



Nuclear New York

Independent Advocates
for Reliable Carbon-Free Energy

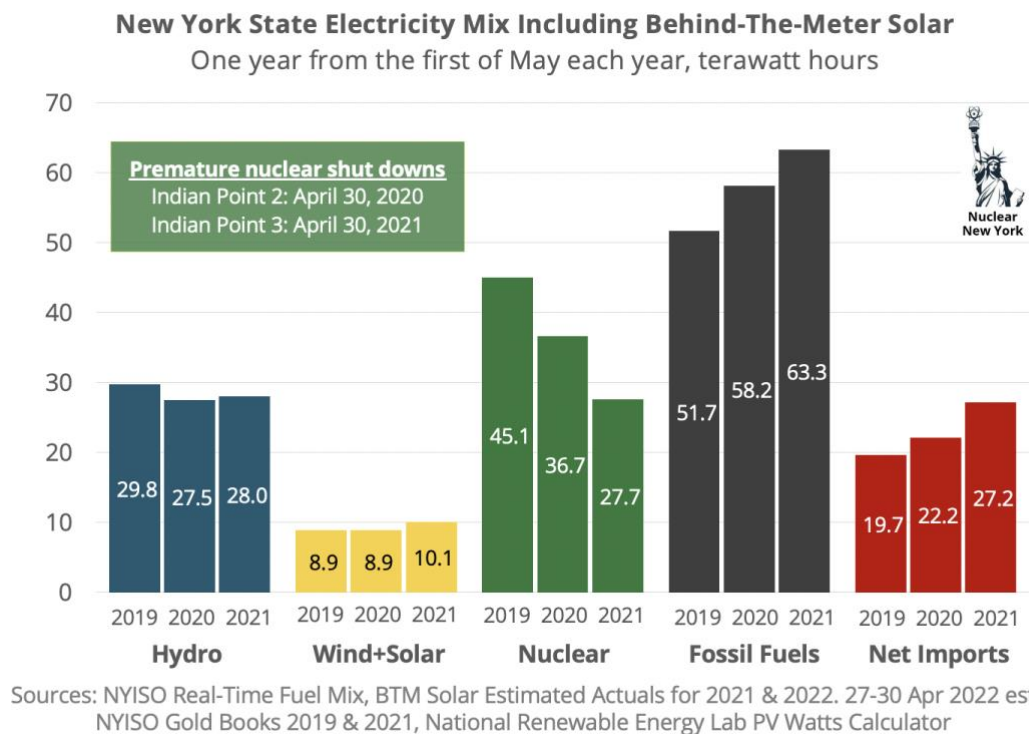
3961 47th St, Sunnyside, NY 11104
NuclearNY.org
info@NuclearNY.org

For Immediate Release: April 28, 2022

ONE YEAR AFTER INDIAN POINT’S CLOSURE PROVES VALUE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY FOR PLANET AND COMMUNITIES

Contact: Dietmar Detering, 917-251-2235

Buchanan, NY – April 30, 2022 marks the one-year anniversary of New York’s premature closure of the Indian Point nuclear power plant. For years, the Cuomo administration and anti-nuclear groups demanded that New York’s largest source of reliable carbon-free energy be shuttered, claiming its electricity would be replaced by gains in renewable energy and efficiency.¹ Real-time data collected by the electricity regulator, New York Independent Systems Operator (NYISO), tells a very different story. Closing 80% of downstate New York’s emissions-free power source has caused the downstate grid to be taken over by fossil fuels.



The miniscule gain in rooftop solar generation from 2019 to 2021 was overshadowed by a decline in hydropower. New York has not added any wind capacity since 2019 and wind-based generation is barely above 2014 levels.² Fossil combustion increased both in-state (black columns) and out-of-state (red columns) to replace Indian Point’s carbon-free electricity generation of 16.7 terawatt-hours per year.

¹ Kit Kennedy. Indian Point Is Closing, but Clean Energy Is Here to Stay. April 28, 2021. <https://www.nrdc.org/experts/kit-kennedy/indian-point-closing-clean-energy-here-stay>

² NYISO Gold Book 2021. Figures III-4a and III-4b <https://www.nyiso.com/documents/20142/2226333/2021-Gold-Book-Final-Public.pdf/b08606d7-db88-c04b-b260-ab35c300ed64>

New York boasted the “most ambitious” climate ambition of all states when unveiling the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) in 2019. The CLCPA’s goals include making electricity generation 100% carbon-free by 2040. However, since the CLCPA became law, annual greenhouse gas emissions of New York’s electric sector have increased by 12-15 million CO₂ equivalent metric tons, nearly a third.³

Two massive fossil combustion plants, Cricket Valley Energy Center and CPV Valley Energy Center, came online to take the place of Indian Point’s steady, 2,080 MW power, as forewarned by NYISO.⁴ To this day, CPV’s plant operates without proper emissions permits.^{5,6}

“It’s perplexing, indeed, disturbing that a plant of the magnitude of CPV is operating without a Title V Clean Air Act permit.” said Wawayanda resident **Madeline Shaw of Protect Orange County**, a group opposing their community from becoming a ‘sacrifice zone.’ “Meanwhile residents around the plant have experienced a significant increase in health impacts associated with exposure to air pollution, such as asthma, COPD, and other respiratory ailments. While some have left the area, many such victims cannot leave the new environmental justice community created by this plant.”

