

SOLUTIONS



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A CLEAN & AFFORDABLE ELECTRIC GRID

As U.S. electricity prices soar, EDF finds ways
to keep prices down and promote clean energy.

ALSO INSIDE: Texas water win | Canada's bold methane move | How to save \$\$ on electricity

Spring in New York is quieter and cleaner

Calmer, quieter streets are the new normal in the Big Apple, where the city's congestion pricing program, which EDF has championed for almost two decades, is quietly transforming daily life. In January 2025, the city began charging drivers to enter the most vehicle-clogged part of Manhattan. Now, traffic across the metropolitan area is down, resulting in faster commutes and cleaner air. One study found a whopping 22% decrease in soot pollution within the zone. In its first year, the program generated \$562 million for updates to the region's transit system, used by 3.5 million people a day.



Let's talk to each other



MOHAMMAD SHAHHOSSEINI

Too many Americans are only talking to people who share their views. In many cases, folks don't even see a point in exchanging ideas. Animosity overshadows a shared sense of community. While EDF's work is global, and this is not a problem only in the United States, I want to focus on the deep divide across America that's making our work harder.

Without talking to our neighbors, we lack a shared understanding of our problems and can't build the consensus we need to support durable solutions.

It can be hard to start a conversation with someone with whom we disagree. But it's worth it. These conversations can yield breakthroughs that speed progress.

I've spent decades listening. I've heard good people explain why they intensely oppose government action on climate change. This is what I have learned: Many people believe it will threaten the things they value deeply. They grew up believing that our country's freedom and openness to entrepreneurship and innovation underpins America's strength and prosperity. And here's the thing: Many of us who support action on climate share those values.

Climate change, however, is a challenge that the market cannot solve on its own. It's a textbook example of when sensible government action is needed.

For those who deeply value free enterprise, this can feel worrisome. In response, some put their faith in future technological breakthroughs that may not materialize. Others engage in wishful thinking that climate change isn't real or that it is not something to be concerned about.

How do we bridge this divide?

Start by listening. Refrain from telling someone they are wrong — that seldom works. Find common ground and build on it. There are powerful ways to address climate change using the light hand of government while preserving our freedoms.

Only by showing curiosity about other people's worldviews do we have a chance of bringing them around to the idea that — for the sake of ourselves and all of our children — we need to find ways to protect our way of life and effectively combat climate change.

Even as EDF fights the current administration in court, we must still work toward bipartisan action on climate. It's an underused way to speed adoption of the solutions we need.


Fred Krupp, EDF President

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EDF to Trump EPA: See you in court

EDF, the American Public Health Association and 15 other health and environmental groups are fighting back against the administration's repeal of the Endangerment Finding and greenhouse gas standards for cars and trucks, with a lawsuit against the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and its administrator, Lee Zeldin.

The 2009 Endangerment Finding, which the administration overturned in February, is the EPA's landmark legal and scientific determination that climate pollution hurts people and that the agency has not only the authority, but also the obligation, to reduce it. Contrary to binding Supreme Court precedent and numerous lower court decisions, the Trump EPA claims it lacks authority under the Clean Air Act to reduce this pollution.

The repeal removes all greenhouse gas standards for motor vehicles and is an effort to undermine climate pollution protections for power plants and oil and gas production.

"The Trump EPA's action tramples mountains of scientific evidence, ignores the law, and is fundamentally at odds with the EPA's core responsibility to protect us from dangerous pollution," says Peter Zalzal, distinguished counsel at EDF.

The repeal and the EPA's rollback of vehicle emissions standards could lead to as many as 58,000 premature deaths and 37 million more asthma attacks in the U.S. It will also force Americans to spend more on fuel and worsen other already high costs, like home insurance premiums.

"We are challenging this action in court, where evidence matters," says EDF President Fred Krupp, "and we will continue working together to build a better, safer and more prosperous future."



