

NREL Updates National Solar Radiation Database

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The Department of Energy's (DOE) National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) and collaborators have updated the National Solar Radiation Database, a planning tool that provides critical information about the amount of solar energy that is available at any given location.

The database is widely used by solar system designers, building architects and engineers, renewable energy analysts and others to plan, size and site solar energy systems.

It provides hourly solar radiation and meteorological data for 1991–2005 for 1,454 stations and features a new hourly 10-kilometer gridded data set for 1998–2005. This expands the original 1961–1990 database, which contains solar and meteorological data for only 239 stations.

The 1991–2005 National Solar Radiation Database is distributed by the National Climatic Data Center and is also accessible from NREL's Renewable Resource Data Center Web site.

An accompanying report, National Solar Radiation Database 1991–2005 Update: User's Manual, provides user instructions and information about the database's development and data access. The manual also includes a complete list of stations and a data quality summary for each site (PDF 14MB). [Download Acrobat Reader.](#)

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NREL is the U.S. Department of Energy's primary national laboratory for renewable energy and energy efficiency research and development. NREL is operated for DOE by Midwest Research Institute and Battelle.

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