

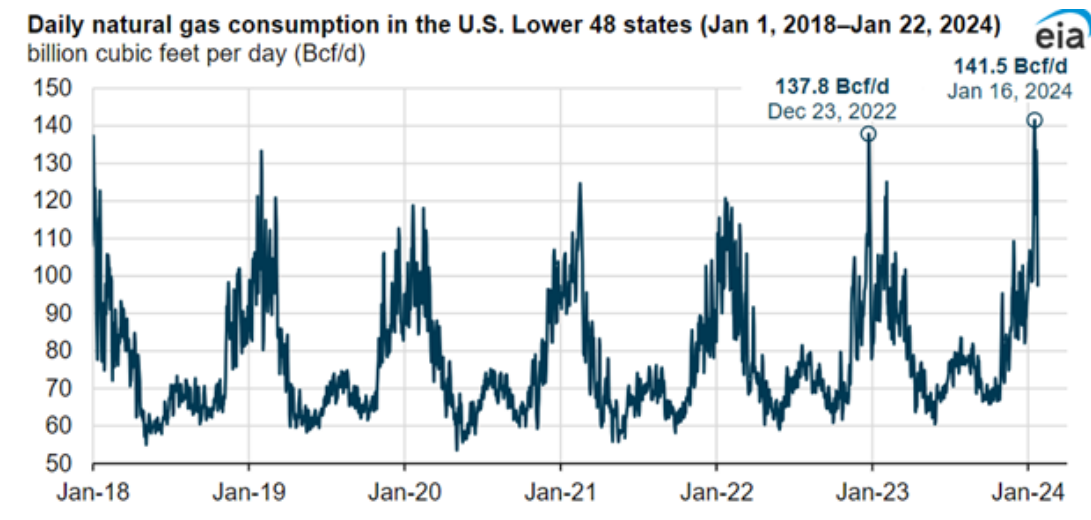
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Energy Information Administration

National – Natural Gas

The U.S. Energy Information Administration reported that natural gas consumption in the United States reached a new record. On January 16, 2024, a record high of 141.5 billion cubic feet of natural gas was consumed in the U.S. Lower 48 states, exceeding the previous record set in December 2022. Well-below-

normal temperatures across most of the U.S. increased demand for natural gas used for residential and commercial space heating and for electric power generation. The consumption of natural gas and withdrawals from underground storage increased to record volumes as a result.



Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Leadership

National – Electric & Natural Gas

President Biden announced Willie Phillips, Jr. as Chair of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Phillips has served as a Commissioner since November 2021, and as Acting Chair since January 2023. Prior to the Commission, Phillips served as Chair of the District of Columbia Public Service Commission and prior to that he served as Assistant General Counsel for the North American Electric Reliability Corporation, the entity that ensures the security and reliability of the bulk power system. In addition, the President nominated three individuals to serve as Commissioners ([President Biden Announces Key Nominees | The](#)

[White House](#)): Judy Chang, Managing Principal of the Analysis Group in Boston and former *Undersecretary of Energy and Climate Solutions of the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources*; Lindsay See, *Solicitor General of the State of West Virginia*; and David Rosner, an energy industry analyst at the Commission who has been on loan to the majority staff of the *Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee*. All three nominations have been received by the Senate, referred to the *Energy and Natural Resources Committee*, and are going through the hearing process.

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Annual Report on Electric Competition

Michigan – Electric

The Michigan Public Service Commission issued its annual report on electric competition ([2023 Status of Electric Competition in Michigan](#)). Michigan legislation restricts that no more than 10 percent of an electric utility's average sales for the preceding calendar year may take service from an alternative electric supplier. While participation by residential customers continues to be non-existent, some highlights include the following: (1) There were approximately 5,500 customers participating in the electric choice programs, down about 4 percent from the prior year, and this represents approximately 2,800 megawatts of electric demand, which is a

significant increase from 2022. (2) As of December 2023, an additional 6,000 customers remained in a queue to take service from an alternative supplier. (3) The electric choice participation remained around 10 percent for each utility. (4) Every Michigan licensed supplier is now subject to capacity demonstration and state reliability mechanism provisions requiring that they have enough resources to serve customers four years forward and if they do not, they are subject to a Commission-approved capacity charge. (5) There are 21 licensed alternative suppliers with seven actively serving customers in the state.

