

\$6.7 billion capital budget

- \$835 million for State Revolving Fund drinking water and wastewater infrastructure projects
- \$440 million for Lead Service Line replacements
- \$93.7 million for unsewered communities grants
- \$2.5 million for recycling and composting grants

Map 2. Changes in Staffing at State Environmental Agencies, 2010-2024



Source: State budget documents, 2010 to 2024. Note: States marked by asterisks have caveats to their data. Staffing data was not available for Wisconsin (shaded gray). See Appendix A for the caveats and methodology.

Organizational Growth

Headcount on February 19, 2026 = 813

Headcount in February 2025 was 739

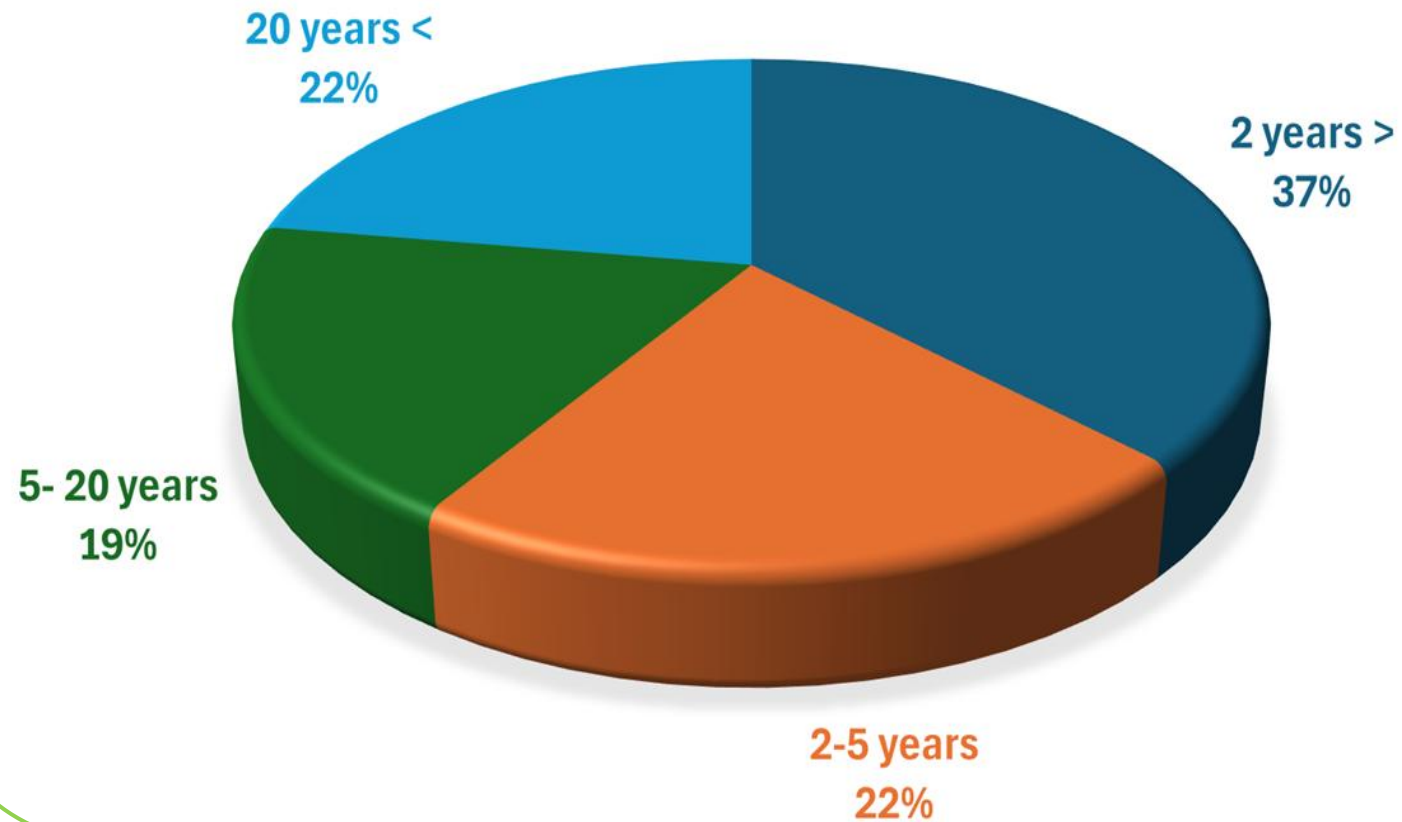
Stats from 2025

- ▶ Job Postings = 177
- ▶ Positions Filled = 223
- ▶ New Staff to the Agency = 136
- ▶ Departure/Retirements = 68

