



Virginians Win with Clean Energy

The Plan for a Healthy, Reliable, and Affordable Electricity System

Thanks to transformative laws like the Clean Economy Act (VCEA), Virginia is on the right path, heading toward a zero-carbon electricity grid by 2050. We are marching forward to a **resilient** electricity system that is better equipped to handle storms, a **healthier** system that doesn't increase the risk that a child has a life-threatening asthma attack on the playground, and an **affordable** and **predictable** system that increases Virginia's energy freedom and security.

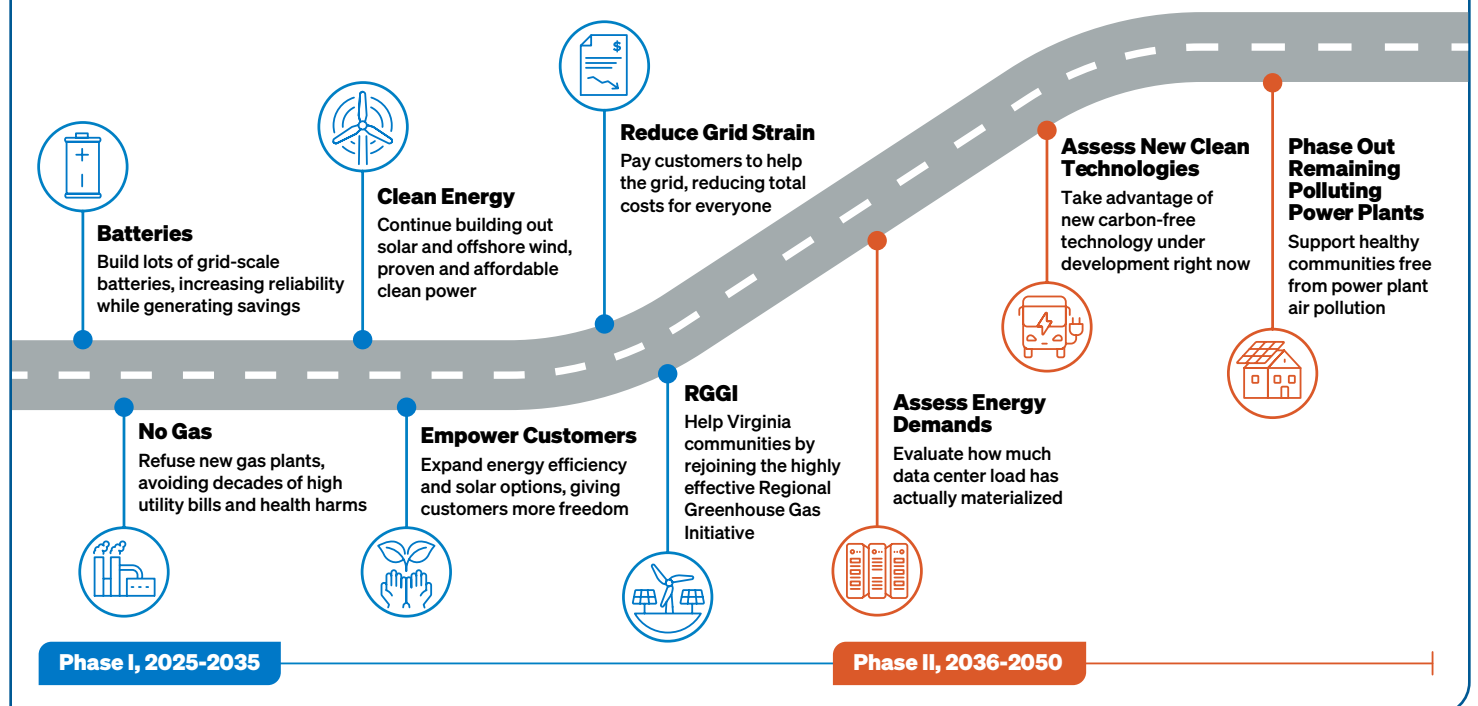
But our current progress is being challenged by rising electricity demand driven by data center development. [There are many reasons](#) why all of this growth may not — and in fact cannot — occur, but changes in the data center industry have the potential to drive unprecedented growth in electricity needs. If data centers keep pouring into Virginia, we will need new power sources and infrastructure, and potentially a lot of them.

This puts Virginia at a crossroads. We can stay on track for a clean, healthy future, or we can let profit-seeking utilities sink our dollars into expensive, dirty power plants and infrastructure just to serve big tech companies. A reversal would saddle utility customers with high, unpredictable bills for decades and put communities across Virginia in harm's way.

Virginia must stay the course. Energy experts crunched the numbers and found that even if data center demand grows as projected, clean solutions can meet the moment. In other words, our laws are working. They don't need to be repealed or rolled back — they need to be protected and strengthened.

