

Clean Energy Is Delivering Sizable Environmental Benefits

Isak Kvam, Communications/Policy Associate • Apr. 18, 2019



Earth Day is on April 22, which means it's the time of year to celebrate the environmental benefits that clean renewable energy projects are bringing to America all year long.

Everyone benefits from clean air, clean water, and fewer greenhouse gas emissions. Thanks to low-cost wind and solar power, clean energy is also delivering a cleaner, healthier America. That's good for our environment and our economy.

Wind energy avoids over [201 million metric tons of CO2](#) annually, which is about 11 percent of US power sector emissions. That has tangible benefits for us today, because wind power avoided \$9.4 billion in public health impacts last year by cutting smog that can trigger asthma attacks and other health problems made worse by air pollution.

The benefits of wind don't stop there -- wind energy also helps to reduce water consumption. Nuclear, natural gas, and coal plants all rely on water to generate electricity. The U.S. power sector uses more water than any other sector, even the agriculture sector. Because wind generation uses virtually no water, wind power saved over [95 billion gallons](#) of water last year. That's equivalent to 308 gallons per American! But wind isn't the only sizable clean energy source delivering environmental benefits. Solar energy has emerged with clean air and water benefits to tout!

In 2018, a new solar project was installed [every 100 seconds](#) in the US. As the solar industry takes off, it's creating jobs and helping keep our air and water cleaner, too. Each year, solar generation offsets more than [73 million metric tons](#) of CO2 emissions. That's equivalent to taking 15.6 million vehicles off the road or planting 1.2 billion trees! The U.S. added 10.6 GW of solar in 2018, bringing its total to 64 GW nationwide. As its costs continue to decline, solar energy is poised to deliver even more low-cost,

carbon free power.

The U.S. is undergoing a clean energy transformation, one that's beneficial for our environment and our economy. Last year, wind and solar powered [8.2 percent](#) of the country's electricity generation. While that may seem small, consider that [37 percent](#) of all new electricity generation built in 2018 was wind and solar power. That's due in large part to the falling cost of both technologies. Today, there are over [35 GW of wind projects](#) under construction or in advanced development. The cost of wind power has declined [69 percent](#) since 2009, and the cost of solar power has declined [88 percent](#) since 2009. Thanks to technology improvements and human ingenuity, more clean energy is powering our homes and businesses than ever before, and at a low cost to boot.

In addition, as the costs of wind and solar decline, and demand for these resources increases, the result is more family-supporting jobs for Americans. A record [114,000 men and women](#) now work in the wind industry, which touches every state in the union with either a wind project or wind-related manufacturing facility. That's something both sides of the aisle can support. And, they should support wind projects or wind-related manufacturing facilities because they [are located](#) in 78 percent of Republican districts and 62 percent of Democratic districts. And the good news doesn't stop there. Today, over 242,000 Americans work in solar in all 50 states -- more than double the number in 2012.

Spring is a season of growth and change - the perfect time of year to highlight the environmental and economic benefits that the clean energy transition is delivering. As we transition to a clean energy economy, we can expect to benefit from the low cost of wind and solar, increased family-supporting jobs, and a cleaner environment for everyone.

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