- ▶ Net Difference in Headcount from 2024 to 2025 = +65

Meeting our Evolving Workforce

IEPA EMPLOYEE TENURE



Environmental Information Management System

1

Connecting Existing
IT Systems

2

Expanding
Opportunities for
Electronic
Submissions

3

Providing Real-
Time Public
Information

Targeted Outputs

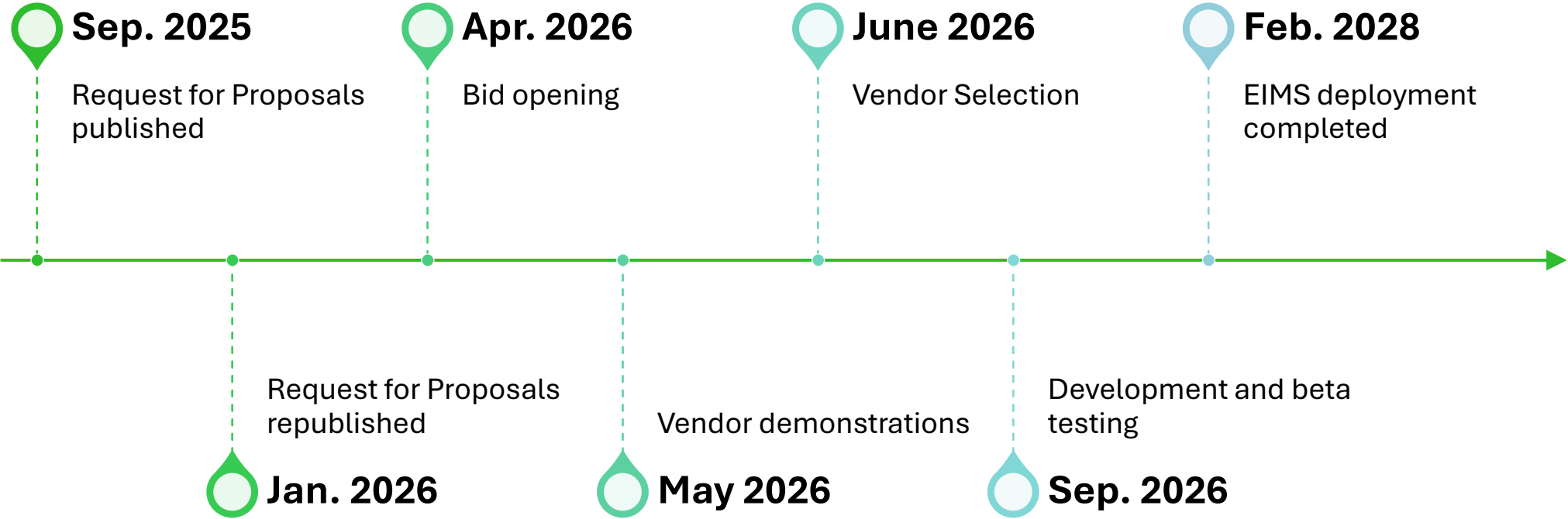
Holistic electronic permitting platform

Online reporting portal to replace paper submissions

Centralized information management system connecting all Agency programs

Increase in volume and quality of publicly available information

Development Timeline



Illinois EPA's AI Use Goals

▶ **Employee Experience**

- ▶ Empower staff with tools that reduce manual work and improve access to information

▶ **Stakeholder Experience**

- ▶ Enhance responsiveness, transparency, and clarity in public engagement

▶ **Operational Efficiency**

- ▶ Streamline document handling, data analysis, and routine workflows

Where are we
today?

Statewide AI Policy

Client Agency AI Policy Template

AI Implementation Checklist

Education

Copilot/Agent Space

AI Showroom

Contracts

Thank You!

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Safeguarding the environment, protecting Illinois' future.

ILLINOIS EPA