

Data Centers Impacts on Virginia

What happens when a power-hungry industry goes unchecked for years?

Virginia has more data centers than anywhere else on earth. The true cost of this development is expensive electric bills, irreversible environmental harm, reduced water quality & access, and public health impacts for nearby neighborhoods, schools and communities.

Air & Water

- Loss of land and ecosystems
- Tree loss: The scale of deforestation tied to these projects is unknown.
- Noise: Round-the-clock humming
- Inadequate buffers (100-200 feet is typical)
- 70% of data centers sit within 500 feet of homes, parks, and businesses
- Air pollution from trucking in diesel fuel
- Air-quality degradation from soot and other emissions from nearby diesel generators

Energy Demand

- Dominion Energy has data center applications for over 70 GW of power.
 - 1 GW is enough energy to power San Francisco.
- Dominion Energy is using data centers' power needs as an excuse to build out fossil fuel plants across Virginia.
- Data center growth has made it impossible for us to meet the Virginia Clean Economy Act's goal to be fossil fuel-free by 2045.
- Data centers are driving construction of new fossil fuel power plants in communities:
 - The proposed Cumberland gas plant & the Chesterfield gas plant.

1,600+

Data center buildings in VA

We have 1,600 data centers existing, under construction or in the pipeline.

14,000

Data center diesel back up generators

Nearly 14,000 diesel generators have been approved for 470 data centers across VA.

432

million square feet

Data centers could add up to more than 432 million square feet of development.

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More energy = More Infrastructure

- 250+ substations
- Transmission lines and fiber installation
- People are footing the bill

Higher Electricity Bills

- Dominion Energy has raised the average residential bill by \$13.60 a month across 2026 and 2027, largely due to data centers.

Diesel Generators

- Virginia has minimal air testing and transparency on diesel generator pollution.
- Nearby residents receive no notice when diesel generators run.
- No studies have assessed health impacts on residents.

Water Usage

- A new statewide study outlines dire threats to water supplies, including drinking water and agricultural water in eastern Virginia.
- Dozens of projects have requested millions of gallons of water per day to cool their equipment, pitting data needs against drinking water for residents and agriculture.
- Chemical contamination of waterways

Tax Exemption

- Data centers get massive tax breaks in Virginia.
- In 2025, Virginia lost out on \$1.9 billion because of the data center tax exemption.

Heat Island

- Recent research estimates that a large data center can emit heat comparable to tens or even hundreds of thousands of households, raising surface and air temperatures for surrounding communities.

Jobs

- A data center may employ only 20-50 workers.
- Data center construction jobs are not guaranteed to go to local or even in-state workers

Data centers harm the environment, public health, and ratepayers. Virginia lawmakers have failed to enact common-sense protections.

Tell Our Leaders: Press pause on data center development.

