



MINNESOTA BRIGHTFIELDS FACTSHEET

Understanding Brownfields & Brightfields

BROWNFIELDS

A “brownfield” is a property where site redevelopment or reuse may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of contamination. Common brownfields include former industrial sites, inactive landfills, closed factories or power plants, and abandoned mines.

BRIGHTFIELDS

A “brightfield” is a clean energy project (typically solar) on a brownfield. As of October 2024, only 6 of the [624 brightfield projects completed in the United States](#) were in Minnesota.

By the numbers: The potential of brightfields in Minnesota

US EPA identified at least 24,885 Superfund, RCRA, brownfield, and landfill sites in Minnesota that could be suitable for renewable energy. Repurposing **only 10% of the available acreage** for solar could result in:

Potential Benefits	Description
Land	23,000 acres of greenfields avoided
Power	3,200 MW of solar produced
Homes	540,000 homes powered
Jobs	18,500 jobs created and supported
Pollution	214 million tons of emissions reduced annually

Data from RE-Powering Tracking Matrix (US EPA), Independent Statistics and Analysis (US EIA), Emissions & Generation Resource Integrated Database (US EPA), and Jobs and Economic Development Impact - Photovoltaic Models (US NREL)



Acreage By Site Type

Superfund	7,673
RCRA	55,762
Brownfields	4,379
Closed Landfills	2,085
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Remediation Sites	162,395

Source: US EPA