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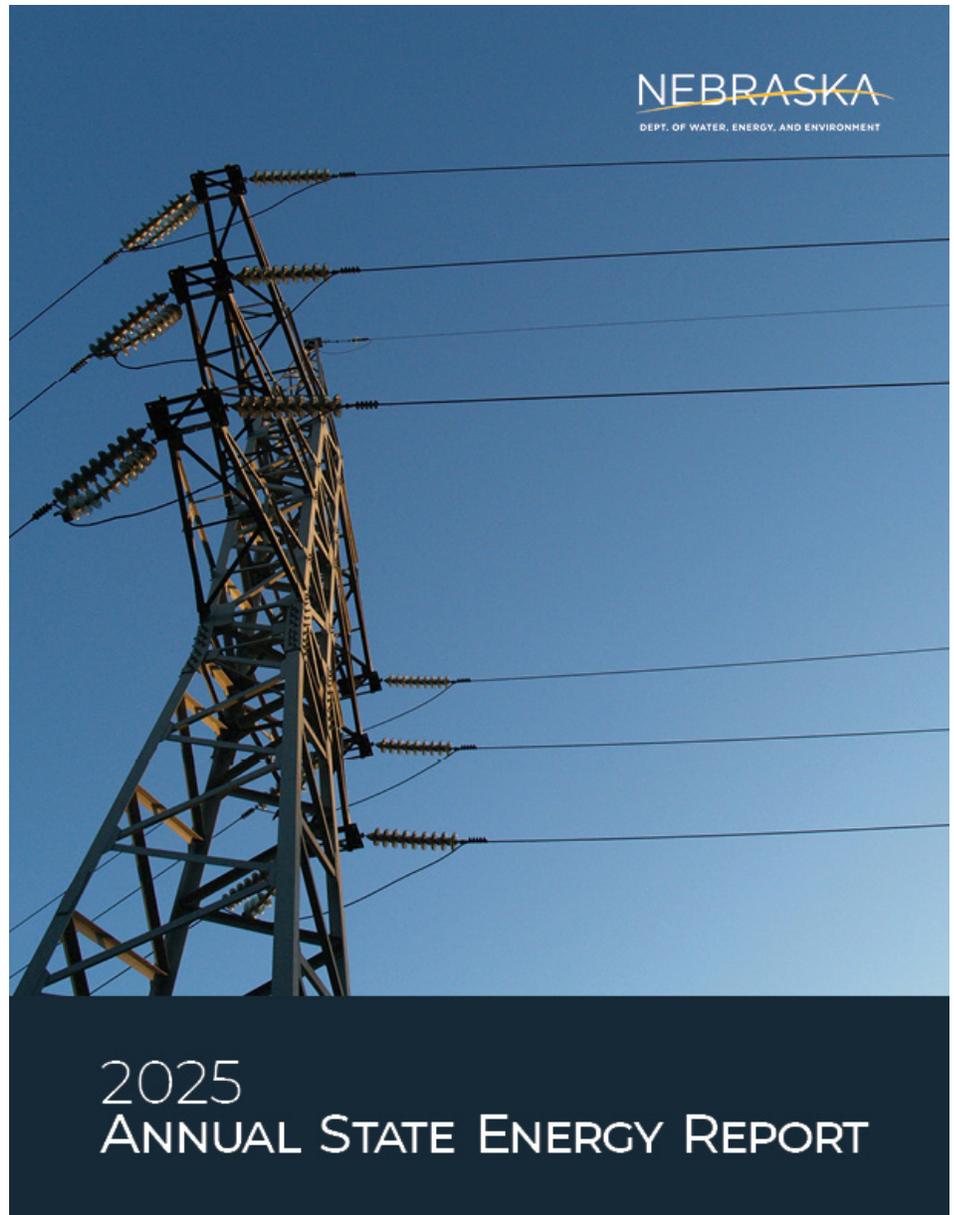
DWEE releases 2025 Annual Energy Report

The Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment has released its 2025 Annual Energy Report to the legislature. It can be found in its entirety on the [agency's website](#).

