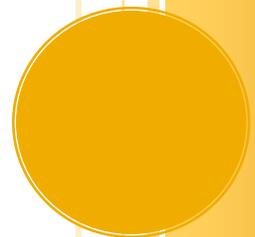


UTAH ENERGY JUSTICE SNAPSHOT



National Association for the Advancement of Colored People,
Environmental and Climate Justice Program

5/1/2017



UTAH ENERGY JUSTICE SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY

Access to clean energy is not just an environmental issue; its also a civil right. Communities of color bear a disproportionate share of the burdens of a fossil fuel based energy economy. This is why the NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Program stands for just energy policies that will help protect our communities from harmful energy production processes and provide equitable access to the clean energy economy.

This Snapshot profiles Utah's energy portfolio, evaluates key state energy policies, documents state utility disconnection policies, and outlines opportunities in the clean energy economy. Of current critical importance, this report also outlines the current debate regarding the future of net metering policies in Utah. Information provided will inform NAACP members on avenues for future engagement.

"The development of clean energy sources, such as solar, provides an opportunity to improve the health and well-being of everyone while creating economic enterprise opportunities."

UT NAACP President Jeanetta Williams



STATE ENERGY PROFILE

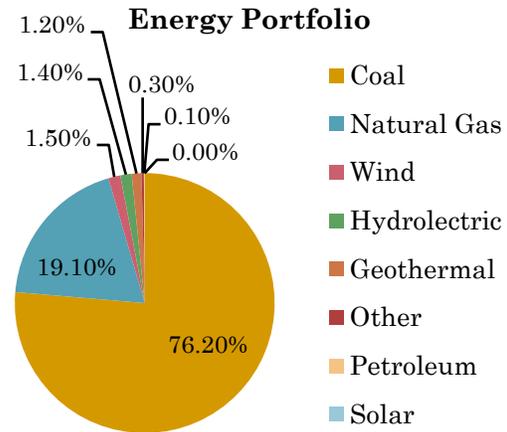
Although Utah has the geography, climate, and natural resources to generate abundant amounts of renewable energy, the state's energy infrastructure is stuck in the fossil fuel past. Utah generates about three-quarters of its electricity from coal and nearly one-quarter from natural gas. Coal has been on the decline in recent years, but state policies maintain the status quo, a 100-year-old dependence on fossil fuels, and inhibit the clean energy transition we need to fight climate change and keep our air breathable and communities healthy. This section outlines Utah's energy portfolio and document current key state energy policies.

Energy Portfolio

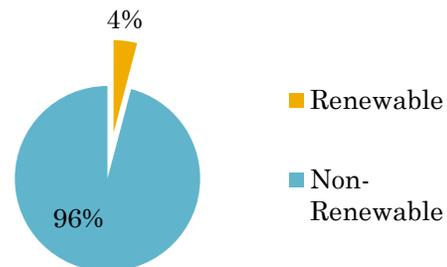
Coal is the dirtiest fossil fuel. From cradle to grave, coal endangers peoples' health. By a huge margin, **coal is the primary energy source in Utah.** Most active coalmines in Utah are located underground in the central Uinta Basin. Recent decreased reliance on coal from the electric power sector has lead to diminished demand and economic profitability of the fuel. Although three-fourths of Utah's net electricity generation came from coal in 2015, this is down from the share a decade ago when coal routinely fueled more than nine-tenths generation. **Second to coal, natural gas contributes just shy of a quarter of Utah's energy.** Production is also concentrated in the Uinta Basin.

In 2015 only about 5% of Utah's net electricity generation came from renewable resources. Despite this low percentage, Utah has diverse, significant renewable resource potential. **Wind power currently accounts for the largest portion of renewable energy generation.** In 2016 Utah had five wind farms operating, but **the state's largest wind farm sends its power to California where state policies mandate renewable energy use.**

Hydropower trails wind, but many of Utah's hydroelectric generators are aging; the state's hydroelectric facilities are more than sixty years old on average. In 2015 Utah was one of eight states with operating geothermal power capacity and has among the best geothermal potential in the nation. **Utah uses little solar despite significant solar potential.** State policies must be passed to incentivize investment in clean energy.ⁱ