Air-pollution-free nuclear energy runs off cheap uranium and skilled labor, the largest component of its costs. Indian Point provided high-paying, largely unionized jobs for 1,000 women and men. These multi-generational jobs and tax revenues enabled a vibrant, healthy, and prosperous community. In contrast, the new fossil plants employ about 51 people in total.

“We oppose taking zero-carbon nuclear power facilities offline. Shutting down Indian Point had devastating, long-term consequences to the state’s power supply and the economy that are irreversible. Thousands of union jobs were lost and not replaced. We cannot make this mistake again,” said **James Shillitto, President of the Utility Workers Union of America Local 1-2**. “As the state looks to the future, we urge a balanced approach to meet our carbon reduction commitments while delivering affordable electricity, bolstering infrastructure, improving grid reliability, and creating New York jobs that support families and communities.”

New York’s Climate Action Council recently completed a Draft Scoping Study on how the state should comply with the CLCPA. Extending the life of New York’s remaining nuclear plants to 80 years benefits New Yorkers to the tune of \$9 billion.⁷ Based on this estimate, shutting Indian Point cost New Yorkers over \$16 billion.

Energy investor and climate advocate **Isuru Seneviratne of Radiant Value Management** said “Switching from nuclear energy to gas only makes sense if you ignore environmental and health externalities. And now gas prices are up by over 50%, as a result New York burns \$600 million in fracked gas annually in lieu of Indian Point.”

³ Nuclear New York. Indian Point. <https://www.nuclearny.org/indian-point/>

⁴ NYISO. Generator Deactivation Assessment Indian Point Energy Center. December 13, 2017. https://www.nyiso.com/documents/20142/1396324/Indian_Point_Generator_Deactivation_Assessment_2017-12-13.pdf/f673a0f8-5620-1d7b-4be2-99aaf781ac5c

⁵ New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Notice of Revocation of Complete Application and Notice of Incomplete Application. November 2020. <http://www.nuclearny.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/2020-11-29-CPV-NYSDEC-NOIA-Title-V-Permit-Application-Revocation.pdf>

⁶ Search <https://www.dec.ny.gov/cfm/xtapps/envapps/index.cfm> for current status of 3-3356-00136/00010 or 3-3356-00136/00009

⁷ New York Climate Action Council. Draft Scoping Plan. December 2021. Appendix G: Integration Analysis Technical Supplement, Section I - Page 75 (page 752 in PDF document). <https://climate.ny.gov/Our-Climate-Act/Draft-Scoping-Plan>

Central Hudson, the utility serving much of the mid-Hudson region, pointed to the increased global gas demand and Indian Point closure when alerting its consumers that electric bills will be 46% higher.⁸ **Dr. Dietmar Detering of Nuclear New York:** “We knew that pollution would go up with the loss of Indian Point. However, this winter the 1,100 MW Cricket Valley Energy Center barely generated any electricity at all. Generation had to shift to out-of-state and inner-city power plants—when rates were already high from elevated gas prices. The result: Record high electricity prices in the Capital region and downstate. Shutting down Indian Point truly was a lose-lose decision for climate, communities, and ratepayers, though some generators certainly made a lot of money this winter!”

“New York is serving itself a one-two punch of energy insecurity in winter,” said **Meredith Angwin, the author of the bestselling book ‘Shorting the Grid.’** “New York is replacing Indian Point with power plants that depend on just-in-time imported gas. Gas for power production is in high demand and tight supply in winter because home heating needs have first priority on the gas. The risk of gas supply disruption is greatest on the coldest days. And the recently approved Champlain Hudson Power Express project also fails to guarantee electricity for New York in winter. When it is really cold, supplier Hydro Quebec reserves all its electricity for Quebecois customers. For energy security, New York needs to increase its energy independence from imported gas and imported electricity. But New York is doing just the opposite.”

Said **Dr. James E. Hansen, climate scientist and former director of NASA’s Goddard Institute,** “Tackling the climate crisis requires policies based on facts, not prejudice. Wind and solar power help with early decarbonization, where they can replace fossil fuels without need for large storage and transmission upgrades. However, systems overly dependent on intermittent, low-energy-density renewables—as California and Germany have proven—lead to skyrocketing electric rates, grid instability, and continued dependence on fossil fuels.”⁹

We urge New York to learn the right lessons from the wanton loss of Indian Point. Nuclear energy provides well-paying jobs, steady tax revenues, stable communities, and ample amounts of reliable electricity for a prosperous society. Carbon-free nuclear power means energy security, clean air, and environmental justice.

⁸ Central Hudson. Central Hudson Alerts Customers of Higher Winter Energy Costs. Feb 10, 2022. <https://www.cenhud.com/en/news/2022/central-hudson-alerts-customers-of-higher-winter-energy-costs/>

⁹ James E. Hansen. Commentary: Nuclear power must be part of New York’s energy solution. Times Union. April 11, 2022 <https://www.timesunion.com/opinion/article/Commentary-Nuclear-power-must-be-part-of-New-17071213.php>