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Report: 62,000 Clean Energy Workers in Colorado

Top 10 Counties: Denver, Arapahoe, Jefferson, Adams, Douglas, Boulder, Larimer, Weld, El Paso, Mesa; Energy Efficiency, Renewables Are Top Industries for Jobs

DENVER (January 6, 2016) – More than 62,000 people in Colorado work in the clean energy sector, according to a new report unveiled today by the national, nonpartisan business group Environmental Entrepreneurs (E2).

“Clean Jobs Colorado,” available [here](#), was previewed this morning at the Colorado State Capitol by legislators and business leaders gathering in Denver for the start of the 2017 legislative session. The report is based on U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics information and new data from the U.S. Department of Energy, as well as a survey completed by hundreds of businesses across Colorado.

“Colorado has been a great place to launch and grow my energy efficiency business, in no small part due to the state’s leadership in clean energy policies,” said RJ Mastic, CEO of Ecosystems Group Inc., a Denver-based energy efficiency business. **“We’re hiring at a brisk pace – a new employee almost every other month. But to keep companies like mine growing – and to attract the next generation of entrepreneurs – Colorado needs to shore up its clean energy policies now.”**

The Clean Jobs Colorado analysis was conducted for E2 by BW Research Partnership. It includes detailed jobs data down to the county, metropolitan area, congressional and state legislative district levels – making it the most comprehensive tally of clean energy jobs ever in Colorado.

According to the report:

- Clean energy is a bipartisan issue, with thousands of jobs in both red and blue areas of the state. Over the next year, clean energy employers are expecting to hire nearly 1,500 additional workers – a 2 percent growth rate.
- Energy efficiency is the state’s largest clean energy employer, with more than 40,000 Coloradoans working in industries like high-efficiency lighting, Energy Star appliance

manufacturing and high-efficiency HVAC services that reduce wasted energy in homes, schools and businesses.

- More than 14,000 Coloradoans work in renewable energy, including nearly 7,000 in solar and about 6,500 in wind.
- There are clean energy jobs in every county in Colorado. The top 10 counties are: Denver, Arapahoe, Jefferson, Adams, Douglas, Boulder, Larimer, Weld, El Paso, and Mesa.
- Looking at metro areas specifically, the Denver-Aurora area has 46,000 residents working in clean energy, followed by Boulder (2,700 jobs) and Fort Collins-Loveland (nearly 2,400). The more rural and agricultural swaths of the state are still home to nearly 6,000 clean energy workers.

To keep these jobs growing, state and federal lawmakers should continue to support policies driving the clean energy sector, according to E2. These policies range from the international climate agreement reached in Paris and the Clean Power Plan, to state and regional clean energy goals in Colorado.

A big part of the clean energy success story in Colorado has been its Renewable Portfolio Standard, or RPS, which requires investor-owned utilities to source 30 percent of their electricity from renewables. With that standard set to expire in 2020, strengthening and extending Colorado's RPS should be a legislative priority – one that can grow Colorado's economy, attract investment, and stimulate in-state innovation. If the standard isn't extended, the industry could falter.

The report also identifies gaps in the state's energy efficiency policies; E2 recommends lawmakers boost energy-savings goals for all utilities to 2 percent annually, and extend those goals beyond 2020.

Expanding electric vehicle (EV) adoption and infrastructure can also grow Colorado's economy and add jobs. The report calls on utilities to incentivize EV ownership by installing more EV infrastructure and encouraging car charging during hours of low energy demand.

“With so much uncertainty in Washington, states like Colorado really need to lead on industries of the future like clean energy,” said Susan Nedell of Louisville, Colo., who's the E2 Rocky Mountains advocate. **“We have a long track record of leadership in this space. Fortunately, the legislature has a big opportunity this year to lock in strong clean energy policies that will grow our economy and protect our environment for years to come.”**

The report includes a case study of a Fort Collins microgrid business that's creating jobs for millennials, and a story about an El Paso County wind farm generating revenue for more than 100 local landowners while also creating high-paying, permanent, rural jobs.

Last month, E2 and our partner E4TheFuture released [“Energy Efficiency Jobs in America,”](#) which included state-by-state breakdowns of 1.9 million energy efficiency jobs across the country. Colorado details are on Pages 33-34.

Earlier in 2016, E2 also released [“Clean Jobs America,”](#) a report that tallied 2.5 million jobs in clean energy sectors nationwide. E2 also recently released two Colorado-specific reports: [“Winds of Change”](#)

and “[Colorado’s Clean Energy Future](#),” which was released in October with an event at the Alliance Center in downtown Denver featuring business and civic leaders from across Colorado.

E2 previously released this [video](#) illustrating how energy efficiency and solar presents business opportunities across Colorado.

All these reports and more are compiled at www.e2.org/cleanjobscolorado. And you can follow Colorado clean energy jobs news via [#CleanJobsCO](#).

For more information, or to speak with clean energy business leaders or policy experts in Colorado, please contact Alex Frank at afrank@hastingsgroup.com, Patrick Mitchell at pmitchell@hastingsgroup.com, or E2 Rocky Mountains advocate Susan Nedell at susan@e2.org.

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[Environmental Entrepreneurs \(E2\)](#) is a national, nonpartisan group of business leaders, investors, and professionals from every sector of the economy who advocate for smart policies that are good for the economy and good for the environment. Our members have founded or funded more than 2,500 companies, created more than 600,000 jobs, and manage more than \$100 billion in venture and private equity capital. For more information, see www.e2.org or follow us on Twitter at [@e2org](#).