Renewable vs. Non-Renewable



Renewable Energy Portfolio

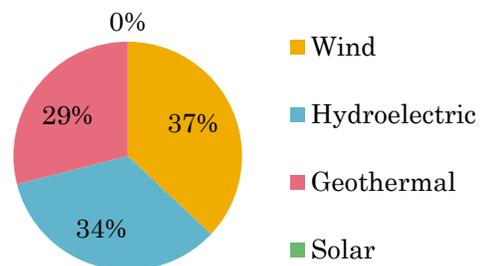


Figure 1-3: <http://spotforcleanenergy.org/state/arizona/>

For more detailed information and data on Utah's energy portfolio visit the U.S. Energy Information Administration's webpage,

<http://www.eia.gov/state/?sid=UT>

State Energy Policiesⁱⁱ

Policy Type	NAACP Recommended Policy Standards	Utah Policy Details
Net Metering	<p>Net Metering Standards require utility companies to provide retail credit for new renewable energy produced by a consumer.</p> <p>Capacity Limit Recommendation: 2,000 kW (minimally), per system</p> <p>Mandatory/Voluntary: Mandatory</p>	<p>Net metering is available for residential systems up to 25 kW in capacity and non-residential system up to two MW in capacity.</p> <p>The Utah Public Service Commission plans to issue new net metering rates in 2017.</p>
Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS)	<p>A RPS requires electric utility companies and other retail electric providers to supply a specific minimum amount of customer load with electricity from eligible renewable energy sources.</p> <p>Recommended Standard: Minimally 25% renewable by 2025</p> <p>Mandatory/Voluntary: Mandatory</p> <p>Allowable Sources: Wind, solar, geothermal, ocean/wave energy</p>	<p>Utah enacted <i>The Energy Resource and Carbon Emission Reduction Initiative</i> in March 2008. While this is similar to an RPS, it is not a mandatory standard but a <i>goal</i>. The law requires utilities to pursue renewable energy to the extent that it is "cost-effective" to do so.</p> <p>20% by 2025; voluntary</p>
Energy Efficiency Resource Standard (EERS)	<p>A EERS establish a requirement for utility companies to meet annual and cumulative energy savings targets through a portfolio of energy efficiency program.</p> <p>Recommended Standard: Minimally 2% annual reduction of each previous year's retail electricity sales.</p> <p>Mandatory/Voluntary: Mandatory</p>	<p>To date, Utah does not have an Energy Efficiency Resource Standard.</p>
Local Hire Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra renewable energy credit multipliers for in-state installation and in-state manufactured content • Renewable energy credits for utility providing incentives to build a plant in-state • Renewable energy credit for utility that makes an investment in a plant located in-state • Quota for government assisted construction project employers to hire a percentage of workers locally • Bidding Preferences for companies that hire a percentage of their employees in-state for state-funded public works projects and service contracts 	<p>Utah does not have a local hire provision.</p>
Disadvantaged Business Enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training opportunities • Notify DBEs of state business opportunities • Set-aside funds for DBEs 	<p>The Utah Unified Certification Program certifies DBEs for the U.S. Dept. of Transportation Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program. This program should be expanded to include energy projects.</p>

Utility Disconnection Policiesⁱⁱⁱ

Notice	Written notice must be provided by mail or delivery 10 days before scheduled disconnection, the utility must provide a 2nd notice by mail, phone, or in person. Personal contact required Oct- March. Written notice provided to a customer with life support device medical certification must be mailed or delivered at least 30 days before scheduled disconnection.
Date Based Protection	Oct-March personal notice required.
Temperature Based Protection	None
Payment Plan	Yes; deferred payment programs when an applicant cannot pay an outstanding debt in full. Utilities permitted to have budget payment plans or equal pay payment plans.
Reconnection Fee	Yes
Disconnection Limitations	Disconnections allowed Monday 9:00am - Thursday 4:00pm. No disconnections on legal holidays or on days when the utility services are not open to the public.
Other Protections	Medical certification postpones disconnection for the lesser of one month or the duration of the medical certification. Postponement for medical certification may be used twice in a calendar year. A customer with a life support device medical certification receives 30 days of additional notice.

Utility shut-offs have a disproportionate impact on low-income and African American communities. Check out the [NAACP report](#), "Lights Out in the Cold" for more information.



Without utility services, Utah residents are at risk of exposure to both extreme heat and extreme cold. Public officials have implemented some policies that protect consumers from the life-threatening practice of utility disconnection (As outlined beside). However, energy justice advocates must continue to hold utility companies and regulators accountable to human rights and basic but life-saving protections.

