LA CROSSE COUNTY

Exceptional services. Extraordinary place.

Sustainability Indicators

2024 Report

November 11, 2025

Prepared by

SUSTAINABILITY ANALYTICS

Contents

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the many La Crosse County staff persons and others who provided information for this report, and to all people and organizations engaged in the important work of preserving and improving the livability of our County.

Introduction

In 2009 the La Crosse County Board adopted a *Strategic Plan for Sustainability*. The plan identified multiple sustainability indicators to be monitored on an ongoing basis. Some indicators apply to government operations only, while others apply to the County as a whole. For most indicators, 2007 was the earliest year for which reliable data could be gathered. It was therefore designated as the "base year" against which future values would be compared. According to the *Strategic Plan for Sustainability*, a report was to be generated on an annual basis to monitor and highlight improvements or setbacks in the pursuit toward sustainability. This report summarizes the status of the following indicators through the end of 2024:

County Government Operations Indicators

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County Government Operations Indicators

Facility Energy Usage

The La Crosse County government utilizes electricity and natural gas energy sources to operate facilities; each is examined separately below. The County government implemented several facilities changes in 2016 and 2017 that significantly impacted subsequent energy usage levels:

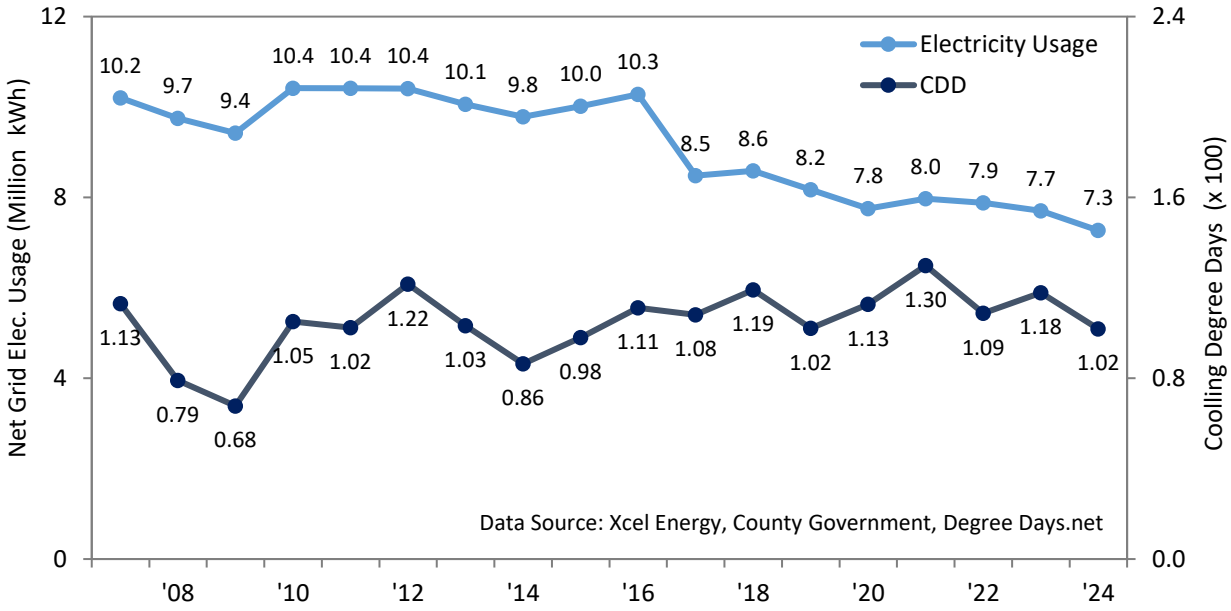
- A new Lakeview Health facility opened late in 2016, replacing the old facility.
- The Administration Center was relocated to another existing facility – smaller in area – in La Crosse. After renovations were completed, the new facility opened early in 2017.
- A boiler replacement and major expansion at the Health & Human Services facility were completed in late 2016

Electricity

La Crosse County government operations consumed 7.58 million kWh of electricity during 2024 – down from 10.20 million kWh in 2007 (-25.7%), and down from 7.71 million kWh in 2023 (-1.6%; see Figure 1). Photovoltaic solar arrays at five County government facilities – Goose Island, Lakeview, Administrative Center, Law Enforcement Center, West Salem Highway Shop, St. Joseph Highway Shop – produced 4.1% of the County government's total electricity usage in 2024 (314,641 kWh). After factoring out solar-produced electricity, the County government's net grid-sourced usage in 2024 was 7.27 million kWh – 28.8% lower than in 2007, and 5.7% lower than in 2023 (see Figure 1). In 2025, solar production is expected to grow to ~11% of the County government's total electricity usage.

The County government's electricity costs in 2024 were an estimated $375,000 less than if net grid usage had remained at 2007 levels, and $2.18 million less from 2008 - 2024 in total. Savings estimates are based on annual statewide average commercial electricity prices, published by the US Energy Information Administration.

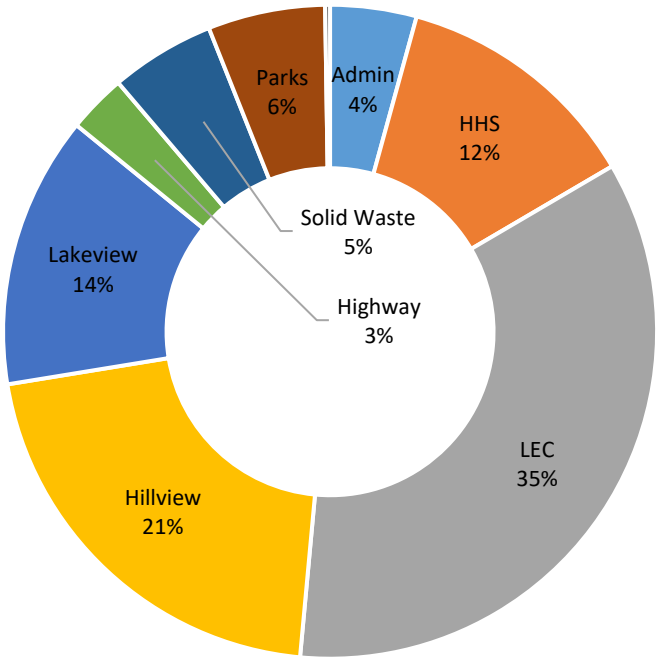
Figure 1: County Government Annual Net Grid Electricity Usage with Cooling Degree Days



Cooling degree days (CDD) measure the difference between outdoor temperature and the base indoor temperature of air-conditioned facilities. The annual CDD values shown in Figure 1 represent an index of overall summer heat levels. Higher electricity consumption for air conditioning is expected in years with higher annual CDD values. In La Crosse, cooling degree days were 13.6% lower in 2024 than in 2023.

Among County facilities/departments, the Law Enforcement Center used the largest amount of electricity in 2024 (35% of the County government total; see Figure 2). Hillview Health Care Center, Lakeview Health Center, and Health and Human Services facilities also used relatively large quantities.

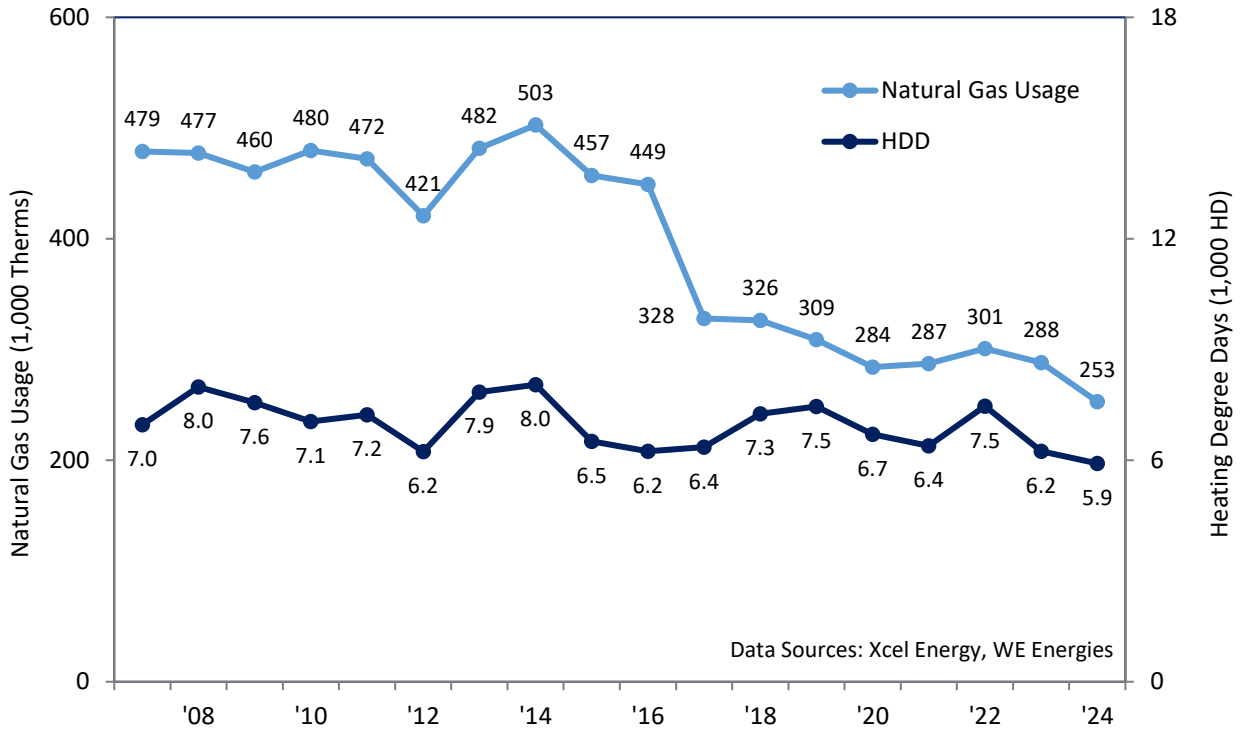
Figure 2: County Government 2024 Net Grid Electricity Usage by Facility/Department



Natural Gas

La Crosse County government operations consumed 252,937 therms of natural gas in 2024 – down from 478,918 therms in 2007 (-47.2%), and down from 288,273 therms in 2023 (-12.3%; see Figure 3).[1] Lower natural gas usage in 2024 compared with 2023 may have resulted from decreased heating loads, due to warmer winter temperatures; see HDD discussion below. The County government spent an estimated $162,000 less on natural gas in 2024 than if usage had remained at the 2007 level, and $1.1 million less from 2008-2024 in total. Savings estimates are based on annual statewide average commercial natural gas prices, published by the US Energy Information Administration.

