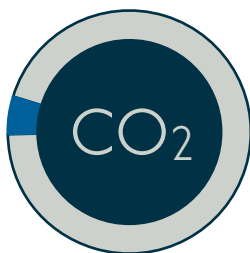


SOLAR POWER & LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Maximizing the benefits: the Southeast has enough sun to power our region, and the benefits to local communities are significant.

SOLAR IS BETTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT & PUBLIC HEALTH

Even accounting for the full life-cycle impacts, solar produces **less than 5%** of coal's carbon emissions.



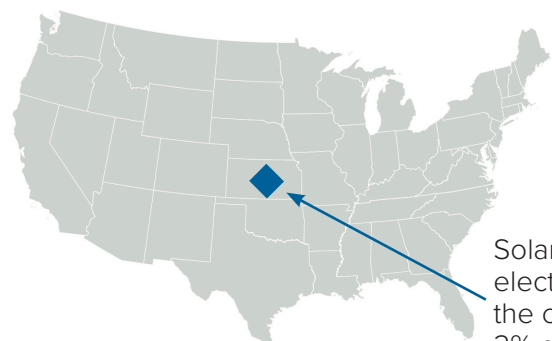
Solar uses a fraction of the water compared to natural gas, nuclear and coal.

Solar
20 gallons
used per kWh

Natural Gas
405 gallons
used per kWh

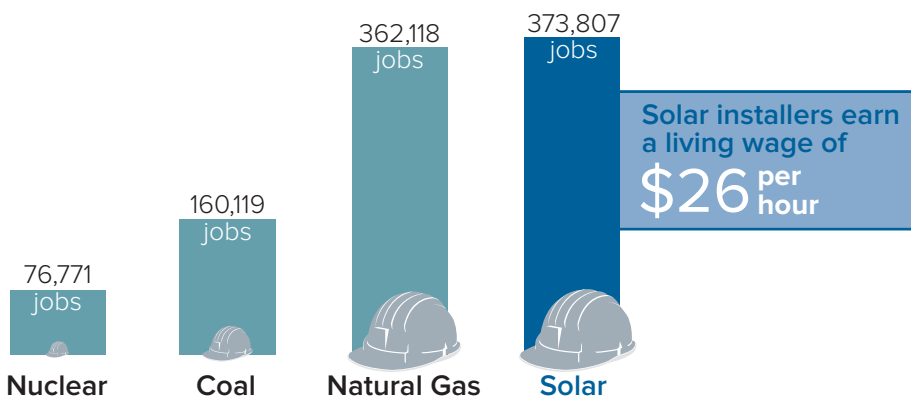
Nuclear
575 gallons
used per kWh

Coal
790 gallons
used per kWh

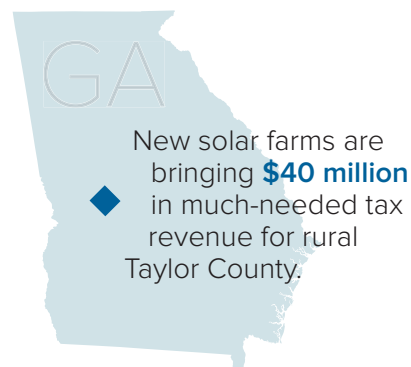
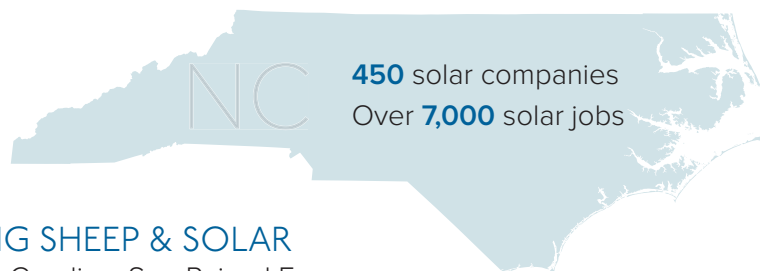


Solar can provide 100% of America's electricity needs by using only 0.6% of the country's total land area, or less than 2% of land that is now in crop production.

SOLAR BRINGS NEW JOBS TO OUR COMMUNITIES



Solar jobs are in all 50 states. The solar industry is growing at a rate 17 times faster than the overall U.S. economy. Solar employs more American workers than natural gas, and over twice as many as coal.



PAIRING SHEEP & SOLAR

In North Carolina, Sun-Raised Farms is proving that solar and farmers go hand in hand. The company pairs solar sites with local farmers, who maintain the vegetation using livestock. This gives farmers extra income and land to graze their sheep, and solar companies get all-natural lawn care.



MINIMIZING THE IMPACTS

As localities look to harness the benefits of solar power, there are ways to minimize the environmental impacts of new solar farms. Existing federal, state, and local environmental review processes provide protection from many potential adverse effects, and solar project developers are also finding new and innovative ways to minimize land-use impacts.



THE MYTHS OF LAND USE

Solar power has smaller life-cycle land impacts than coal, biomass, nuclear, or natural gas plants. Some have raised concerns about solar taking over farmlands, but here's the reality: if solar farms were to supply 100% of America's electricity needs, they would occupy less than 2% of land in crop production. That's less land than is currently being used for corn ethanol production. Solar leases typically require restoration of land once the lease ends, and can provide much-needed extra income for our farmers.



PROTECTING SENSITIVE SPECIES

Smart planning can ensure that solar farms are protective of our special places and sensitive species. In Georgia, the wildlife agencies are developing maps of critical habitat locations and are partnering with solar developers to select sites that minimize and mitigate impacts to wildlife and sensitive species such as the gopher tortoise.



RECYCLING SOLAR PANELS

PV panels are made of mostly very recyclable materials, including glass and aluminum, making it feasible to recover and re-use these materials at the end of a panel's useful life. The Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) recently launched a national solar panel recycling program. SEIA's program creates a network of cost-effective recyclers that can responsibly manage solar PV waste and end-of-life disposal of the panels.

“Our goal is make the entire solar industry landfill-free,” said Tom Kimbis, SEIA's interim president.



SOLAR AND YOUR COMMUNITY

To maximize solar power's benefits and to minimize potential impacts, local governments often seek to balance community perspectives with landowners' interests in investing in this energy source. We encourage local decision-makers to contact us and to consider establishing best practice permitting guidelines. For example, diverse stakeholders came together in North Carolina to craft a model local solar ordinance that can serve as an example for localities.

Following best practices, along with careful planning and collaboration among developers, community members, and environmental agencies can help ensure that solar power continues to be one of the cleanest forms of energy at our disposal.

FOR MORE INFORMATION



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