

Wow: California Votes NO on Fossil Fuels

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California's Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) has determined the state doesn't need to invest in any new fossil fuel plants through 2020, and even beyond that.

CPUC voted unanimously to defer any investments in fossil fuel infrastructure because the existing electricity supply can meet state demand through 2020.

And it is also reasonable to defer procurement of generation after 2020, they say."

State law requires that 33% of California's electricity must come from renewables by 2020.

"This is a real opportunity to bring about a just energy system," says Shana Lazerow, an attorney with Communities for a Better Environment, a party to the proceeding. "This ruling should mean our communities can focus on green jobs that come with building local, sustainable generation, and not have to fend off proposals for new, dirty plants."

"This order is a solid step toward an energy plan for California that considers the needs of people and the environment," says Jim Metropulos, Senior Advocate with Sierra Club California. "We will continue to work with the Commission to create a future supply of power that doesn't deplete our natural resources or pollute our air and water."

The decision is part of CPUC's 2010 Long-Term Procurement Plan proceeding that evaluated the state's energy needs into the next decade.

In January, CPUC voted to require California's utilities need to first employ energy efficiency and conservation to meet customer demand; then energy from renewable sources, and only purchase power from fossil fuel plants only after all other choices are exhausted.

2012 California Green Innovation Index

California has used its lead in clean technology to help the state's economy rebound, while cutting greenhouse gas emissions, even with a rapidly growing population.

The state leads in venture capital investment, cleantech patent registration, energy productivity and renewable energy generation, according to the non-profit Next 10's 4th California Green Innovation Index.

Venture capital investment in California's cleantech companies rose 24% from 2010-2011 to \$3.5 billion. In solar, the state pulled in 62% of US investments, \$1.2 billion.

Last year, California passed 1000 MW threshold for installed solar.

910 patents were filed from 2008-2010, and patents filed in solar and batteries, represented 41% and 21% respectively, of all cleantech patents filed in the US.

"Venture capital investment and patent filings are two economic indicators that signal positive future growth in terms of jobs and businesses," says Noel Perry, founder of Next 10.

"California's commitment to an economy that is cleaner will also give us an economy that is stronger."

As of 2009, California cut carbon emissions 28% from 1990 levels for every dollar of GDP generated, while adding 8 million new residents.

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