Figure 3: County Government Annual Natural Gas Usage with Heating Degree Days

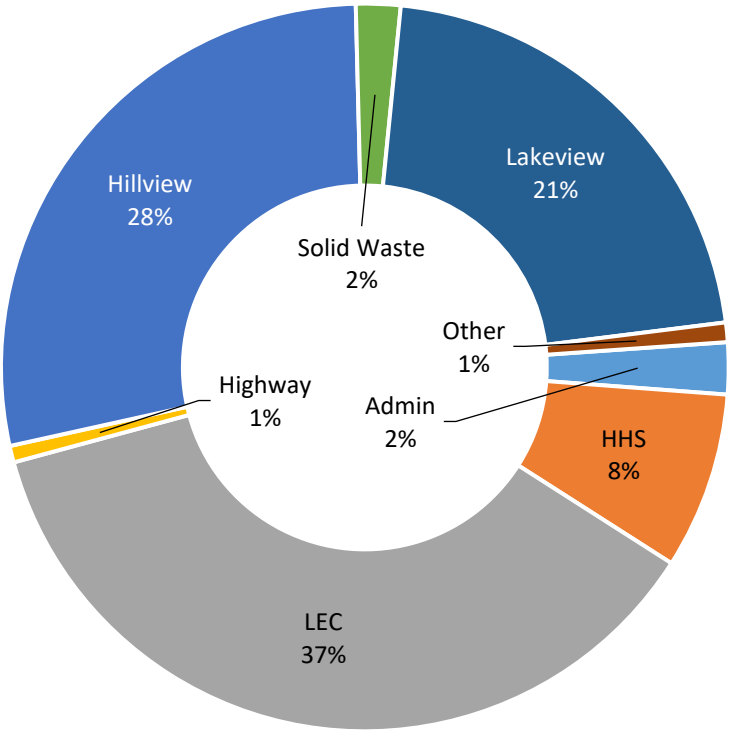


Heating degree days (HDD) measure the difference between outdoor and indoor temperatures. The annual HDD values shown in Figure 3 represent an index of overall winter coldness. Higher natural gas use is expected in years with higher HDD values. In La Crosse, heating degree days in 2024 were 15.0% lower than in 2007, and 5.3% lower than in 2023.

[1] Natural gas usage values for 2022 and 2023 have been adjusted downward from the previous report because errors in Xcel billing data were discovered and corrected

Among County facilities, the Law Enforcement Center used the largest amount of natural gas in 2024 (37% of the County government total; see Figure 4). Hillview Health Care Center and Lakeview Health Center facilities also used relatively large quantities.

Figure 4: County Government 2024 Natural Gas Usage by Facility/Dept.



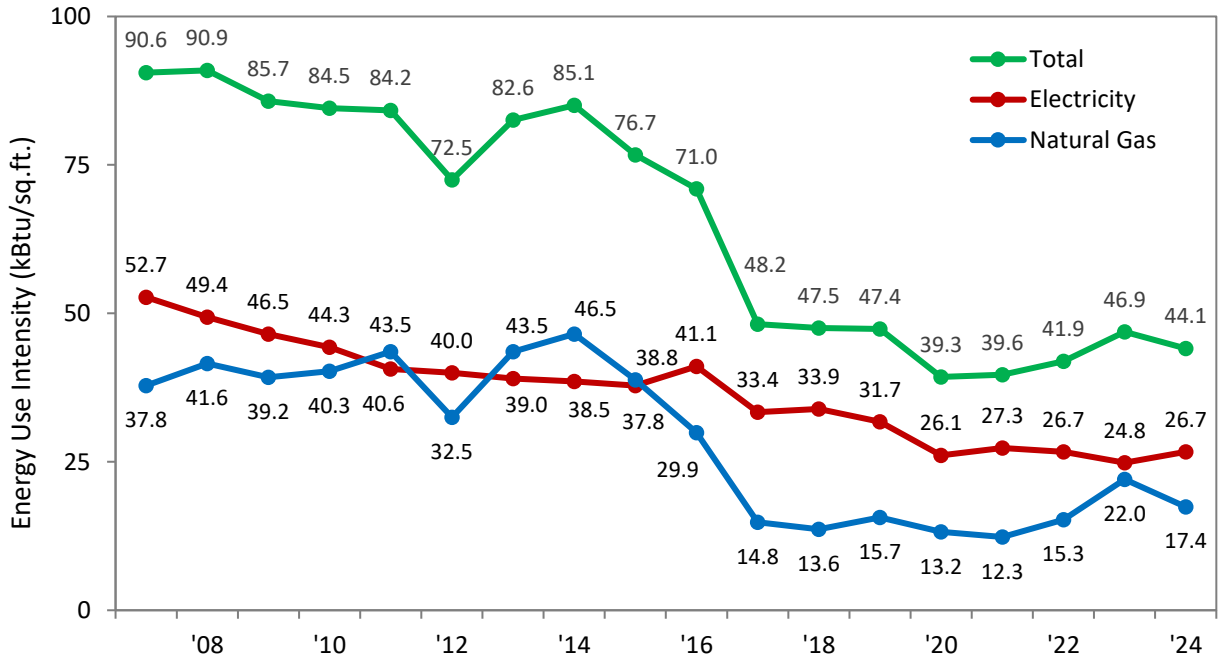
Energy Use Intensity

A facility's annual energy usage per square foot, or *energy use intensity (EUI)*, is a measure of its total annual energy usage (in units of kBtu), standardized by its size (in units of ft^2). EUI is useful for comparing energy use among facilities of different sizes. This analysis examines EUI of two La Crosse County government facilities -- Health and Human Services and the Law Enforcement Center.

Health and Human Services Facility

The Health and Human Services facility's EUI in 2024 was 44.1 kBtu/ft^2 – down from 90.6 kBtu/ft^2 in 2007 (-51.3%), and down from 46.9 kBtu/ ft^2 in 2023 (-5.9%; see Figure 5). Milder winter temperatures and boiler control strategy improvements likely explain the reduction in natural gas EUI in 2024 as compared to 2023. For comparison, U.S. EPA's Energy Star Portfolio Manager publishes median EUI values by facility type. As of March 2016, the median site-level EUI value for offices was 67.3 kBtu/ft^2. Note that La Crosse County replaced the boiler and completed an expansion in its Health and Human Services facility in 2016, increasing the total area of conditioned space from 90,000 ft^2 to 114,000 ft^2 and leading to the significant drop in EUI between 2016 and 2017. The drop in energy use intensity between 2019 and 2020 likely resulted from changes in facility usage patterns during the COVID pandemic.

Figure 5: Health & Human Services Facility Annual Energy Use Intensity

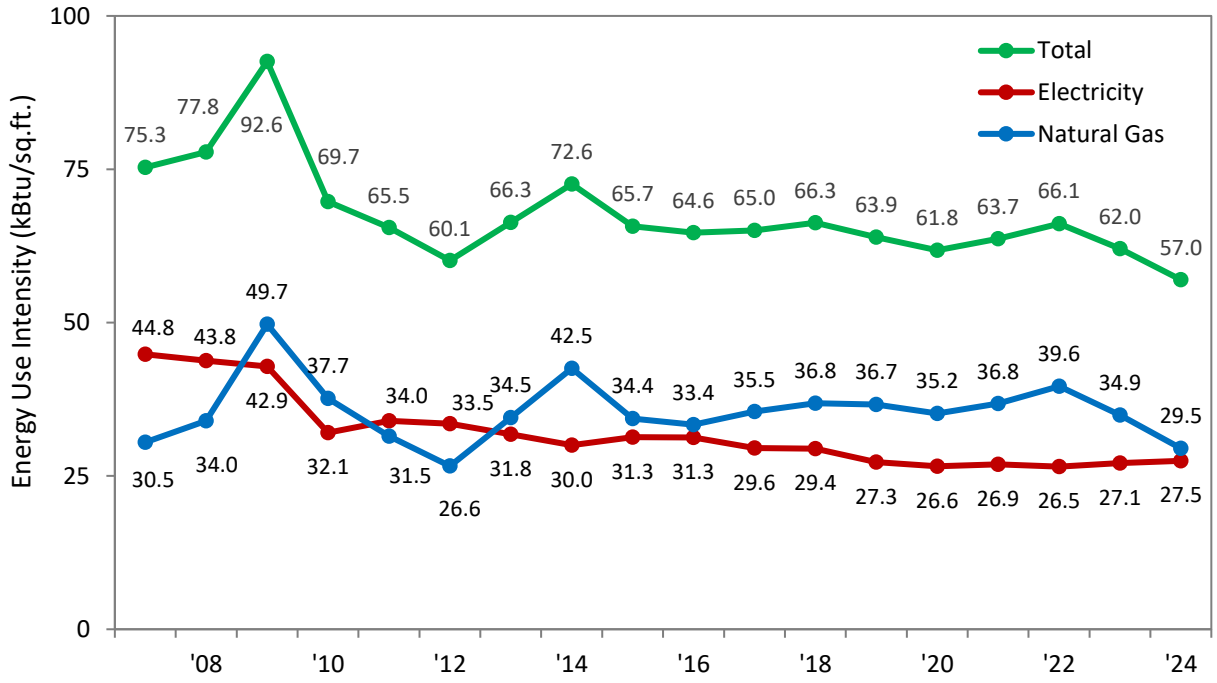


Change in EUI can have significant financial implications. The energy cost to operate the Health and Human Services facility in 2024 was ~$132,000 less than if the EUI had remained at 2007 levels, based on statewide average commercial energy prices.

Law Enforcement Center

The Law Enforcement Center's EUI in 2023 was 57.0 kBtu/ft^2— down from 75.3 kBtu/ft^2 in 2007 (-24.3%), and down from 62.0 kBtu/ft^2 in 2023 (-8.2%; see Figure 6).[2] Milder winter temperatures and boiler control strategy improvements likely explain the reduction in natural gas EUI in 2024 as compared to 2023. For comparison, the Portfolio Manager's median EUI value for incarceration facilities in March 2016 was 93.2 kBtu/ft^2. Please note that the La Crosse County Law Enforcement Center underwent a major expansion in 2010, increasing its total area from 169,000 ft^2 to 315,000 ft^2.

