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BURNS & McDONNELL SELF-PERFORMS CONSTRUCTION FOR 50-MEGAWATT ALTERNATING CURRENT SOLAR FIELD

Integrated Engineering and Construction Team Overcomes Many Challenges to Deliver Project on Time

KANSAS CITY, Missouri — Burns & McDonnell recently completed the construction of CenterPoint Energy's utility-scale solar project. Located near Troy, Indiana, the 50-megawatt alternating current/65-megawatt direct current project will mark another step toward the utility's goal of reducing operational emissions by 70% by 2035 based on its emissions in 2005.

The solar field is constructed of approximately 150,000 solar modules, each mounted on a NEXTracker single-axis tracker enabling the modules to track with the sun to maximize energy generation as the sun's rays naturally move throughout the day. Burns & McDonnell worked with local building trades and other subcontractors to assist with on-site labor efforts. Hiring local trades and subcontractors also promoted job growth in the region during a difficult economic downturn as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

"The client is very excited to have this solar project up and running," says Doug Riedel, senior vice president of renewables at Burns & McDonnell. "The client realizes the challenges the team faced going through construction, the COVID-19 pandemic and adverse weather and is thrilled with the finished project."

Burns & McDonnell was hired after the project's original engineer-procure-construct (EPC) contractor exited the EPC market. CenterPoint Energy looked to Burns & McDonnell, the firm that had been serving as the project's current owner's engineer, to provide engineering, detailed electrical, civil and structural design, procurement specifications and construction execution services. Using an integrated team — including AZCO, part of the Burns & McDonnell family of companies, for construction — allowed for consistency and effective communication across every phase of the project.

"Our ability to self-perform the construction of this job was vital to helping CenterPoint Energy diversify its generation portfolio," says Chad Cotter, director of solar EPC at Burns & McDonnell. "This project had a lot of moving parts, which, when paired with a pandemic, further complicated things. Our integrated team was able to successfully solve challenges as they arose."

Safety remained a top priority every step of the way with more than 164,000 safe work hours logged, zero days away and zero lost time incidents. With construction completed in January 2021, the new solar field generates enough electricity to power more than 12,000 households per year.

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About Burns & McDonnell

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Burns & McDonnell is a family of companies bringing together an unmatched team of 7,600 engineers, construction professionals, architects, planners, technologists and scientists to design and build our critical infrastructure. With an integrated construction and design mindset, we offer full-service capabilities with more than 60 offices globally. Founded in 1898, Burns & McDonnell is 100% employee-owned. Learn how we are designed to build.