The truth is we don't have to sacrifice communities and our clean energy transition to accommodate big tech companies and utilities seeking higher profits. Here's how we do it right.

The Clean Future



Phase I, 2025-2035

Build Batteries, Not Gas

BATTERIES MAKE THE GRID CHEAPER, ADAPTABLE, AND MORE RELIABLE

Virginia needs more batteries during this time of uncertain growth in demand for electricity. Batteries leverage existing resources and benefit customers immediately, giving Virginia time to assess data center needs and take advantage of promising new energy technologies. *See “Phase II.”*

Grid-scale batteries can provide huge savings to customers by charging when there is cheap, excess electricity (e.g., a sunny day with lots of solar energy), and then discharging when energy is more expensive (e.g., a very hot summer afternoon with air conditioners running at max). In Virginia, Danville Utilities has approved two battery projects that together will save customers \$70 million over 20 years.¹

Batteries can also help avoid the need to build expensive new power plants and big disruptive powerlines and other transmission projects. They can deliver critical power during storms and reduce outage times, providing reliability benefits on par with or even greater than a gas plant.²

Batteries use much less land than other power projects, can be built in urban and rural areas, and do not burden communities with harmful air pollution like power plants do. Since they can be put on the grid quickly, Virginians can start reaping the benefits faster.

GAS: GOOD FOR CORPORATE PROFITS, BAD FOR YOUR WALLET AND HEALTH

Utilities like Dominion have seized on data center growth to build as many gas-fired power plants as they can. Here’s why big corporations keep pushing these projects and how they’ll drain your wallet for decades.

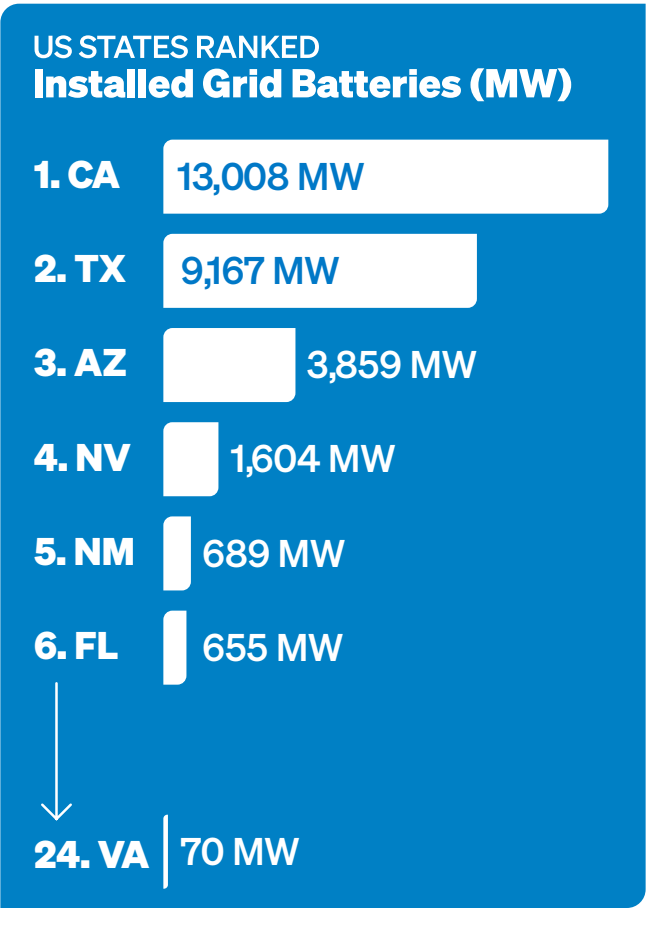
More capital investment, more profit. A monopoly utility’s profits are largely tied to the money it spends to build stuff. That’s why utilities continue to stack the deck against efficient solutions, because inefficient and often unnecessary projects like gas plants are better for their bottom line. Unfortunately, those excess profits come right out of customer wallets.

Financing costs. The true cost of big gas projects is far higher than the initial “sticker price” due to the financing costs. Dominion’s proposed Chesterfield gas plant has a “sticker price” of \$1.47 billion, but in reality, customers will pay \$4.5 billion.⁶

Fuel costs. A utility charges you for the fuel it uses every year. Dominion, for example, expects to ask customers for an estimated \$3.5 billion to pay for the gas needed at Chesterfield, on top of the \$4.5 billion it needs just to build

Virginia is falling behind other states, ranking 24th in terms of installed grid-scale batteries.