Figure 6: Law Enforcement Center Annual Energy Use Intensity



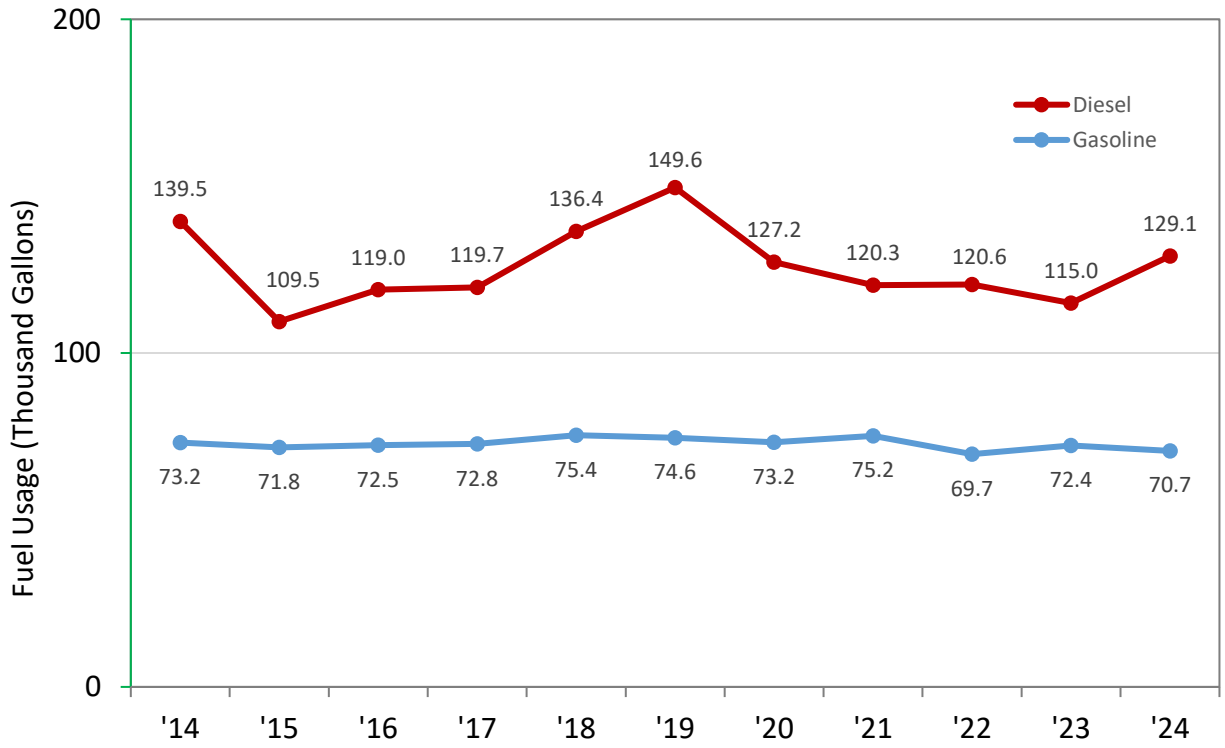
Change in EUI can have significant financial implications. The energy cost to operate the Law Enforcement Center in 2024 was ~$199,000 less than if the EUI had remained at 2007 levels, based on statewide average energy prices.

[2] Natural Gas and Total EUI values for 2023 have been adjusted downward since the previous report after natural gas usage quantity was corrected

Vehicle Fuels

The County government's vehicle fleet and other powered equipment consumes diesel fuel and gasoline, along with much smaller quantities of compressed natural gas and propane. Diesel and gasoline usage trends are examined separately below. Please note that fuel usage values from previous years have been corrected since last year's report, after errors were discovered. Also, 2014 is the earliest year for which reliable fuel usage information is available.

Figure 7: County Government Annual Vehicle Fuel Usage



Diesel

Diesel fuel is utilized by heavy-duty vehicles such as snowplows and construction vehicles. Therefore, diesel fuel usage is influenced by winter snowfall amounts and summer construction activity. County government operations used 129,101 gallons of diesel fuel in 2024 – down from 139,466 gallons in 2014 (-7.4%) but up from 114,964 gallons in 2023 (+12.3%; see Figure 7). The Highway Department, which accounted for 98% of the County government's diesel usage in 2024, completed a large amount of road construction during that year.

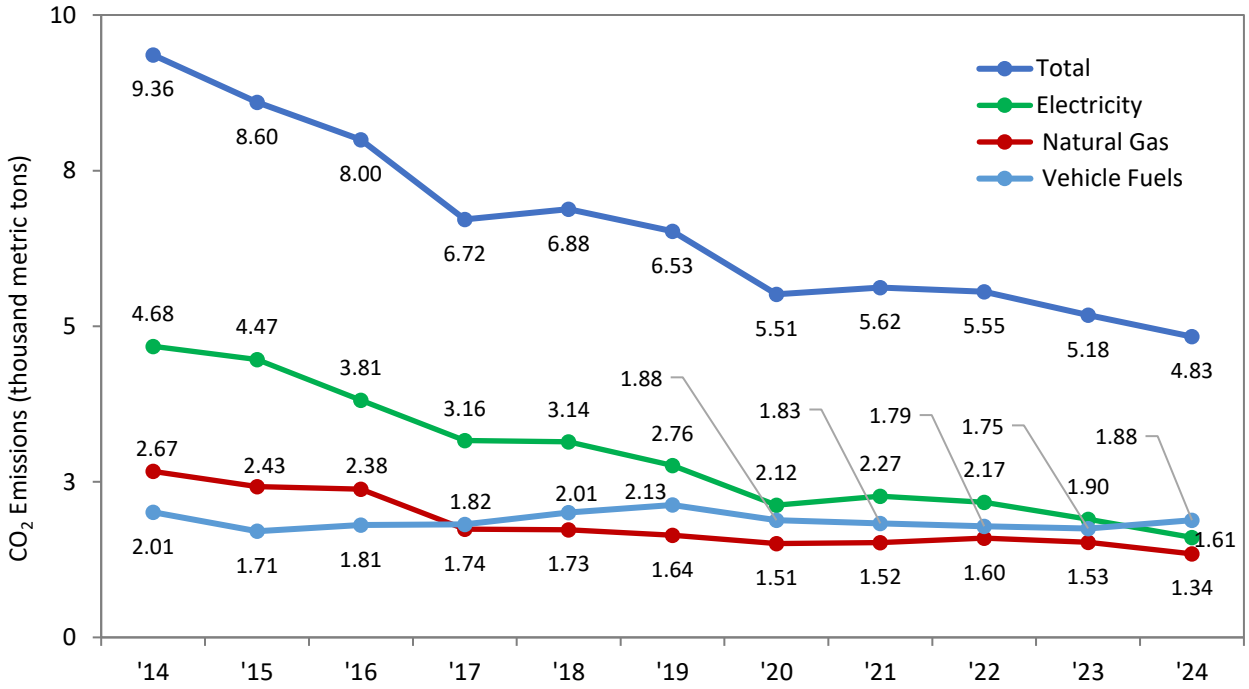
Gasoline

Gasoline is utilized by lighter-duty vehicles such as passenger cars and sheriff squad vehicles. County government operations used 70,711 gallons of gasoline in 2024 – down from 73,222 gallons in 2014 (-3.4%), and down from 72,360 gallons in 2023 (-2.3%; see Figure 7). The Sheriff's Department accounted for 66% of gasoline usage in 2023, the Highway Department accounted for 20%, and Facilities accounted for 7%.

Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Energy Usage

Combustion of fossil fuels to produce energy emits carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. The County government's 2024 energy usage resulted in an estimated 4,832 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions – down from 9,358 metric tons in 2014 (-48.4%), and down from 5,179 metric tons in 2023 (-6.7%; see Figure 8).[3] Please note that these results exclude emissions from bio-based fuel sources (e.g., the ethanol component of gasoline and biomass electricity generation). The electricity component was the largest driver of reduced emissions from 2014 to 2024, having decreased by 65.7%; but emissions from natural gas and vehicle fuels also decreased – by 49.7% and 6.4%, respectively. 2014 is the earliest year for which complete information is available.

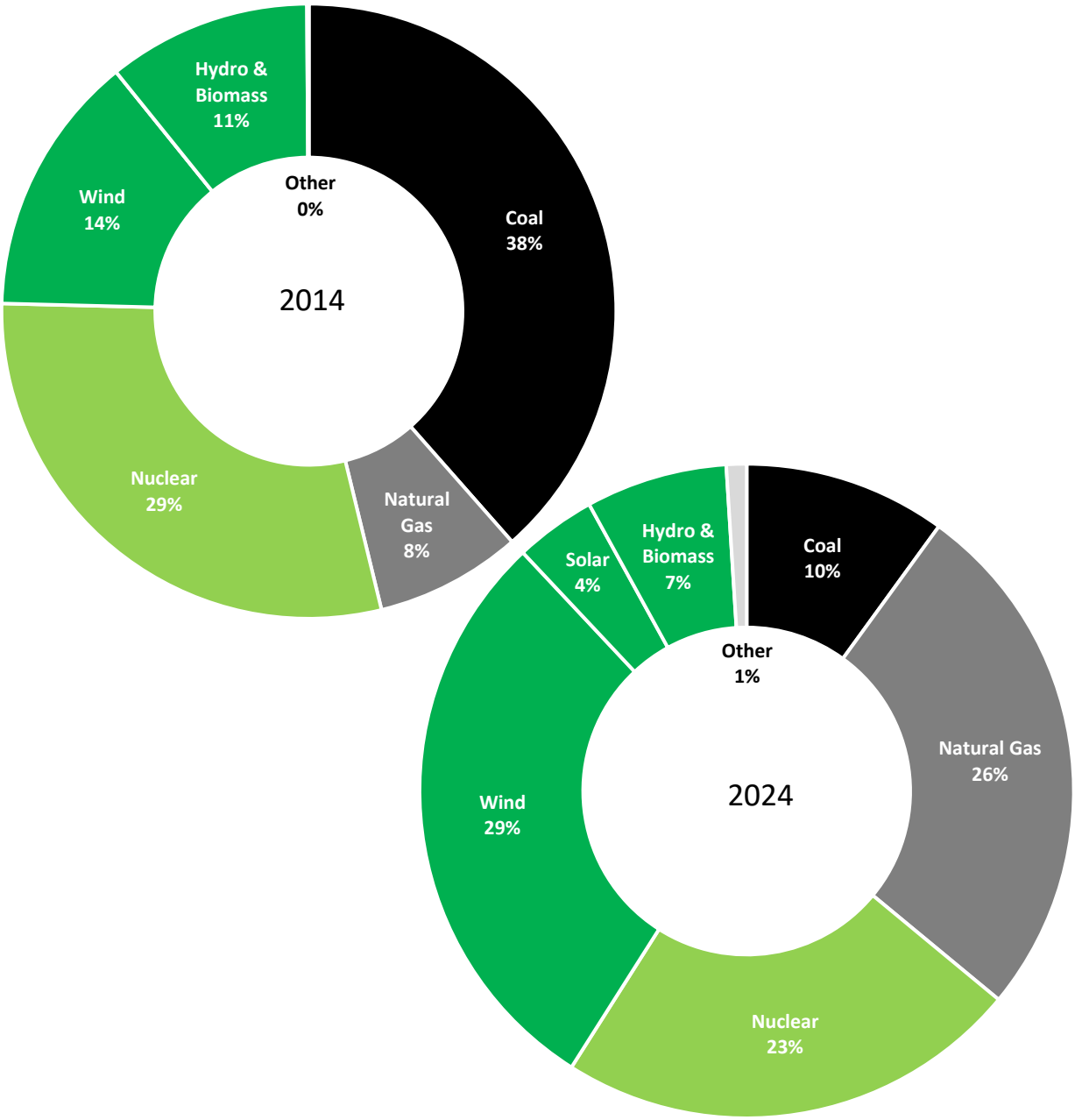
Figure 8: County Government Annual Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Energy Usage



