



NEWS RELEASE

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Illinois EPA and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Introduce 5th-6th Grade Online Curriculum Focusing on Energy *Annual Poster, Poetry, and Prose Contest to Follow Unit*

SPRINGFIELD — The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's Office for Mathematics, Science, and Technology Education (MSTE) have again partnered to create a new online science curriculum unit for fifth and sixth grade educators: *How does a bulb light?* The unit helps students explore energy, electricity use, and power sources and how they relate to climate change. The Illinois EPA's Annual Poster, Poetry, and Prose Contest theme "*Get Energized About Slowing Down Climate Change!*" will follow the new curriculum.

Educators, parents, and caregivers are asked to introduce these topics using the newly developed free, online curriculum. The unit is aligned with Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Following the unit, students are asked to create posters or written works for the Poster, Poetry, and Prose Contest related to the theme's focus. Entries must be submitted to the Illinois EPA by February 1, 2022. Additional information on the Contest can be found at: <https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/education/contest/Pages/default.aspx>.

"Educators and students have faced numerous challenges as they have adapted to hybrid, remote, and in-classroom learning. It is our hope these virtual opportunities allow students to continue to grow their knowledge of the environment and the importance of protecting it," **said Illinois EPA Director John Kim**. "This year's unit is especially relevant to current events related to climate change, and we are excited to see it translated to pieces of art and written work for the upcoming Contest."

How does a bulb light? will help students investigate the everyday phenomenon of an electric light turning on. Students will observe two strings of LED lights turn on, one being powered by battery and the other by plugging into a wall outlet. Students will record their observations and "wonderings," which will drive the flow of the unit as students plan and carry out their own investigations to answer their questions. This will include investigating electricity production and delivery, when and how to conserve, and recent and future changes in the energy system, including changes in transportation energy demands. The curriculum is available online to teachers and parents at <https://pathways.mste.illinois.edu/curriculum/energy>.

Environmental Pathways Curriculum 2021-Poster, Poetry, and Prose/2

Illinois EPA is proud to again partner with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Office of Mathematics, Science, and Technology Education to expand the Environmental Pathways curriculum. Earlier units developed through this partnership include “*Where does my food go?*” and “*Why is the pond green?*,” which can be found at:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/education/Pages/pathways.aspx>.

Information about all of Illinois EPA’s environmental education programs can be found at:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/education/Pages/default.aspx>, or by contacting Kristi Morris, Environmental Education Coordinator for the Illinois EPA by email at Kristi.Morris@illinois.gov.

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