

A CLEANER, MORE EFFICIENT POWER SECTOR IN NEBRASKA

We have a moral obligation to leave our children a planet that's not polluted or damaged. By taking action now to combat climate change, including developing homegrown clean energy and cutting energy waste, we can help protect our kids' health, cut carbon pollution, and begin to slow the effects of climate change so we leave a cleaner, safer environment for future generations.

We are already feeling the dangerous and costly effects of a changing climate across the nation. In the past three decades, the percentage of Americans with asthma has more than doubled, and climate change is putting those Americans at greater risk of landing in the hospital. And extreme weather events – from more severe droughts and wildfires in the west to more powerful hurricanes and record heat waves – are affecting communities across the country. Now is the time to act. We have already made progress by moving to cleaner sources of energy and improving the energy efficiency of our cars, trucks, and buildings.

The Clean Power Plan, a key part of the President's Climate Action Plan, cuts harmful carbon pollution from the power sector that's fueling climate change. By setting the first-ever national standards to limit carbon pollution from power plants, the largest single source of U.S. carbon pollution, it will improve the health of Americans across the country, create clean energy jobs, and help households and businesses save on their energy bills. The final plan takes into account the more than 4 million comments received from states and stakeholders across the country, creating strong but achievable standards for power plants that provide flexibility and choices for states and utilities on how to achieve their clean energy future.

The Clean Power Plan Will Improve the Health of Nebraska Residents

We know climate change will put vulnerable populations at greater risk – including the elderly, our kids, and people already suffering from burdensome allergies, asthma, and other illnesses. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 7.3 percent of Nebraska's adult population and 6.6 percent of children in the state suffer from asthma. The sooner we act, by taking responsible steps to cut carbon pollution from existing power plants, the more we can do to prevent impacts that affect all Americans – especially the most vulnerable.

In 2013, 28 million metric tons of carbon pollution were emitted from power plants in Nebraska — equal to the yearly pollution from almost 6 million cars. In addition to reducing a portion of this carbon pollution, EPA's guidelines will also cut other forms of air pollution like soot and smog. Overall, these reductions will provide significant health benefits.

Since the Clean Air Act was implemented more than 40 years ago, the EPA has continued to protect the health of communities, in particular those vulnerable to the impacts of harmful pollution, while growing the economy. In fact, since 1970, air pollution has decreased by nearly 70 percent while the economy has tripled in size. The Clean Power Plan builds on this progress, while providing states the flexibility to have clean, reliable, and affordable electricity.

Reducing Carbon Pollution Lowers Risks and Costs for Nebraska

Nebraska is part of the U.S. National Climate Assessment's Great Plains Region. The findings in the National Climate Assessment underscore the need for urgent action to combat the threats from climate change, protect American citizens and communities today, and build a sustainable future for our kids and

grandkids. According to the third U.S. National Climate Assessment Highlights report, regional and state-specific impacts include:

- *Climate:* Heavy precipitation events are projected to increase, leading to increased runoff and flooding that will reduce water quality and erode soils. Increased snowfall, rapid spring warming, and intense rainfall can combine to produce devastating floods. The Plains will remain vulnerable to periodic drought because much of the projected increase in precipitation is expected to occur in the cooler months while increasing temperatures will result in additional evapotranspiration. Declining aquifer levels threaten the ability to maintain production.
- *Agriculture:* Changes to crop growth cycles due to warming winters and alterations in the timing and magnitude of rainfall events have already been observed; as these trends continue, they will require new agriculture and livestock management practices. Greater evaporation due to higher temperatures will increase irrigation demand and exacerbate current stresses on agricultural productivity. Holding other aspects of production constant, the climate impacts of shifting from irrigated to dryland agriculture would reduce crop yields by about a factor of two.
- *Rural:* For rural and tribal communities, their remote locations, sparse development, limited local services, and language barriers present greater challenges in responding to climate extremes. Working-age people are moving to urban areas, leaving a growing percentage of elderly people in rural communities.