[3] Carbon dioxide emission quantity for 2023 has been revised downward since the previous report, following downward revision of natural gas usage quantities.

The County government's carbon dioxide emissions from electricity are influenced by two factors: the County government's net grid electricity usage quantities and Xcel Energy's electricity emission rates – i.e., the amount of carbon dioxide emitted per unit of electricity produced. Both factors declined from 2014-2024, net grid usage by 25.7% and emission rates by 50.5%. The decline in emission rates resulted from Xcel Energy producing less electricity with coal and more with natural gas, wind, and solar energy sources (see Figure 9). Natural gas is a fossil fuel source like coal, but electricity generated from natural gas produces approximately only half as much carbon dioxide as electricity generated using coal.

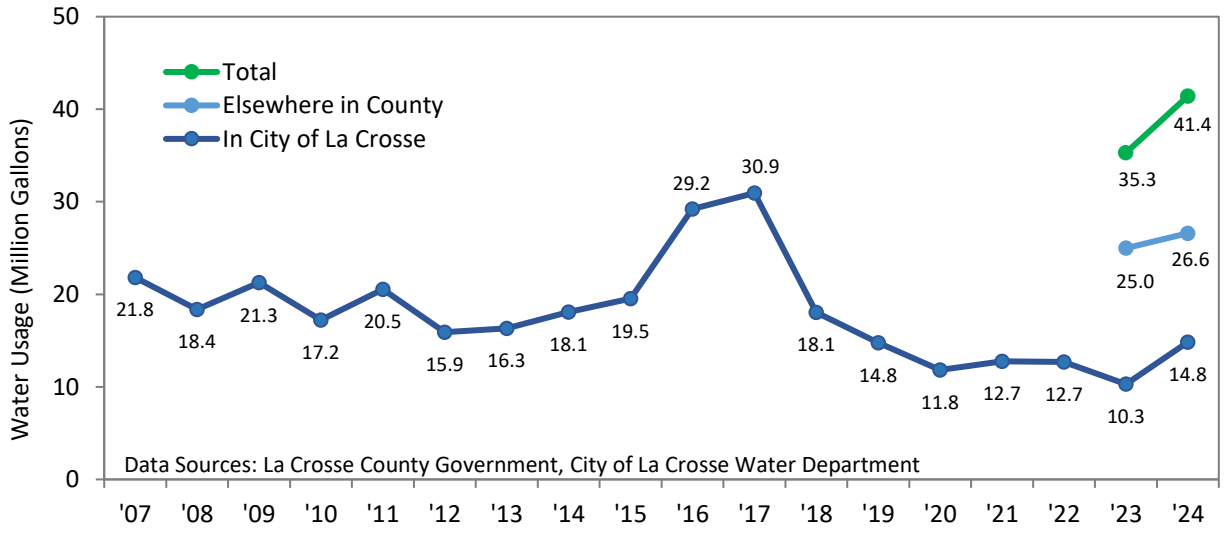
Figure 9: Xcel Energy Upper Midwest Region Electricity Resource Mix



Water Usage

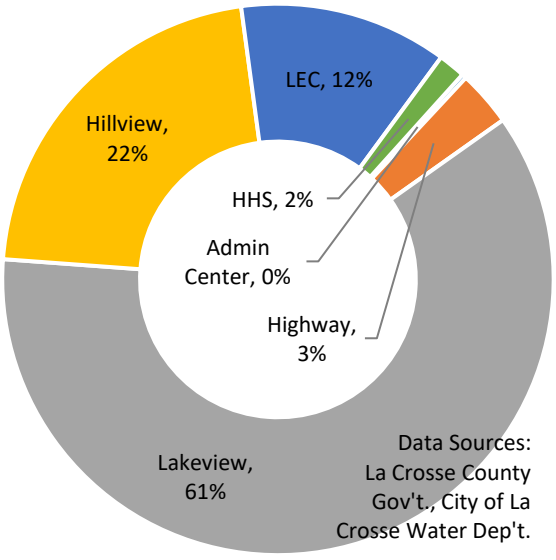
This indicator tracks water usage at County government facilities that are located within the City of La Crosse and served by the City Water Utility: Administration Center, Health & Human Services, Law Enforcement Center, Hillview Health Care Center, Carroll Heights, and the Highway Department facility on Park Lane Dr. Water usage quantities at additional facilities outside the City of La Crosse were first added in 2023. These include Lakeview Health Center and the Highway Department Headquarters, both in West Salem, and the Highway shop in Mindoro. Water sourced from on-site wells at the Administrative Center, Health and Human Services, and Law Enforcement Center facilities is not included.

Figure 10: County Government Annual Water Usage



The County government's water usage in 2024 was 41.4 million gallons – up from 35.3 million gallons in 2023 (+17.4%). The 2024 total includes 14.8 million gallons at facilities within the City of La Crosse – up from 10.3 million gallons in 2023 (+44.0%), but down from 21.8 million gallons in 2007 (-32.1%; see Figure 10). The 2024 total also includes 26.6 million gallons at facilities elsewhere in the County – up from 25.0 million gallons in 2023 (+6.5%; see Figure 10). On the level of individual facilities, Lakeview used 25.2 million gallons – 61% of the total (see Figure 11). High water usage quantities in 2016 and 2017 resulted from temporary stoppages of on-site wells at the Law Enforcement Center (2016) and the Health and Human Services facility (2017). The facilities used City-sourced water while on-site wells were not operating.

Figure 11: County Government 2024 Water Usage by Facility



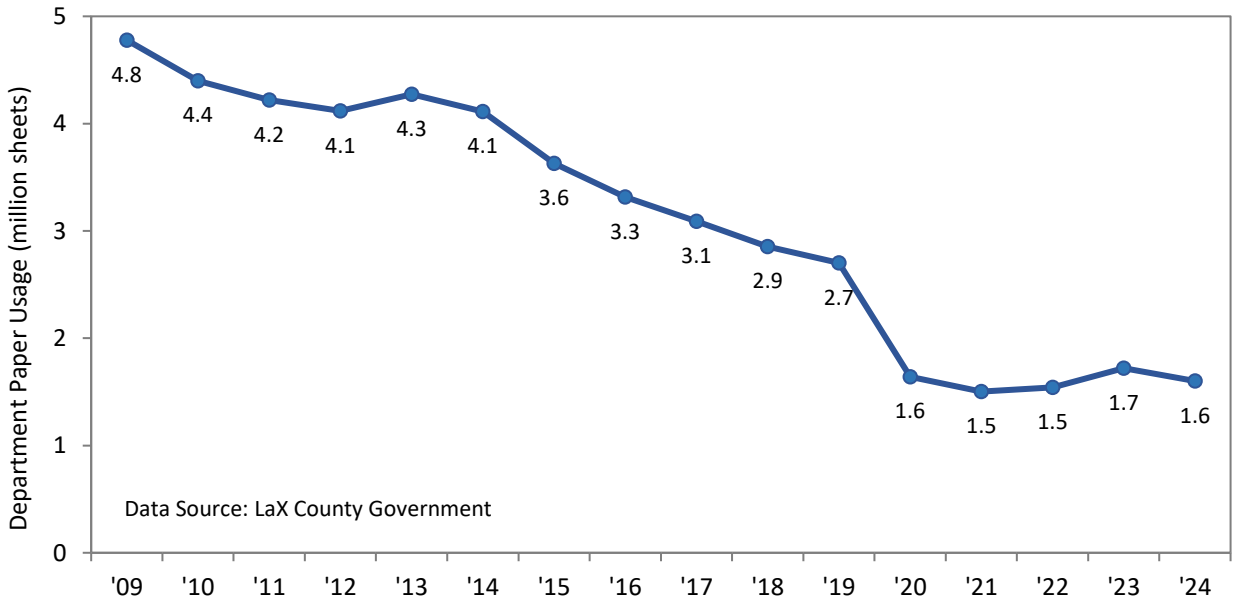
Paper Usage

County government operations consume paper for production and department purposes. In previous years of this report, combined total paper usage (production + department) was presented. In 2021 department printing was responsible for approximately two thirds of total paper usage, and production printing for one third. As of 2022 the County outsources all production printing and no longer tracks quantities in this category. Therefore, this report presents information on department printing only.

County government operations used 1.60 million sheets of paper for department purposes in 2024 – down from 4.78 million sheets in 2009 (-66.5%), and down from 1.72 million sheets in 2023 (-6.9%; see Figure 12). Paper usage information is not available for 2007 or 2008. The large decrease in paper consumption from 2019 to 2020 likely resulted from changes to County employee work patterns caused by the COVID pandemic.

