

Record 2020 wind installations represented 42% of new power

August 30 2021, by Ari Natter



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The U.S. installed a record amount of wind-generating capacity last year, adding nearly 17,000 megawatts of power on land, according to an Energy Department report being released Monday.

Wind [energy](#)'s share of total utility-scale generating capacity in the U.S. was only 11% in 2020, behind natural gas at 43% and nuclear and coal which both represented about 20%.

But wind is gaining: It accounted for 42% of all new capacity in 2020, which represented \$24.6 billion in new wind power projects, according to the Energy Department study, which was conducted by the department's Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory.

Solar was second, accounting for 38% of new capacity, followed by natural gas at about 20%. Overall, [renewable energy](#) comprised 80% of new capacity added last year. Utility scale measures energy that can be fed into a power grid.

"These reports contain such terrific news: the U.S. installed a record-breaking amount of land-based wind energy last year," Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm said in a statement. "They underscore both the progress made and the capacity for much more affordable wind power to come."

President Joe Biden's administration has laid out ambitious plans to increase renewable-energy use, and vowed to achieve 100% clean energy by 2035 to curb planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions.

Part of those plans is a goal of deploying 30 gigawatts of [offshore wind](#) power by 2030. The Interior Department announced Monday it was proceeding with an environmental review of a proposed 122-turbine project in federal waters off the coast of Montauk, New York, a key bureaucratic hurdle for the project.

"The Interior Department is committed to confronting [climate change](#), creating thousands of good-paying jobs, and paving the way for the nation's transition to a cleaner energy future," Interior Secretary Deb

Haaland said. "Offshore wind is a critical component of that ambitious agenda."

The Land-Based Wind Market Report also found that [wind energy](#) provided more than 10% of total in-state electricity generation in 16 states, including 57% of Iowa's and more than 30% in Kansas, Oklahoma, and North and South Dakota.

New utility-scale, land-based wind turbines were installed in 25 states in 2020, including Texas which installed the most capacity, with 4,137 megawatts, the report said.

According to the Energy Department, [wind](#) industry employment expanded by 1.8% in 2020, making it one of the few areas that saw job growth amid declines because of the coronavirus pandemic.

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