Texas had virtually no such batteries before 2020 but now has 9.2 GW — that’s 130 times more than Virginia.³ In 2024, as the state was struck by extreme weather like Winter Storm Heather, batteries saved Texas customers \$750 million.⁴ And, by rapidly deploying battery energy storage alongside solar, Texas’ risk of grid emergencies plummeted from 16 percent (summer 2024) to less than 1 percent (summer 2025).⁵ Thanks to batteries, Texas customers are saving hundreds of millions of dollars while dramatically improving their grid’s reliability.



the power plant — meaning customers may be on the hook for over \$8 billion for a single dirty power plant.⁷

Fuel risk. Fuel prices are volatile and at the mercy of international markets — beyond a utility or regulator’s control. That’s no sweat to a monopoly utility, however, because it can put that massive risk onto its captive customers. In both 2022 and 2023, Dominion asked customers to pay over \$1 billion extra because gas and coal prices were so high.⁸ Gas prices continue to rise — with prices expected to nearly double by 2026⁹ — which will again drive significant increases in utility bills.

Phase II, 2035-2050

Assess the Demand, Deploy New Clean Tech, Phase Out Dirty Power

BATTERIES BUY TIME TO ASSESS FUTURE ELECTRICITY NEEDS

Virginia's utilities claim they need to build a wave of gas projects in the 2030s to meet projected unprecedented data center growth. But there are many signs that these projections are overblown: supply chain constraints, increased efficiency of computer chips and artificial intelligence models, and speculative data center projects that may never be built.¹⁵ If we let profit-seeking corporations rush to build gas first and ask questions later, ordinary Virginians may be left paying for expensive new power plants that we don't need.

THE DIRTY SECRET: BURNING GAS IS BAD FOR HEALTH

Burning gas produces harmful pollutants, including tiny particles that lodge deep in your lungs and cause serious health problems, with particularly acute risks to children.¹⁰ Corporations don't like to talk about this reality when they're trying to get projects approved, but the harms are real:

- A proposed gas plant in Pittsylvania County would have exposed at least 17,500 residents to severe health impacts, and led to more than \$625 million in cumulative healthcare-related costs by 2040.¹¹ Local officials responsibly said no.¹²
- Dominion's proposed Chesterfield gas plant is projected to impose \$88.5 million in annual health harms on 1.3 million nearby Virginians, totaling nearly \$3.2 billion over the project's 36-year expected life.¹³
- Together, Dominion's plan, which includes building six new gas plants, would impose approximately \$7.4 billion to \$13.9 billion in health costs on Virginia communities through 2045.¹⁴



Building batteries now is a safer and more responsible approach. By leveraging existing resources, reducing overall costs, and improving reliability, batteries help Virginians now while we assess data center demands over the next decade.

DEPLOY EMERGING CLEAN TECHNOLOGIES

Scientists and engineers are hard at work developing the next wave of carbon-free power sources.

- Virginia was recently selected as the site for the first commercial nuclear fusion facility — a long-pursued technology that is recently showing real signs of commercial viability.¹⁶
- Small modular reactors are another technology that could fill an important need, building on existing technology used in aircraft carriers.¹⁷
- Enhanced geothermal systems harness energy from hot underground rock. With rapid advances in the technology, more areas in Virginia may prove suitable for this clean energy option.¹⁸

By deploying batteries now, we give Virginia a chance to monitor these exciting developments and invest in the next wave of technology, rather than commit to decades more of polluting, old technology.

PHASE OUT DIRTY POWER

By following this clean, adaptable path, Virginia will be in a great position to phase out its remaining fossil fuel power plants as we approach 2045 — a process already required by law.¹⁹ This transition will give Virginians cleaner air to breathe and will dramatically slash fuel charges on utility bills.²⁰ Dominion customers, for example, would save an estimated \$3.5 billion in fuel costs in 2045 alone.²¹



SCAN TO LEARN MORE ABOUT VIRGINIA'S CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE.

- Continue to build out solar and offshore wind.
- Expand energy efficiency and small-scale solar options.
- Establish strong programs that pay customers to help the grid when it is strained.
- Rejoin the highly effective Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

Virginia at a Crossroads

Do we move forward or go backwards?

The Costly Reversal

Questionable

Centralized grid is vulnerable to larger-scale outages during increasingly severe storms

High and Volatile

Reliance on unpredictable global products like gas and coal

High

Communities saddled with billions in health harms

High

Increased potential for decades of high and unnecessary bill increases

Low

Continued reliance on high-cost, centralized projects that earn utility more profit at customer expense

Reliability

Fuel costs

Air pollution health costs

Risk of unnecessary bill increases

Customer freedom

The Clean Future

High

A distributed grid, that relies more on strategically-located batteries and less on gas infrastructure, is better equipped to handle storms

Low

Solar and wind have zero fuel costs, meaning customers only pay for nuclear fuel

Zero

Solar, wind, nuclear, and batteries will produce zero air pollution

Low

Investments in batteries allow grid to adapt to future conditions, providing high value to customers

High

Improved access to cost-saving tools like energy efficiency and rooftop solar and incentive programs to let customers help the grid

Let's keep Virginia on the right path.

Want to learn more or review the sources?
Scan the QR code.



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