Reducing paper usage has financial and environmental benefits. At $0.05 per printed sheet of paper, the County government spent an estimated $159,000 less on paper/printing for department purposes in 2024 than if usage had remained at the 2009 level, which avoided an estimated 81 mt CO_2e of GHG emissions. Cumulative savings from 2010 – 2024 were $1.35 million and 686 mt CO_2e.[4]

Figure 12: County Government Annual 'Department' Paper Usage



[4] Avoided GHG emissions estimated using EPA Waste Reduction Model (WARM) v15, with recycling as baseline management scenario. Paper weight assumed to be 10 lbs. per 1,000 sheets.

Community-Wide Indicators

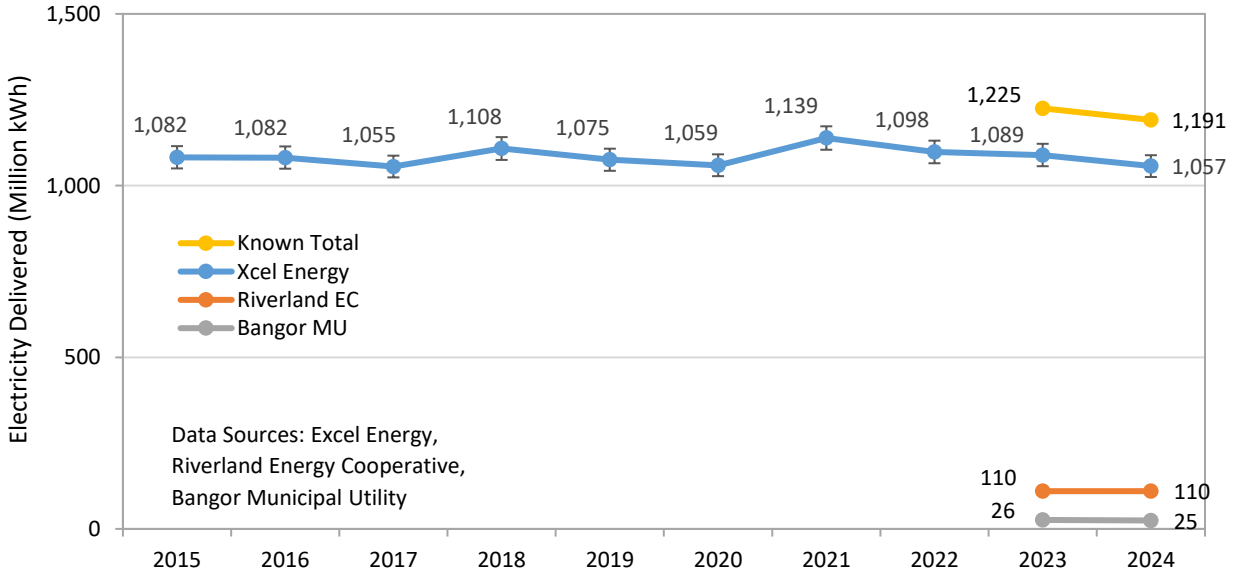
The following three indicators – electricity usage, natural gas usage, and associated carbon dioxide emissions – track community-wide energy use and associated GHG emissions in La Crosse County since 2015, the earliest year for which information is available. Until 2023, however, only electricity and natural gas provided by Xcel Energy was tracked. Electricity and natural gas provided by other utilities that also operate within the County were included beginning in 2023.

Electricity Usage

Five providers deliver electricity to customers in La Crosse County: Xcel Energy, the Bangor Municipal Utility, Riverland Energy Cooperative, Vernon Electric Cooperative, and Jackson Electric Cooperative. Quantities delivered by Xcel Energy are known back to 2015, while quantities delivered by Riverland Energy Cooperative and the Bangor Municipal Utility are known starting in 2023. Vernon and Jackson Electric Cooperatives did not provide information for this report, so the quantities of electricity they delivered are unknown.

The total known quantity of electricity delivered to La Crosse County customers in 2024 was 1.191 billion kWh, down from 1.225 billion kWh in 2023 (+-2.8%). Of the total quantity in 2024, 61% was delivered within the City of La Crosse, and 39% was delivered elsewhere in the County. Xcel Energy delivered 1.057 billion kWh (89% of the known total) – down from 1.089 billion kWh in 2023 (-3.0%), and down from 1.082 billion kWh in 2015 (-2.4%; see Figure 13). Year-to-year differences may fall within the 3% margin of error specified by Xcel Energy. Riverland Energy Cooperative delivered 110 million kWh of electricity to La Crosse County customers in 2024 (9% of the known total), and the Bangor Municipal Utility delivered 25 million kWh (2% of the known total).

Figure 13: Annual Electricity Quantities Delivered to Customers in La Crosse County

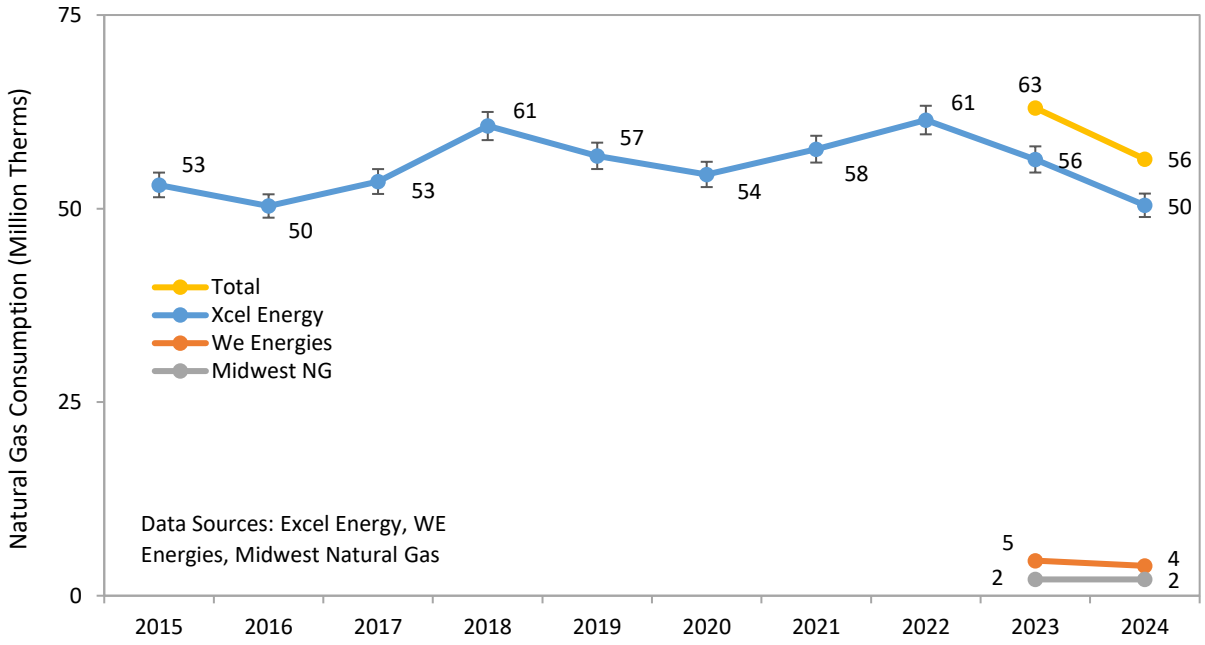


Natural Gas Usage

Three providers deliver natural gas to customers in La Crosse County: Xcel Energy, WE Energies, and Midwest Natural Gas. Quantities delivered by Xcel Energy are known back to 2015, while quantities delivered by WE Energies and Midwest Natural Gas are known starting in 2023.

In total, 56.4 million therms of natural gas were delivered to La Crosse County customers in 2024— down from 63.0 million therms in 2023. Of the 2024 total, 64% was delivered within the City of La Crosse and 36% was delivered elsewhere in the County. Xcel Energy delivered 50.4 million therms of natural gas to La Crosse County customers in 2024 (89% of the total) – down from 56.3 million therms 2023 (-10.5%), and down from 53.1 million therms in 2015 (-5.0%; see Figure 14). Note that year-to-year differences may fall within the 3% margin of error specified by Xcel Energy. WE Energies delivered 3.9 million therms of natural gas to La Crosse County customers in 2024 (7% of the total), while Midwest Natural Gas delivered 2.1 million therms (3% of the total).

Figure 14: Annual Natural Gas Quantities Delivered to Customers in La Crosse County



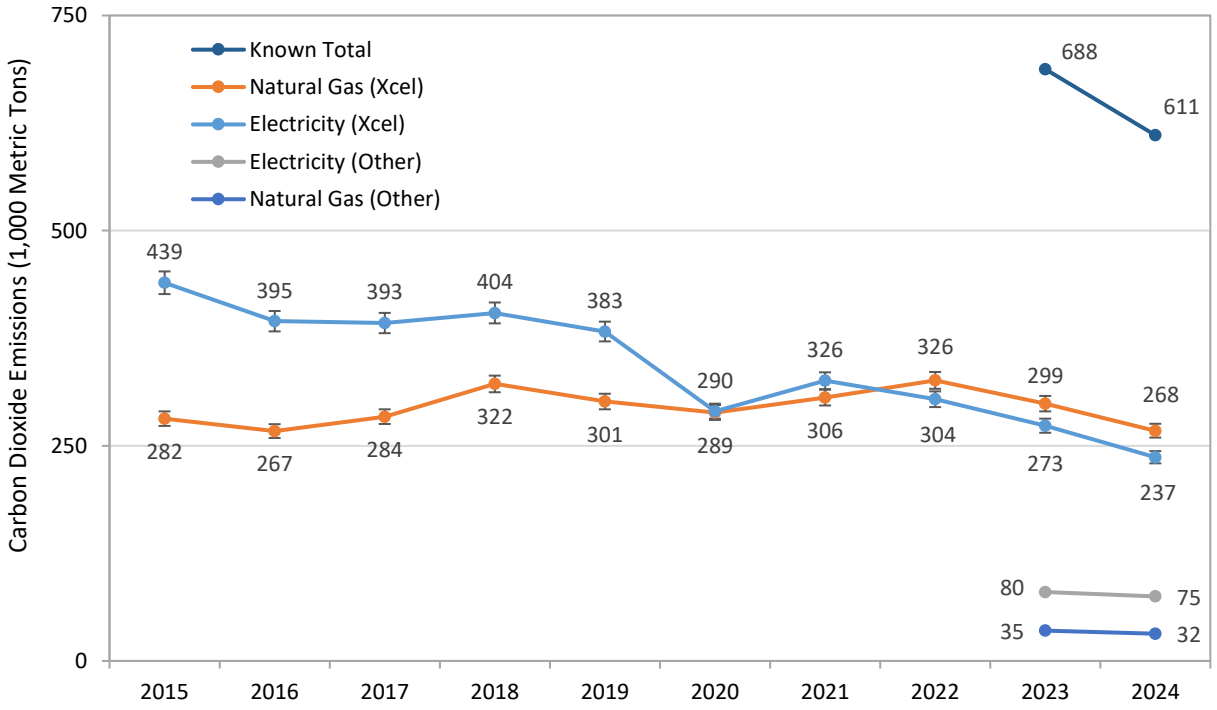
Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Energy Usage

Known community-wide electricity and natural gas usage in La Crosse County generated an estimated 610,906 metric tons of carbon dioxide in 2024 – down from 687,699 metric tons in 2023 (-11.2%).[5] Electricity contributed 51% of this amount and natural gas contributed 49%. In terms of geography, the City of La Crosse was responsible for 58% of the total, and the rest of La Crosse County was responsible for 42%.