Nebraska is Already Taking Steps to Reduce Carbon Pollution and has Many Tools to Meet its Clean Power Plan Goals

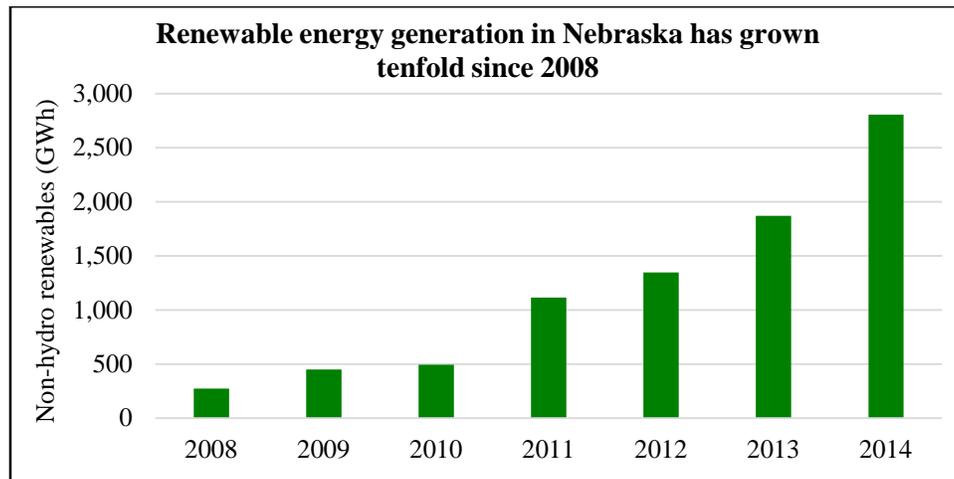
Mayors of three cities in Nebraska have joined the Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, committing to take action in their communities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Nebraska, like all states, will have flexibility to meet EPA's goal by using the energy sources that work best for it and by cutting energy waste. To date, all 50 states have demand-side energy efficiency programs, 37 have implemented renewable portfolio standards or goals, and 10 have adopted market-based greenhouse gas emissions programs. EPA's rule builds on progress already underway in each state and provides guidelines for states to develop plans to meet their carbon pollution reduction goals. It lets states work alone to develop plans or work together with neighboring states to develop multi-state plans, creating thousands of good jobs for Americans who are making our electricity system cleaner and our homes and businesses more energy efficient. In 2014, there were approximately 2,400 people employed in the wind and solar industries in Nebraska.

Cutting Carbon Pollution and Saving on Energy Bills in Nebraska

Through the President's leadership, and the initiative of the state of Nebraska, local communities, and the private sector, a number of common sense measures to combat carbon pollution in Nebraska are already in place. EPA's flexible guidelines for power plants will continue driving cost-effective measures to reduce carbon pollution in Nebraska, building off of recent progress:

- *Increasing the Deployment of Clean Energy:* Since President Obama took office, the United States has more than doubled its use of renewable energy from wind, solar, and geothermal sources, including tripling wind energy generation and increasing solar generation by more than twenty times. In Nebraska, renewable energy generation from these sources increased more than tenfold since 2008. The Administration has supported tens of thousands of renewable energy projects throughout the country, including 23 in Nebraska, generating enough energy to power more than 44,000 homes.

Furthermore, the U.S. produces more natural gas than ever before -- and nearly everyone's energy bill is lower because of it.



- **Improving Energy Efficiency:** Using less energy to power our homes and businesses is critical to building a clean and secure energy future. President Obama has made essential investments in research and development to advance energy efficiency, and set new standards to make the things we use every day more efficient. Since October 2009, the Department of Energy and the Department of Housing and Urban Development have jointly completed energy upgrades for more than 1.5 million homes across the country, saving many families more than \$400 on their heating and cooling bills in the first year alone. Already, local communities are taking initiative. Through the President's Better Buildings Challenge, Omaha committed to reducing energy intensity 20 percent by 2020 in 4 million square feet of its buildings.