Everett Liquefied Natural Gas Facility

New England – Natural Gas

The Everett liquefied natural gas (LNG) facility owned by Constellation is scheduled to close at the end of May 2024; however, it is now likely to remain open well beyond that date through March 31, 2030, if the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities approves proposals submitted by the major gas utilities in Massachusetts. National Grid filed an application for its Boston Gas Company operations seeking approval of an agreement that will provide it with 27,000 dekatherms per day for a six-year term with a seasonal quantity of 500,000 dekatherms in the first year. Eversource Energy filed an application for Eversource Gas Company of Massachusetts seeking approval of an agreement for peaking service that would provide 19,600 dekatherms per day with a seasonal quantity of 882,000 dekatherms deliverable to the Company's Algonquin Attleboro and/or Taunton citygates and into the Tennessee Gas

Pipeline receipt location at the Everett LNG Facility during each winter season from June 1, 2024, through March 31, 2030. In addition, Eversource filed an application for NSTAR Gas seeking approval of a proposed agreement for peaking service that would provide up to 15,000 dekatherms per day with a seasonal quantity of 450,000 dekatherms deliverable to the Company's citygates during each winter season from June 1, 2024, through March 31, 2030. Unitil filed an application for Fitchburg Gas and Electric Light Company requesting approval of an agreement to provide a maximum daily quantity of 3,400 dekatherms and a maximum seasonal quantity of 83,000 dekatherms for each of the six years during the contract term. The filing parties have asked the Department of Public Utilities for approval by May 1, 2024, and the proposals are under regulatory review.

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Natural Gas Capacity and Renewable Portfolio Standard

Connecticut – Electric & Natural Gas

Legislation has been introduced in the Connecticut Assembly ([C G A - Connecticut General Assembly](#)) and referred to the *Joint Energy and Technology Committee* to (1) study expanding natural gas capacity in the state, and (2) adjust the Renewable Portfolio Standard by redefining the Class I renewable energy source to include all electricity derived from

hydropower and nuclear power. If enacted, this would require the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection to study and evaluate natural gas capacity in the state including ways to expand natural gas capacity. This would include an assessment of any necessary regulatory or legislative changes with a recommendation by January 1, 2025.

Office of the Energy Transformation

Massachusetts – Electric & Natural Gas

The Healey-Driscoll Administration announced the establishment of the Office of the Energy Transformation (OET) ([Healey-Driscoll Administration Establishes Nation's First Office of the Energy Transformation | Mass.gov](#)) and the appointment of Melissa Lavinson as its Executive Director effective May 1, 2024. The OET will be housed within the *Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs* and is charged with the execution of the clean energy

transition, including ensuring the availability and readiness of electrical infrastructure, electric and natural gas transition coordination, and a just transition for impacted workers and businesses. Lavinson will also convene an Energy Transformation Task Force with industry, labor and supply chain representatives, among others, to accelerate cooperation and understanding of the current state of the energy transition in Massachusetts.

Last Coal Plants to Close

New England – Electric

Granite Shore Power announced that an agreement was reached with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency whereby Merrimack Station (Bow, New Hampshire), New England's last remaining coal-fired power plant, as well as Schiller Station (Portsmouth, New Hampshire) will be closing ([Press Release | NH Coal Plant Closing \(graniteshorepower.com\)](#)). The agreement will facilitate the creation of renewable

energy parks and as part of the redevelopment plan, Schiller Station is advancing a battery energy storage system that will take energy from the electric grid during low demand and put it back on the grid during peak periods and serve as a reliability resource for wind power that is being built off the coast of Massachusetts and Maine.

Exploring Retail Choice

Missouri – Electric

Legislation has been introduced in Missouri ([Missouri House of Representatives - Bill Information for HB2070 \(mo.gov\)](#)) that, if enacted, would require

the Missouri Public Service Commission to permit commercial and industrial customers to choose an electric generation supplier starting June 1, 2025. It

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would also require the Commission to create rules allowing residential customers of electric utilities to choose an electric generation supplier by January 1,

Expanding Electric Competition

Virginia – Electric

Virginia Customers for Energy Choice stated that **"The limited Virginia customers that were able to shop saved more than \$105 million compared to utility rates between 2017-2021 and the majority were enrolled in plans that were 100% renewable energy."** *Virginia Customers for Energy Choice*, a coalition of customers, businesses and environmental groups have convened to support Virginia Senate Bill 591 ([Bill Tracking - 2024 session > Legislation \(virginia.gov\)](#)) to expand electricity competition and reduce the restrictions on customers being able to shop for an alternative electricity supplier. The proposed changes include the following: (1) reducing from 5 megawatts to 1 megawatt the threshold size above which a customer is allowed to shop for a

2028. An executive session on the proposed legislation was held by the *House Emerging Issues Committee* and awaits further steps.

competitive supplier; (2) reducing from 5 megawatts to 1 megawatt the aggregation size threshold that allows an aggregation of customers to shop for competitive supply; (3) elimination of the requirement that aggregations for competitive supply must seek Virginia State Corporation Commission approval to shop; (4) allows all customers to shop for a 100 percent renewable plan, regardless of the presence of any utility green tariff available to the customer; and (5) the bill also decreases the required written notice period from five years to six months for certain electric energy customers to return to service by Dominion Energy Virginia after purchasing electric energy from other suppliers.

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