Natural gas usage by Xcel Energy customers in La Crosse County resulted in 267,561 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions in 2024 – down from 298,989 metric tons in 2023 (-10.5%), and down from 281,532 metric tons in 2015 (-5.0%; see Figure 15). Natural gas delivered by other providers (including Midwest Natural Gas and WE Energies) resulted in an additional 31,655 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions in 2024.

Electricity usage by Xcel Energy customers in La Crosse County resulted in 236,708 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions in 2024 – down from 273,349 metric tons in 2023 (-13.4%), and down from 439,462 metric tons in 2015 (-46.1%; see Figure 15). Electricity delivered by other providers (including Riverland Energy Cooperative and the Bangor Municipal Utility) resulted in an additional 74,982 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions in 2024.

Figure 15: La Crosse County Community-Wide Annual Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Energy Usage



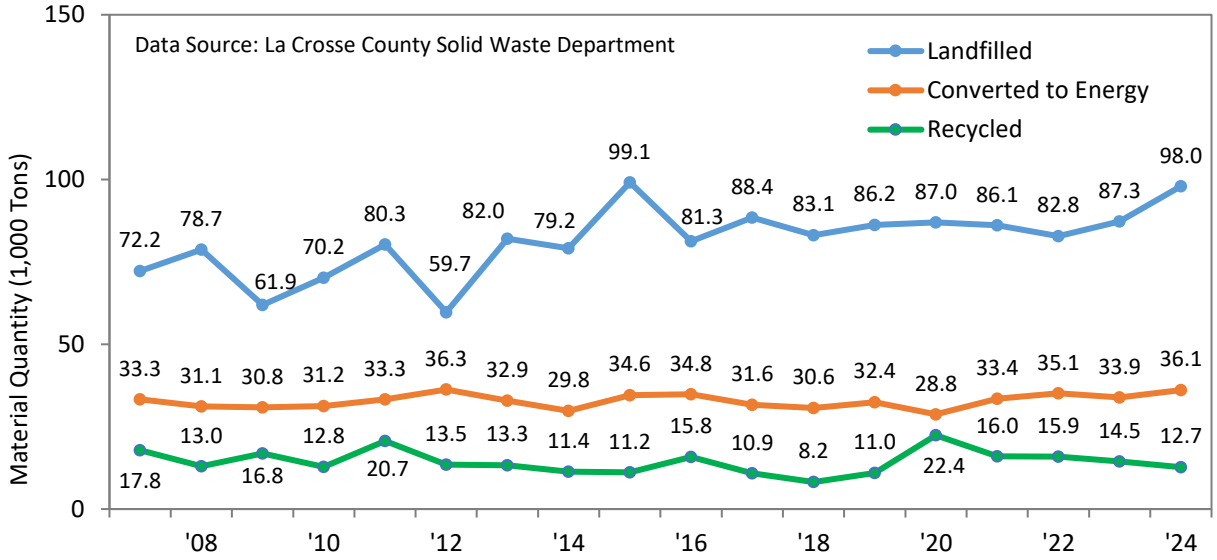
[5] The 2023 total carbon dioxide emission estimate was revised slightly downward from the previous report, after emission factors were updated.

Solid Waste Generation & Diversion

Solid waste managed by La Crosse County enters one of three waste streams: deposition in the La Crosse County Landfill, incineration at Xcel Energy's Waste-to-Energy facility on French Island, or recycling. Recycled quantities include materials diverted for recycling at the landfill -- shingles, concrete, tires, scrap metal, yard waste and wood waste.

In total, La Crosse County handled 146,842 tons of solid waste in 2024 – up from 123,274 tons in 2007 (+19.1%), and up from 135,729 tons in 2023 (+8.2%; see Figure 16). Economic recession may explain the relatively low quantity of solid waste generated in 2009 and the subsequent increasing trend.

Figure 16: La Crosse County Annual Solid Waste Quantities



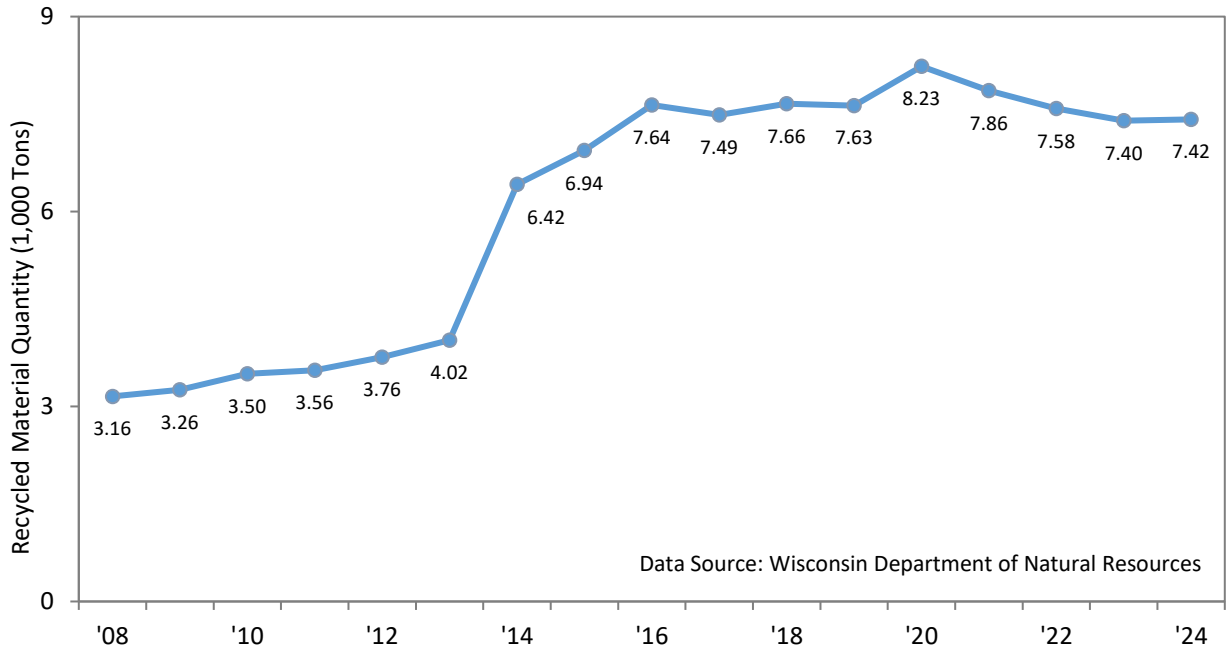
Of the total solid waste handled in 2024, 66.7% was deposited into the landfill, 24.6% was incinerated to produce electricity, and 8.7% was recycled. Roof damage caused by storms resulted in large quantities of shingles being received by the County solid waste system in 2020, which explains the increased quantity of recycled material during that year. The 2024 total diversion rate (i.e., the sum of the percent incinerated, and the percent recycled) was 33.3% - down from 41.4% in 2007, and down from 35.7% in 2023. Waste from La Crosse County incinerated at French Island was used to produce an estimated 22.6 million kWh of electricity in 2024, enough to supply approximately 2,485 households.

Municipal Recycling Collection

This indicator tracks quantities of recyclable materials collected through curbside and drop off collection methods by all municipalities within La Crosse County. Materials include paper products (newspaper, corrugated, magazines), containers (aluminum, steel, bi–metal, plastic, glass) and polystyrene foam packaging.

Recycling collection quantities have increased significantly since 2007. Together, the County's municipalities collected 7,416 tons of materials for recycling in 2024 – up from 3,160 tons in 2007 (+134.7%), and up slightly from 7,401 tons in 2023 (+0.2%; see Figure 17). The increase in recycled quantities between 2013 and 2014 coincide with the initiation of "single stream" collection processes and distribution of larger storage containers to residents in the Cities of La Crosse and Onalaska.

Figure 17: La Crosse County Annual Municipal Recycling Quantities



Transportation

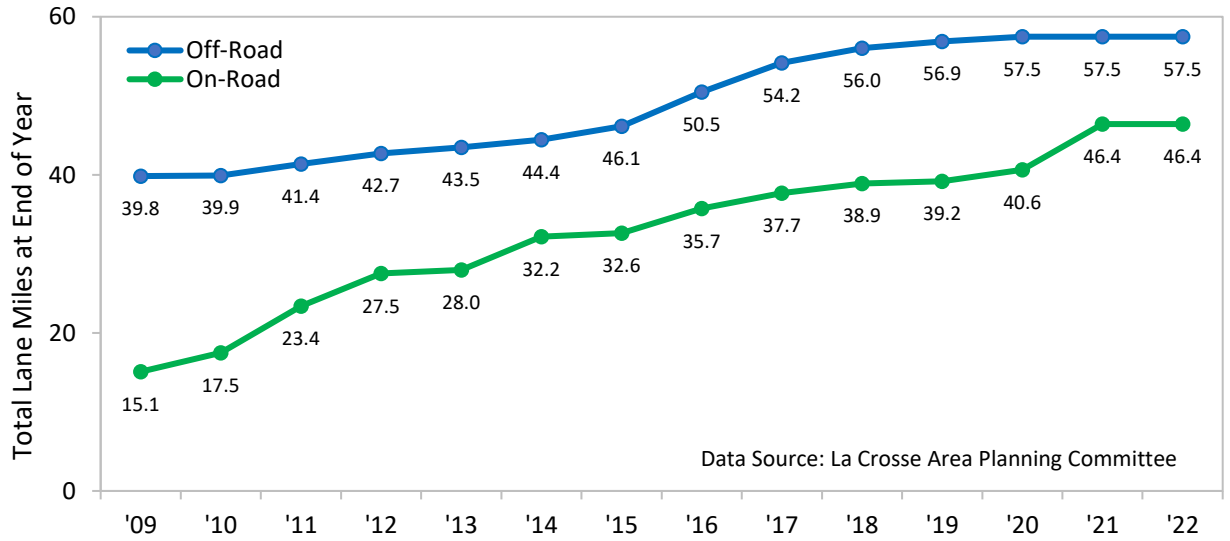
This report tracks two indicators related to alternative forms of transportation: the total length of area bicycle accommodations (i.e., routes and trails), and residents' usage of alternative methods for commuting to work.

