



mi air mi health

RENEWABLE ENERGY AND EFFICIENCY IN MICHIGAN

It is time for Michigan to lead the way by investing in more renewable energy and by reducing energy waste through energy efficiency. Transitioning away from fossil fuels will save money and lives, and give Michigan cleaner and healthier air.

- **Renewable energy** is energy generated from clean, renewable sources like wind, water and the sun. Renewable energy means producing energy here in our own backyards and employing Michigan workers in the process, rather than sending our money out of state to pay for imported coal and foreign oil.
- **Energy efficiency/optimization:** While these terms may seem convoluted, it's actually quite simple—energy efficiency means taking simple steps to reduce energy waste. Whether it's a homeowner updating an old, inefficient furnace, a hospital installing a new lighting system, or a small-business owner adding insulation, energy efficiency benefits all of us.
- **Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Saves Money and Lives.** Doctors, nurses, scientists, and other health advocates support transitioning away from coal and other fossil fuels to clean energy because it will reduce illness, rein in health care costs, and ultimately save lives.
- Michigan gets approximately 40% of its electricity from burning coal.¹ Michigan's coal plants emit dangerous levels of mercury, sulfur dioxide and arsenic, which are linked to heart disease, childhood asthma, lung disease, and premature death.
- Pollution from Michigan's nine oldest coal-fired power plants has been linked to 68,000 cases of asthma attacks and 180 premature deaths each year in our state, costing us over \$1.5 billion per year in excess health care costs.²
- Renewable energy and energy efficiency are affordable and cost-effective solutions. The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) has already determined renewable energy is cheaper than new coal generation. And for every \$1 invested in energy efficiency, customers avoid \$4.35 in energy costs.³
- If Michigan produced just 30% of its energy from renewable sources by 2030, we could provide an estimated \$4.1 billion in public health benefits.⁴

A Healthier and Cleaner Future is Possible

We need policies that put Michigan on track to be an industry leader in clean energy, create jobs, and give us healthier air. Transitioning to clean energy sources and being more energy efficient will improve health, lower health care costs, and save lives.

Here are two ways we can get there:

1. Tell your Michigan legislators that we can and should think of ways to increase the amount of renewable energy and energy efficiency we use in our state. After all, our energy policy can protect our health.
2. Engage with the MPSC during public comment periods to ensure:
 - Protecting Michigan's public health is a priority;
 - Michigan's utilities are maximizing all economically feasible energy efficiency opportunities; and
 - Diversifying Michigan's use of clean energy as an alternative to power generation that relies too heavily on a volatile fossil fuel market.



ABOUT MI AIR, MI HEALTH

The MI Air MI Health Coalition works to ensure that all Michigan communities have clean, healthy air. We organize health professionals to advocate for policies that improve outdoor air quality, improve a range of health impacts caused by unhealthy outdoor air pollution and climate change, and reduce the healthcare costs we bear because of unhealthy outdoor air.

OUR MISSION

MI Air, MI Health is committed to ensuring healthy air for Michigan communities by assessing the health effects of air quality and advocating for the development, implementation, and enforcement of policies to address these issues, recognizing that clean air contributes to a healthy economy.

To learn more, visit miairmihealth.org

¹ <https://www.eia.gov/state/?sid=MI#tabs-1>

² "Public Health Impacts of Old Coal-Fired Power Plants in Michigan," prepared by the Environmental Health & Engineering, Inc for Michigan Environmental Council, 2011.

³ Michigan Public Service Commission. (2016). 2016 Report on the implementation of P.A. 295 utility energy optimization programs.

⁴ Union of Concerned Scientists. (2016). Meeting the clean power plan in Michigan.



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