How does your state compare?

The table below shows the average cost per kiloWatt hour in Virginia and other states in the southern portion of the United States, as of October 2018. The national average, according to the US Energy Information Administration, is also shown.

Virginia compares favorably, especially for commercial customers, to other southern states and the national average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>Residential/kWh</th>
<th>Commercial/kWh</th>
<th>Industrial/kWh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>$0.1242</td>
<td>$0.1124</td>
<td>$0.0598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>$0.1096</td>
<td>$0.0950</td>
<td>$0.0526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>$0.1194</td>
<td>$0.0906</td>
<td>$0.0605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>$0.1243</td>
<td>$0.0983</td>
<td>$0.0589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>$0.1190</td>
<td>$0.0831</td>
<td>$0.0691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Average</td>
<td>$0.1287</td>
<td>$0.1074</td>
<td>$0.0691</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

New Natural Gas-Fired Plant to be built near Richmond

The Chickahominy Plant is being built in Charles City County, southeast of Richmond. It is being built by Balico, LLC. The plant will be a 1,650 MegaWatt plant - tied for second largest in the country.

Construction is expected to begin in the first quarter of 2019 and scheduled to go on line in 2022. The plant is supposed to create 800 to 1,000 temporary jobs during construction and 35 permanent jobs once complete.

The Season of Ice

When will power be restored?

We are in the middle of ice storm season. Ice storms are among the most damaging to power companies. Ice builds up on trees and causes them to fall on power lines, resulting in outages. When the power goes out, it is helpful to have an idea of when it will be restored. This information can help businesses decide whether to close and send employees home or whether to simply wait.

Fortunately, Dominion Power has a page on their website that can provide information such as how widespread the outage is and an estimated time when customers can expect power to be restored. The link to that page is:

https://outagemap.dominionenergy.com/external/default.html

Accessing that link will direct you to a map that looks like this:

This is a screenshot taken during a winter storm. There were 301 separate outages at the time, impacting a total of 12,025 customers of Dominion Power. The more widespread the outages are, the longer it is likely to take to get service restored.

For more information regarding outages during any type of storm, Dominion provides a list of Frequently Asked Questions (and answers) on their website:

https://www.dominionenergy.com/outage-center/outage-faqs

Using this link, you can sign up to receive text & email alerts:

https://www.dominionenergy.com/outage-center/text-alerts
At UMS, we follow environmental, regulatory, economic and financial issues in the energy industry. Here are some of the predictions from UMS - and some from the US Energy Information Administration - of what may be in coming years.

Climate Change

Climate change will likely stop being seen as a theory and become widely accepted as a scientific fact. We will likely also accept that human activities, primarily the burning of fossil fuels, are the cause of the change. This could lead to sweeping changes in the energy industry that would impact everyone. Even with these changes, we can only slow the effects of climate change - there is no reversing it.

Lighting

The government may mandate LED lighting for new construction and ban the sale of incandescent and fluorescent lighting. Many incandescent and fluorescent lamps are already banned by the government. Thanks to the extremely long life of an LED lamp, purchasing and replacing bulbs will become rare.

Solar Energy

Building codes may be updated to mandate solar panels on most new residential and commercial construction. Solar panels may become like insulation - you’ll be required to install to help conserve energy. The trend toward solar is underway. Starting in 2020, California will require solar panels on most new homes. Tax credits and falling costs of solar technology help drive new solar installations, and, according to a graphic published by the US Energy Information Administration (EIA), solar will become the dominant source of new generating capacity.

Wind Energy

The wind energy industry has grown dramatically over the last 15 years. EIA predicts increases in wind energy to diminish with the end of the tax credits in 2023.

Coal Plants

Coal will continue its steady decline. The EIA graph shows no new coal power capacity has come on line since 2012 and extensive coal plant retirements for the foreseeable future. The Trump administration has canceled the Clean Power Plan; this will slow, but not eliminate, the decline in coal power. Twenty years ago, coal produced 50 percent of our electricity. By 2040, it will produce less than 20 percent.

Natural Gas

Vast quantities of natural gas have been identified in the US. Thanks to fracking, it can be extracted in a cost-effective manner. Natural gas is now used to produce more electricity than coal; it is much cleaner.

Nuclear Plants

When the EIA created this same graph in 2016, they forecast a small amount of nuclear generating capacity in 2018 and 2019. That was for the new units at Plant Vogtle in Georgia, and the VC Summer units in South Carolina. The Vogtle units are dramatically over budget, behind schedule and may never produce electricity. The EIA forecasts no new nuclear generation after the Vogtle units and nuclear plants being retired in the coming years.

US Becomes an Energy Exporter

The EIA predicts that the US will soon become a net energy exporter, due to the dramatic increases in exporting liquefied natural gas. This puts us in a favorable trading and economic position. We will continue to be a net importer of petroleum, but at lower rates than today.

Energy Tax

The government may implement an energy tax in some form to provide incentive to conserve energy. It could be a carbon tax, which has already been implemented in Canada and has many advocates in the US. It could be a BTU tax, which was proposed by President Clinton in 1993.

Energy Prices

The EIA projects increases in the costs of petroleum, natural gas and electricity for the foreseeable future.