Bicycle Accommodations

This indicator quantifies on-road and off-road accommodations for bicycle transportation within the La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC) Planning Area -- which includes the city of La Crescent, MN as well as most of La Crosse County except for the towns of Farmington, Washington, Rockland, Burns, and Bangor.[6] On-road accommodations include designated bicycle lanes and designated shoulders. Please note that streets marked with "sharrow" symbols had been included in previous reports, but as of this report are excluded from the analysis – because visibility has deteriorated. Off-road accommodations include paved trails that are at least eight feet wide, and state trails – which generally have crushed stone surfaces. Trails with grass or earth surfaces are not included. Information for 2007 and 2008 are unavailable for this indicator.

Data for this indicator is no longer available in the same form as in the past, so it was not able to be updated for this report. An alternative data source is being considered for future tracking of this indicator. The LAPC Planning Area contained 57.5 lane-miles of off-road bicycle accommodations at the end of 2022 – up from 39.8 lane-miles in 2009 (+44.3%), and unchanged from 2021 (see Figure 18). The Area contained 46.4 lane-miles of on-road bicycle accommodations at the end of 2022 – up from 15.1 lane-miles in 2009 (+207.5%), and unchanged from 2021 (see Figure 18).

Figure 18: LAPC Planning Area Bicycle Accommodations



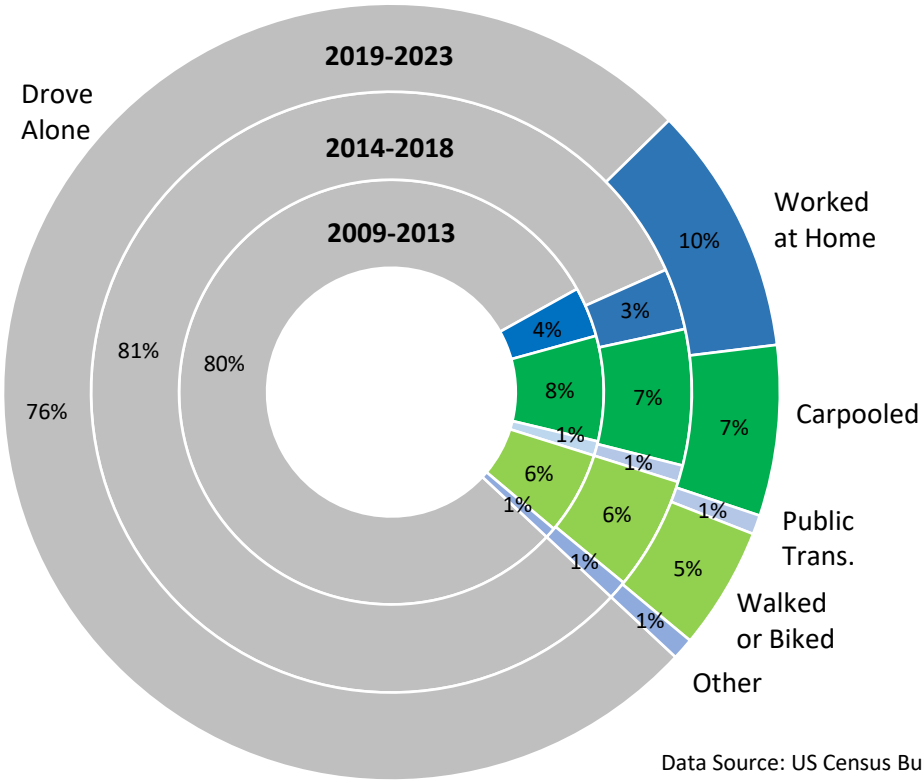
[6] See LAPC Planning Area map at www.lapc.org/content/about/map.htm

Alternative Commuting Rates

This indicator examines percentages of workers who travel to work in ways other than driving alone in an automobile: bicycling or walking, public transportation, or carpooling. Data are collected as part of the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS). ACS results are published as 5-year averages; this analysis examines alternative commute rates in three periods: 2009-2013, 2014-2018 and 2019-2023. Information for 2024 was not available in time for this report.

During all three periods more than three quarters of County residents drove alone to work, while the remainder utilized alternative methods including carpooling (7-8%), walking/bicycling (5-6%), public transportation (1%), or worked at home (3-10%; see Figure 19). The City of La Crosse's relatively compact spatial arrangement with short travel distances between residential areas and workplaces make walking/bicycling practical, so this percentage is higher for the City of La Crosse than the state average. Although many students also walk or bike to school in the City, students are not included in the analysis. The higher percentage of people working from home during the 2019-2023 period was caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 4: La Crosse County Resident Commuting Methods

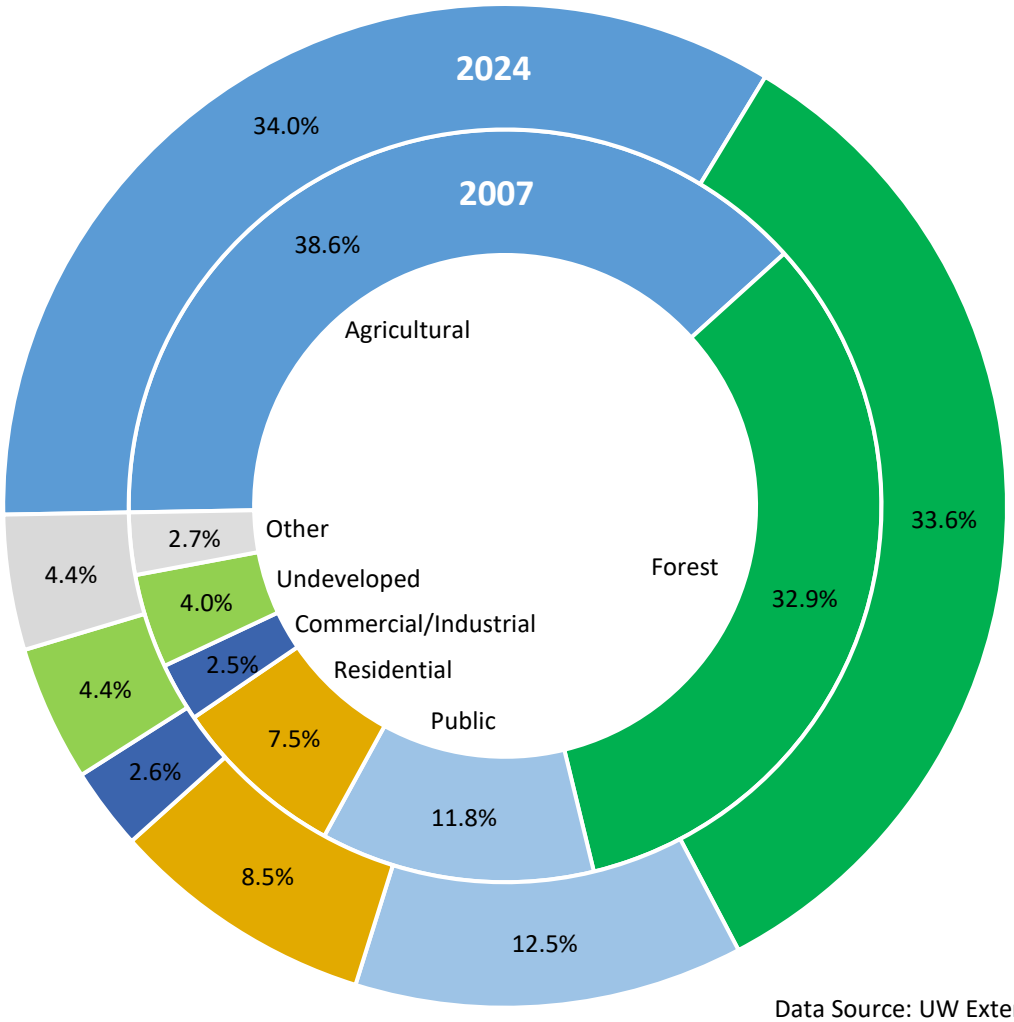


Data Source: US Census Bureau

Land Use

This indicator tracks land use changes across La Crosse County. Land classification categories include residential, agricultural, forest, commercial/manufacturing, public (i.e., local/state/federally owned), undeveloped, and 'other' – which represents land owned by schools, churches, and municipalities. Most of the County's land area is classified as agriculture or forest (see Figure 20). Public and residential uses make up most of the remainder.

Figure 20: La Crosse County Land Use Classifications



Data Source: UW Extension

Public, residential, commercial, undeveloped, forest, and 'other' land use types gained area between 2007 and 2024, while agricultural land was lost. Transition of agricultural land into "undeveloped" land may occur with Conservation Reserve Program enrollment, or loss of access for a season because of high water. The increase in public land may result from WI DNR stewardship grants in within the County, or from any road building or expansion projects that increase right of way. Of greater concern is conversion of agricultural land into residential or commercial/industrial areas.

