

**Title:** Building collaborations through the Illinois Water Resources Center

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**Abstract:**

Established as a result of the Water Resources Research Act of 1964, the Illinois Water Resources Center (IWRC) is one of 54 centers in the nation collectively known as the National Institutes for Water Resources, funded by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). A condition of the law is that the centers in each of the 50 United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands, be housed at that state/territory's land-grant institution. As such, IWRC is based at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, but serves the entire state of Illinois working with scientists, water professionals, and communities to address water resource challenges at the state, regional and national scales. Within the state, IWRC funds \$40,000-\$50,000 in research every year with the mission of promoting collaboration between USGS and researchers, disseminating research findings and other water resource information to the public, and supporting young scientists who seek careers in water resources. Current projects funded by the Center focus on several water resource issues including water-energy nexus, smart energy data analysis, water quality, drought management, groundwater contamination, and denitrification. Additionally, establishment of a statewide data hub accessible to IWRC's research fellows is currently underway. IWRC is also involved in several regional and national efforts including the prevention of harmful algal blooms in the North Central region of the United States, aquatic invasive species in the Upper Mississippi Basin, and groundwater and geothermal installation integrations. With a unique funding model, opportunities for collaboration and supplemental funding availability often come directly to IWRC from USGS or other federal agencies. Matching and leveraging available resources with the needs of the state places IWRC in an exclusive position to advance water resource research in Illinois. For more information on IWRC's research or to connect with our network please visit [iwrc.illinois.edu](http://iwrc.illinois.edu).