This report fulfills obligations set by Neb. Rev. Stat. §81-1607, which requires DWEE to submit an annual report that identifies emerging trends in energy supply, demand, and conservation within the agricultural, commercial, residential, industrial, transportation, and electric power sectors, along with other sector information that may be useful.

Information on DWEE's energy programs is also included in this report. There are summaries of FY2025 activities for DWEE's Weatherization Assistance Program, Dollar and Energy Saving Loans Program, State Heating Oil and Propane Program and other special projects.

Questions or comments on this report may be submitted to DWEE.moreinfo@nebraska.gov.



The cover of the Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment's 2025 Annual State Energy Report.

DWEE opens application period for Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program

The Nebraska Department of Water, Energy and Environment (DWEE) has announced the application period for counties, cities, and villages to apply for Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants (EECBG).

The application period is open through April 15, 2026. Decisions on awarded projects will be made by April 30, 2026, and be awarded by May 31, 2026.

In 2024, DWEE was awarded \$1.779 million in Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants (EECBG) from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to support local communities in implementing high-impact, self-sustaining energy efficiency projects through a competitive subaward grant process.

DWEE funded 14 projects, totaling \$1.1 million, in 2024. Those projects are now underway or completed. The Department is opening this supplemental funding opportunity to award additional projects.

Applications are open to Nebraska counties and local communities who were not eligible for a federal EECBG allocation. Eligible projects



Photo by CJ Dayrit on Unsplash

Nebraska municipalities can apply for a second round of funding through the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant through April 15. Funds can be used for high-impact, self-sustaining energy efficiency projects, such as improvements to a government building envelope, energy efficient street lighting, and energy efficiency workforce development, among other projects.

include upgrades to improve performance of building envelope for government structures, heating, air and ventilation upgrades, replacement of existing lighting to more energy efficient lighting equipment, and energy efficiency workforce development and training.

Projects for these competitive grants should improve the community by providing long-

lasting benefits such as increasing energy efficiency, decreasing the community's energy burden, and promoting workforce development in energy efficiency.

EECBG applications, instructions, and other supporting documents can be found on the program [application page](#). More information about the EECBG program can also be found on the [EECBG landing page](#).



Photo by Scott Webb on Unsplash

Home energy audits can help you identify energy efficiency problems in your home so you can fix them and save energy and money.

Making small changes can add up to big savings with a home energy audit

An expensive electric or gas bill might signal that your house isn't using energy efficiently. An inefficient home can use more energy and resources than needed.

If you suspect your house has energy efficiency issues, a [home energy audit](#) would be a good place to start. A residential energy auditor should be trained and certified by either the [Home Energy Rating System](#) (HERS) or the [Building Performance Institute](#) (BPI).

The inspection itself involves various aspects of the house: checking insulation in the walls, floors, and attic by using an infrared camera, assessing the sealing of duct work, determining whether windows have low-e or a gas fill, measuring insulation levels, checking air conditioning size and efficiency, and completing a [blower door test](#).

A blower door test measures how "leaky" the house is, or how much air it lets in or out. This involves mounting a fan with a pressure gauge, or blower door, into the frame of an exterior door to detect air leaks and find the air infiltration rate of a building.

This test is needed because houses receive positive pressure from the direction the wind blows from and negative pressure on the lee side, or downstream side, of the home. Energy losses from infiltration on a leaky home can be as costly as a lack of insulation. An energy auditor can find leak spots in your home using a blower door and infrared camera.

Here are some quick ways anyone can improve their home.