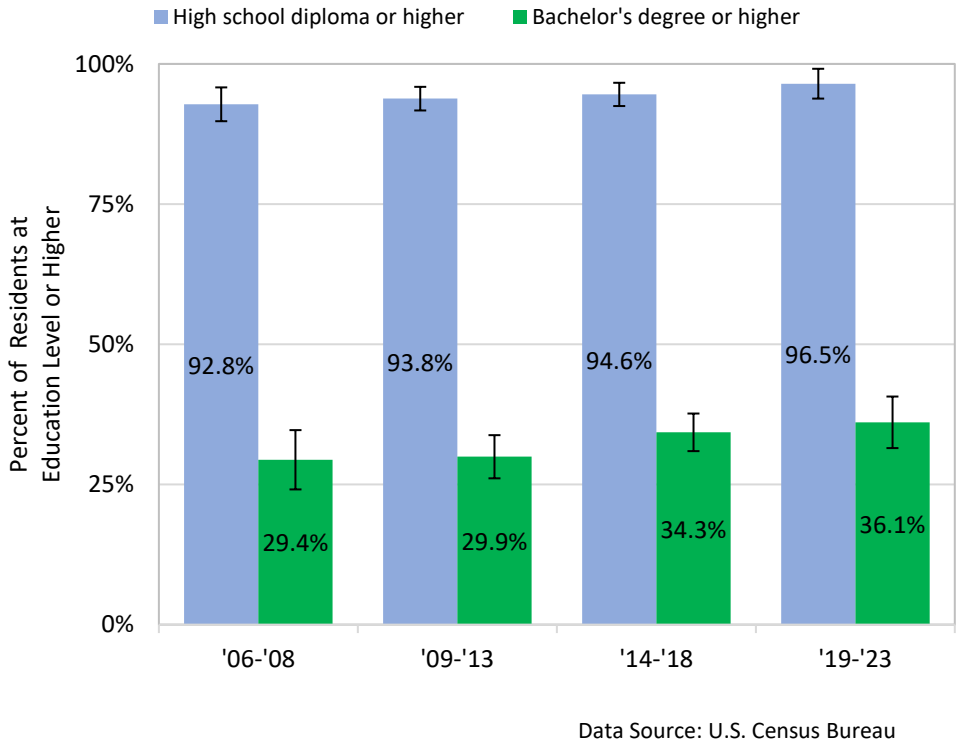
Socio-Economic Indicators

Socio-economic indicators specified by the *Strategic Plan for Sustainability* include educational attainment, household income, poverty rate and unemployment rate. For all socioeconomic indicators but the unemployment rate, the source of these data is the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS).

Education Attainment

This indicator tracks percentages of residents who held (1) high school diplomas and (2) bachelor's degrees during four periods: 2006-2008, 2009-2013, 2014-2018, and 2019-2023. Information for 2024 was not available in time for this report. An estimated 96.5% of County residents held high school diplomas in the 2019-2023 period, up from 94.6% in 2014-2018 and up from 92.8% in 2006-2008 (see Figure 21). An estimated 36.1% of County residents held bachelor's degrees in the 2019-2023 period, up from 34.3% in 2014-2018 and up from 29.4% in 2006-2008. Both high school diploma and bachelor's degree indicators suggest trends toward higher education levels among County residents over the time periods examined, but please note that period-to-period differences are not statistically significant when margins of error are considered.

Figure 21: Percent of La Crosse County Residents with High School Diploma / Bachelor's Degree

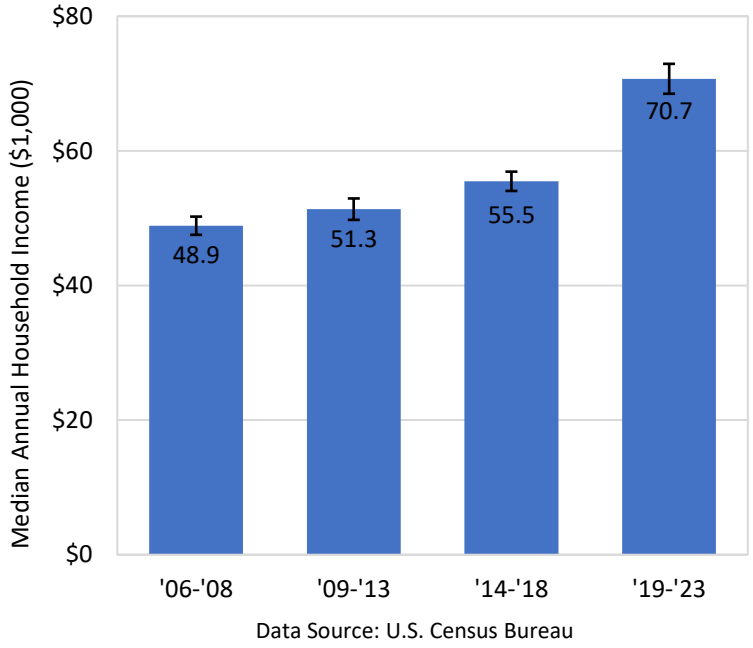


Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Household Income

This indicator examines median annual household income (MAHI) during four periods: 2006-2008, 2009-2013, 2014-2018, and 2019-2023. Information for 2024 was not available in time for this report. La Crosse County's estimated MAHI during the 2019-2023 period was $70,704, up from $55,479 during the 2014-2018 period (+27.4%) and up from $48,880 during the 2006-2008 period (+44.6%; see Figure 22). This increasing trend is consistent with economic recovery from the "great recession."

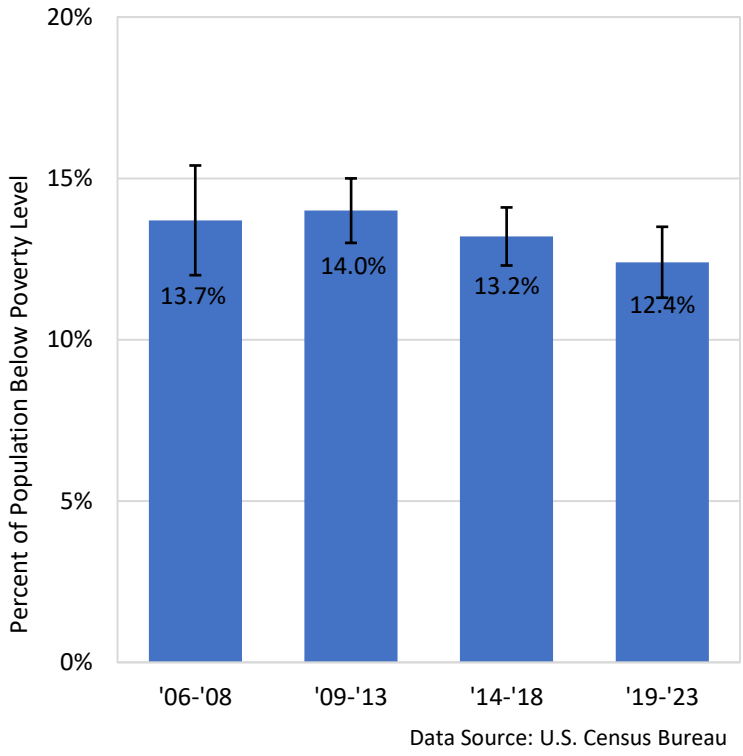
Figure 22: La Crosse County Median Annual Household Income



Poverty Rate

This indicator examines the percentage of residents whose income in the past twelve months was below poverty level during three periods: four periods: 2006-2008, 2009-2013, 2014-2018, and 2019-2023. Information for 2024 was not available in time for this report. La Crosse County's estimated poverty rate for the 2019-2023 period was 12.4%, down from 13.2% during the 2014-2018 period and down from 13.7% during the 2006-2008 period (see Figure 23). Please note that differences in poverty rates between periods are not statistically significant when margins of error are considered.

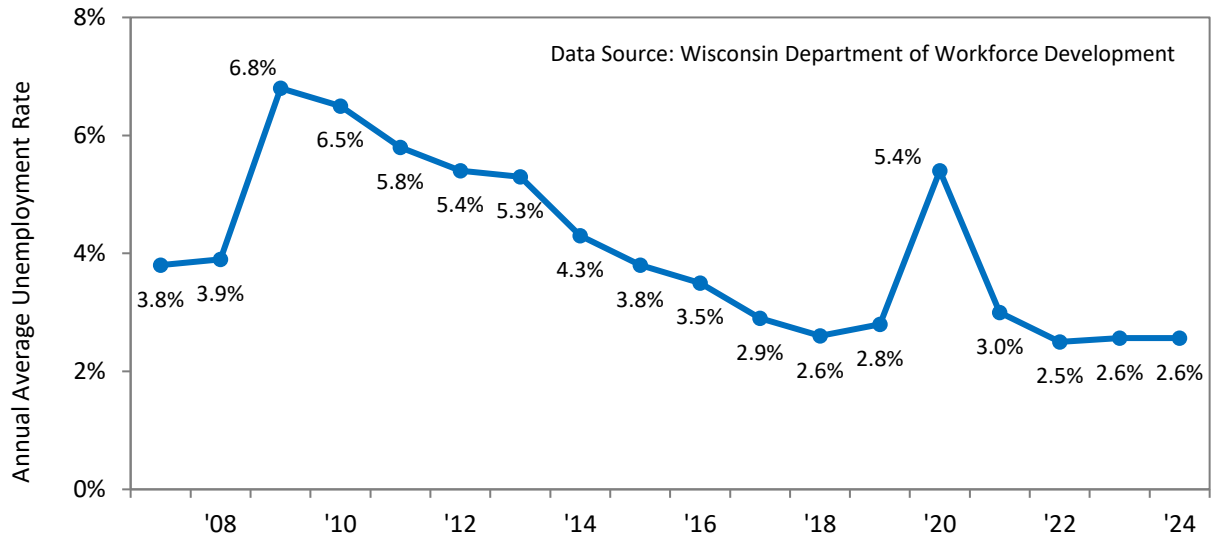
Figure 23: La Crosse County Resident Poverty Rates



Unemployment Rate

This indicator tracks trends in La Crosse County's annual average unemployment rate, as measured by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development. La Crosse County's average unemployment rate was 2.6% in 2024 - unchanged from 2023, but down from 3.8% in 2007.[7] After unemployment rates below 4% in 2007 and 2008, the rate increased sharply to 6.8% in 2009 because of the "great recession" (see Figure 24). Rates then slowly declined as the economy gradually recovered, and by 2015 rates had returned to 2007-08 levels. Unemployment rates were under 3% from 2017-2019, increased sharply again in 2020 because of the economic disruption caused by the COVID pandemic, and then returned to 3% and below from 2021-2024.

Figure 24: La Crosse County Annual Average Unemployment Rates



[7] Values for 2024 are considered preliminary as of publication of this report; final values may vary slightly