Action steps: Meet with the Public Utilities Commission or your utility company to advocate for the adoption of the following:

- Temperature based protections
- Restriction on reconnection fees
- Expanded protection for vulnerable populations

More details about Utah's disconnection policies are available at:

<http://publicutilities.utah.gov/faqs.html>

Hot Topic: Net Metering

Utah state policy currently mandates that net metering is available for residential systems up to 25 kW in capacity and non-residential system up to 2000 kW in capacity. But the policy that provides retail-rate compensation for customers who send excess power produced through distributed energy generation back to the grid is under debate.^{iv}

In November 2016, Rocky Mountain Power proposed changes to net metering rates. If implemented, the rate change would dramatically increase the cost of electricity for Utahans who want to power their home through distributed energy sources such as rooftop solar. The [Utah Solar Energy Association](#) calls the proposal "the most aggressive, anti-consumer, anti-competitive and anti-solar proposal ever made by a utility in the United States."^v

If the proposed change were to go into effect, it will:

- Harm the solar jobs industry, eliminating thousands of jobs
- Stifle the growth the solar industry in Utah, which is already incredibly small compared to the states solar potential
- Put unnecessary barriers in the way of access to solar energy



The rooftop solar industry is a key source of green job creation. In 2016 the Solar Energy Industries Association reported that recent solar capacity additions in the US have been predominantly commercial and utility-scale projects. However, in 2016 over half of the nation's solar workers were at work on residential solar projects. This imbalance is attributed to the fact that utility-scale generation typically produces more MWh's per labor unit installed compared to distributed generation.^{vi}

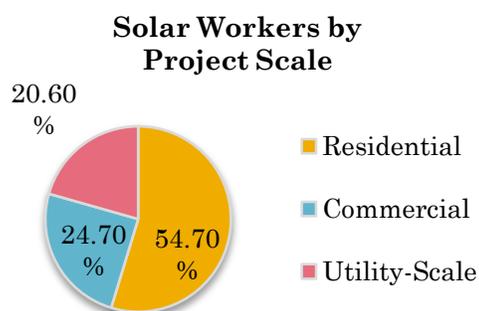


Figure 4:
https://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2017/01/f34/2017%20US%20Energy%20and%20Jobs%20Report_0.pdf

If Rocky Mountain Power's proposal is actualized, this would be a step in the wrong direction for clean energy in Utah. These proposed policy changes could kill customer choice, stifle the economic growth that renewable energy brings, and prevent the creation of thousands of clean energy Utah jobs.

Action step: State solar incentives including net metering are up for review in 2017. The time is now for energy justice advocates to speak out in favor of net metering policies. Before meeting with public officials, brush up on common net metering myths:
<https://mediamatters.org/research/2015/09/14/myths-and-facts-about-net-metering-for-solar-en/205519>.

DEVELOPING THE BLACK-GREEN PIPELINE

African Americans are inadequately represented in the clean energy sector. It is the goal of the NAACP Black-Green Pipeline Initiative that African Americans will have increased representation across all sectors of the clean energy economy. The Black-Green Pipeline Initiative promotes the equitable inclusion of communities of color into the green economy in order to address unemployment in our communities and to increase the voices and influence of our communities in the green economy.

To subscribe to the Black-Green Pipeline Initiative Weekly Digest send a blank email to:
naacp-bgp-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

The Green Labor Market and Communities of Color

Utah's concentration of energy employment parallels national averages with 27,985 traditional energy workers statewide. The energy efficiency segment employs another 31,074 people. Even though it supplies a very small portion of the state's energy portfolio, solar makes up the largest portion of jobs in electric power generation.^{vii}

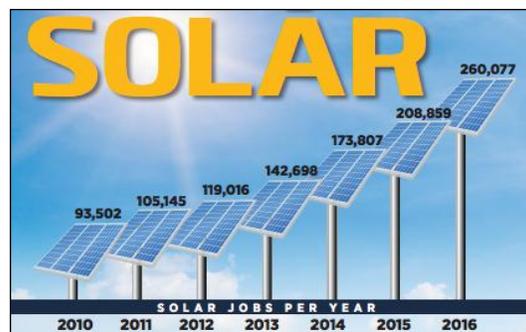


Figure 5: National Solar Jobs; <http://www.thesolarfoundation.org/>



According to the Solar Foundation [Solar Jobs Census](#), in 2016 Utah gained 1,729 solar industry jobs, representing a 65% increase in the state's solar workforce. In 2016 one out of every fifty new jobs in the United States was in the solar industry. Nationwide, solar industry employment outpaced the overall U.S. economy by seventeen times. And while the Solar Foundation reports that the solar industry outpaces most other sectors of the economy, adding workers at a rate nearly 12 times faster than the overall economy, African Americans are underrepresented in this economic boom. Up from about 5% in 2015, African Americans made up about 7% of the solar workforce nationwide in 2016.^{viii}

Action step: Host a *Bridge the Gap: Connecting Black Communities to the Green Economy* Program to establish working groups with existing organizations to increase African American engagement with local green economy. More details are listed on the following page.