- 1. Make sure you have adequate insulation.** Look for attic insulation that is at least 10 in. deep. Shoot for an R-50 to R-60 if adding insulation to your attic and check walls to make certain all cavities are filled. However, be careful because ceiling drywall has weight limits that should never be exceeded. Cellulose and fiberglass are the most common types of attic insulation, and both are good insulation products.
- 2. Change your furnace filter regularly.** Check the type of filter you use to see how often it should be replaced.
- 3. Invest in energy-efficient lighting.** An average household dedicates about 15% of its energy budget to lighting, according to the [U.S. Department of Energy](#).
- 4. Look for ENERGY STAR and their “Most Efficient” rating** when purchasing appliances. ENERGY STAR rated products can be found on the [ENERGY STAR website](#), and look for their page with the “Most Efficient” equipment ratings. (“Most Efficient” is a higher ENERGY STAR rating)
- 5. Make sure your heating and cooling equipment are working properly.** Regular HVAC maintenance provides added benefits of preventing costly breakdowns and extending the life of the systems.
- 6. Installing a solar system,** either photovoltaic modules or a hot water system can be a cost effective improvement. Check local utilities for rebates, and use [IRS Form 5695](#) for Residential Energy Credits.
- 7. Use an [energy auditor](#)** with either [HERS](#) or [BPI](#) certifications to conduct a blower door test to stop infiltration and to find other areas of your home that could use improvements.

Many of these projects can be completed by homeowners. Utility companies also may have free home audit programs and rebates as well. Check with your local utility.

If you need to undergo a more significant home improvement project, the Dollar and Energy Saving Loan program may help. To qualify, applicants must live in Nebraska, be working on a building in Nebraska and work through a Nebraska lender (incorporated or chartered in Nebraska). For more information, visit DWEE’s [DESL webpage](#). Minimum requirements can be found on loan application forms.

Nebraska by Numbers

One of DWEE's duties is to maintain a collection of energy data to assess trends in the availability, consumption, and development of all forms of energy. This information can be found on [DWEE's statistics page](#). This edition's Nebraska by Numbers will provide an overview of Nebraska's energy use, statistics, and facts from the [U.S. Energy Information Administration](#).

Nebraska ranks...

2nd in ethanol production behind Iowa. Nebraska produces 13% of the United States' fuel ethanol.

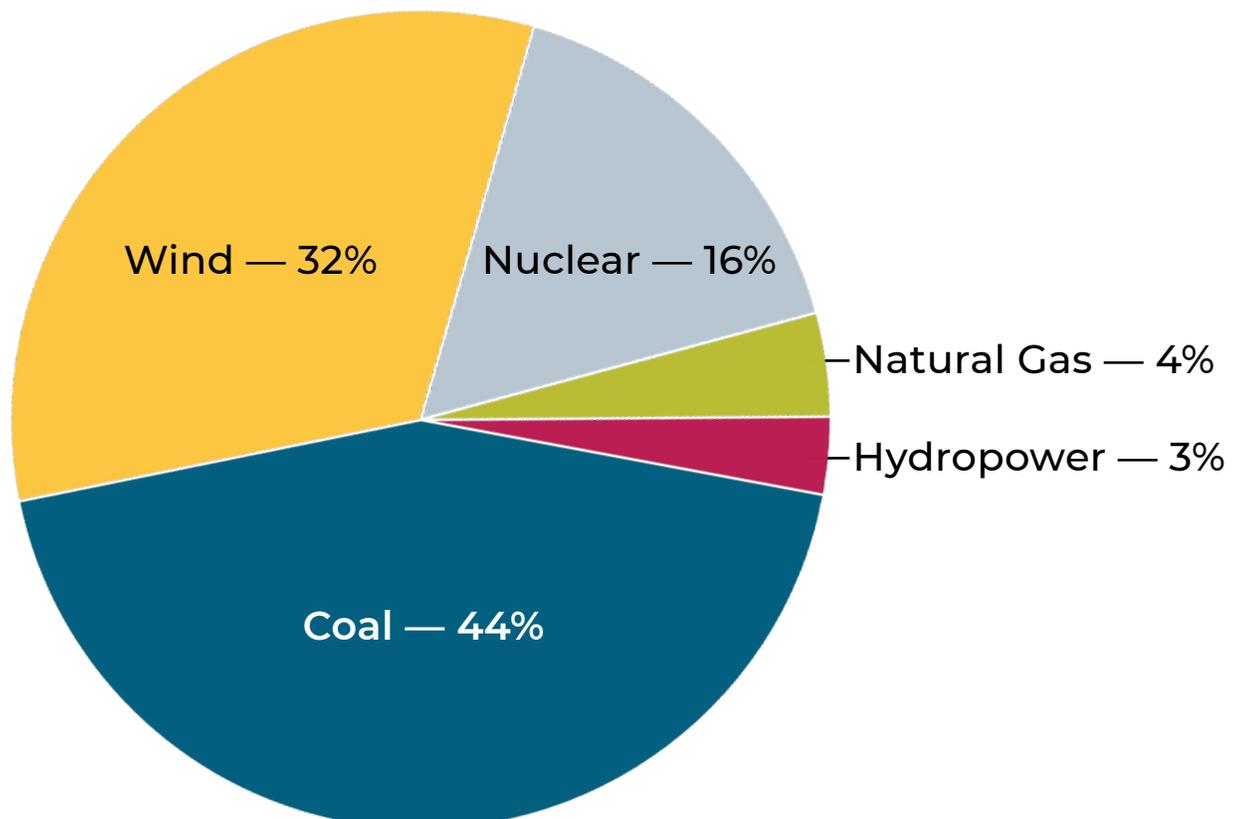
8th in total energy consumption per capita at 423 million British thermal units (Btu).

