



SOLAR PANEL INSTALLATION AT MASTER GARDENER IDEA GARDEN

DETAILS OF REQUEST:

What: Solar Panel installation on Idea Garden shed

Why: To provide electricity at the garden and to educate the community on sustainable energy

Who: Installation and assessment be done in partnership with local community groups and the University of Illinois.

Where: The Idea Garden, located on the University of Illinois Arboretum in Urbana, Illinois

Attachment(s): Areal image of Idea Garden

PROPOSAL:

University of Illinois Extension serving Champaign, Ford, Iroquois and Vermilion Counties with the assistance of local programs, including the Student Sustainability Committee and Solar Urbana-Champaign, proposes the installation of solar panels at the Idea Garden, located on the University of Illinois Arboretum in Urbana. The accompanying map shows the layout of the garden, The solar panels would be installed at shed (A) and provide power to building. The power grid would be extended to the garden to power light fixtures and outlets at sites B1-B4, C and D. Remodeling of the Idea Garden to provide access for people with disabilities is scheduled to begin in 2016, so this would be an opportune time to install underground cables. A small parking lot is also to be built at D. Funding for the proposed installation is not available from the grant supporting the remodel.

PURPOSE OF SOLAR PANELS:

The solar panels will serve two main purposes:

- 1) To provide electricity to the Idea Garden shed (lighting, outlets, etc.) Currently, the garden is not hooked up to the electric grid.
- 2) To educate the community on sustainable energy and the beneficial impact on the environment as well as its functionality in gardens, homes, and the community.

HISTORY OF THE IDEA GARDEN:

The Idea Garden was constructed by Champaign County Master Gardener volunteers in 1996. Master Gardeners invest over 4,000 volunteer hours in the garden annually. The garden also receives over 1,000 community visitors each season. Since its inception, it is both a highlight of the Urbana-Champaign community as well as the University of Illinois.

PURPOSE OF THE IDEA GARDEN:

The mission of the Idea Garden is to demonstrate ideas for garden design and maintenance. It is to provide a learning environment for the public and University of Illinois students that promotes environmentally responsible gardening practices. The Idea Garden is to serve as a site for educating the public and students, and to encourage and inspire its many visitors.

Submitted by:

Ava Heap

Program Coordinator, Horticulture

University of Illinois Extension, Unit 13

Champaign County

801 N. Country Fair Drive, Suite D

Champaign, IL 61821

Phone: 217-333-7672

carmien2@illinois.edu

Sandra Mason

Extension Educator, Horticulture

University of Illinois Extension

801 North Country Fair Drive

Suite D

Champaign, IL 61821

Phone: 217-333-7672

FAX: 217-333-7683

slmason@illinois.edu