TAKE ACTION

The Nevada-Utah-Idaho Tri-State Conference has been a leader among NAACP state conferences in taking action on energy justice. In 2014 the state conference released the NAACP Just Energy Policies Report for Utah, which among other things evaluates the state of Utah's energy policies and advocates for the focal policies outlined in this snapshot. By releasing this report, the Utah NAACP took a strong stand on energy justice advocacy, but there is more work to be done! Consider the following ideas:

Host a Bridging the Gap: Connecting Black Communities to the Green Economy Roundtable

- The NAACP ECJ Program is committed to advancing a meaningful dialogue and concerted action on engagement of communities of color in the green economy.
- To start taking action, organize a multi-stakeholder roundtable with socially responsible energy business leaders, historically black colleges and universities, environmental groups, civil rights organizations, labor unions, and others to discuss developing and implementing a strategy to ensure that policies/laws/regulation, research initiatives, community level practices, corporate social responsibility measures, etc. are in place to ensure greater engagement of communities of color in the green economy.

Implement a demonstration project such as a community solar garden or rooftop solar project

- Interested in taking a direct role in implementing clean energy practices in your community? Install rooftop solar or community solar.
- There are several rebates and incentives available to the people of Utah interested in pursuing renewable energy projects. Visit energy.gov for a list of renewable energy incentive program available on the state and federal levels.
- You can also check out funding opportunities offered through the Department of Energy SunShot Initiative, which aims to support solar energy adoption by making solar energy accessible to all Americans.

Launch a Just Energy Policies Campaign

- Identify one or more of the focal policies outlined in this snapshot and documented more extensively in the Just Energy Policies to champion.
- Build a coalition with likeminded energy justice advocates and other local and state allies to build power and momentum.
- Host a town-hall to educate the community about the policy and get input from members on their needs, priorities, and perspectives.
- Launch an intentional campaign to advocate that Utah adopts the recommended policy standard.
- Set up lobby trainings and coordinate a lobby-day with elected officials.

Make public the NAACP energy justice platform and engage the public through media

- Develop and place an op-ed by NAACP Unit President or ECJ Chair in a local newspaper
- Participate in a radio interview, TV interview, podcast
- Be quoted in a local newspaper
- Post an article or blog to an online platform

Utah Society for Environmental Education: a nonprofit environmental education organization that engages in environmental justice projects and research in Salt Lake City in order to expand the land of environmental education.

Breathe Utah: a groups of citizens and professional with experience and expertise in scientific, medical, legal, and communication aspects of air quality in Utah.

Peaceful Uprising: a non-profit collective committed to action to combat the climate crisis and build a just, healthy world. Committed to climate justice and collective liberation.

Climate Justice Alliance: coalition of organizations united for a just transition to a clean energy economy.

Utah Clean Cities Coalition: the mission of Utah Clean Cities Coalition is to advance the energy, economic, and environmental security of the United States by supporting local decisions to adopt practices that reduce petroleum use.

Utah Clean Energy: Utah Clean Energy leads and accelerates the clean energy transformation and is committed to creating a future that ensures healthy, thriving communities for all, empowered and sustained by clean energy.

SLC Green: an organization that advances programs to conserve resources, reduce pollution, slow climate change, and ensure healthy communities.

Utah Interfaith Power and Light: an organization committed to deepening the connection between ecology and faith.

Utah Solar Energy Association: An industry association representing Utah solar companies.

CLOSING

Today there is unprecedented urgency for climate action and a just transition to clean renewable energy. States like Utah have the power to be leaders in the energy transition. As NAACP Tri-State Conference of Idaho-Nevada-Utah President Jeanetta Williams penned in a [2014 op-ed](#), "our nation's choice to get the vast majority of energy from dirty fossil fuel sources has serious consequences for the physical and economic health of our communities."

Embracing a transition to clean, renewable energy sources will not only provide significant environmental and health benefits for Utahans, but will also diversify and strengthen the state's economy. While the state has significant renewable energy potential, state policies have no incentivized the growth of renewable energy. NAACP just energy leaders should advocate on behalf of a strong Renewable Portfolio Standard, Energy Efficiency Resource Standard, and Net Metering standards.

Need additional support, resources, or other assistance?

Contact: ecjp@naacpnet.org



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Created by the NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Program

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