11th in total energy expenditures per capita at \$5,740.

14th in natural gas residential price at \$23.05/thousand cubic feet. The average is \$19.61/thousand cubic feet.

46th average residential electricity retail price at \$0.1313/kilowatthour. The average is \$0.1798/kilowatthour.

2024 Nebraska electricity net generation by fuel



Lighting choices to save you money

Information from the [U.S. Department of Energy](#)

When you switch to energy-efficient lighting, you can light your home using the same amount of light for less money.

Lighting accounts for around 15% of an average home's electricity use, and the average household saves about \$225 in energy costs per year by using LED lighting. If you are still using incandescent light bulbs, switching to energy-efficient lighting is one of the fastest ways to cut your energy bills. For high-quality products with the greatest energy savings, choose bulbs that have earned the ENERGY STAR symbol.

In addition to efficient lighting, consider using controls such as timers and dimmers to save electricity. Timers automatically turn lights off when not in use, and dimmers can be used to lower light levels. Be sure to select products that are compatible with the energy-efficient bulbs you want to use.

If you have outdoor lighting that is left on for a long time, using LEDs or CFLs in these fixtures can save a lot of energy. LEDs and CFLs are available as flood lights, and have been tested to withstand the rain and snow so they can be used in exposed fixtures. For high quality products with the greatest savings, look for ENERGY STAR-qualified fixtures that are designed for outdoor use and come with features like automatic daylight shut-off and motion sensors.

LEDs

[Light emitting diodes \(LEDs\)](#) are a type of solid-state lighting — semiconductors that convert electricity into light. Although once known mainly for indicator and traffic lights, LEDs in white light, general illumination applications are today's most energy-efficient and rapidly-developing lighting technology. LEDs use up to 90% less energy and last up to 25 times longer than traditional incandescent bulbs.

LED technology is available in many lighting product types including replacements for 40W, 60W, 75W, and



Photo by Federico Bottos on Unsplash

Switching to energy-efficient lighting can save the average household \$225/year. LED lights are efficient and last up to 25 times longer an incandescent bulbs.

100W traditional incandescent bulbs, reflector bulbs used in recessed fixtures, and track lights, task lighting, undercabinet lighting, and outdoor area lights. LEDs come in a variety of colors, and some bulbs can be tuned to different colors or different hues of white light. Some are dimmable or offer convenient features such as daylight and motion sensors. LEDs work well indoors and outdoors because of their durability and performance in cold environments. Look for LED products such as pathway lights, step lights, and porch lights for outdoor use. You can also find solar-powered LED outdoor lighting.

The cost of LED light bulbs has decreased dramatically since they entered the market and prices are expected to come down further as more products become available. While LEDs are more expensive than traditional incandescent bulbs, they still save money because they last a long time and have very low energy use.