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Not just trash talk: Colorado leads on landfill solutions



COURTESY OF MESA COUNTY

After tireless advocacy by EDF and other groups, Colorado took historic action in December to address the often-overlooked issue of climate and air pollution from landfills.

Federal standards haven't been updated since 2016, though nationwide, garbage dumps are the third-largest source of methane pollution. (Methane, the main component of natural gas, is a potent greenhouse gas responsible for around 30% of current global warming.) Landfills also produce hazardous gases like benzene and vinyl chloride, which are linked to cancer and smog.

These garbage dumps often have dangerous impacts on local communities. "Was it just bad luck that my dad had cancer, my brother needed an inhaler and my mom had chronic health issues?"

asks Allie Morton, a senior at the Colorado School of Mines, who grew up near a landfill in Erie, Colorado.

One in three state residents lives within five miles of a landfill; dumps there release a million cars' worth of climate pollution each year.

State air regulators voted to adopt updated standards that go well beyond the national ones. By 2050, they'll cut as much climate pollution as comes from burning 1.4 billion gallons of gasoline.

"These new standards will improve air quality and cut climate-warming pollution, helping us achieve the clean air and safe climate our children deserve," says Coloradoan Laurie Anderson, of EDF affiliate Moms Clean Air Force.

LEARN MORE Visit bit.ly/3Ne8Dc2.

Mumbai's first Climate Week

Mumbai hosted India's first Climate Week in February, drawing 2,500 people from 30 countries, and from all walks of life, to discuss climate solutions for the Global South. EDF has been supporting partners in India to advance economic progress through climate action since 2007 and helped organize discussions about fishing, farming, carbon pricing and more. "I was honored to be a part of this gathering and inspired by the progress India is making to improve the lives of millions through climate solutions," said EDF Executive Director Amanda Leland.



Mumbai faces rising sea levels and other threats from climate change.

GETTY

Good neighbors: The key to climate adaptation

Houston's new resilience hub network could serve as nationwide model.

HUEY GERMAN-WILSON, A LONGTIME resident of Houston's flood-prone northeast side, has lived through dozens of disasters and major floods. "We always just reacted in the moment," German-Wilson says. "There was no disaster plan."

That lack of planning became painfully clear when floodwaters inundated about half of the homes in the Kashmere Gardens neighborhood during Hurricane Harvey in 2017. Families had nowhere nearby to shelter, charge phones or even get basic information from city officials.

"People were being sent to faraway locations that didn't have enough resources and weren't built for long-term recovery," says German-Wilson, a founder of the Northeast Houston Redevelopment Council, which advocates for equity and economic development.

German-Wilson and other local leaders, including experts at the Bullard Center for Environmental and Climate Justice and EDF health scientist Grace Tee Lewis, are now working to reimagine disaster preparedness on the city's northeast side, an area of older homes, low incomes and limited access to healthcare.

“Communities that are connected and help one another before a crisis are more resilient.”

— Grace Tee Lewis, EDF health scientist



Houston is particularly vulnerable to flooding from hurricanes.

GETTY

The solution? Strategically placed "resilience hubs" that support communities all year long. It's a hyperlocal vision, but with a game-changing vision — to strengthen communities before disaster strikes — rather than triaging after the fact. And it can be replicated anywhere just by listening to communities.

What are resilience hubs?

"Resilience hubs are trusted, centrally located spaces where people living in vulnerable areas can go to get help both when preparing for a disaster and afterward," German-Wilson explains. Some are inside churches; others are in community centers; a few are even in private homes equipped with solar power and generators. Unlike traditional emergency shelters, these hubs are designed to meet the specific needs of the local community.

In Houston's northeast neighborhoods, residents said they needed more safe places to shelter during disasters, a convenient distribution center for food, water, and clothing, and help applying for FEMA or housing assistance after a disaster.

To meet these needs, the Northeast Houston Redevelopment Council purchased a 62-year-old former elementary school — a massive concrete structure that has never flooded, not even during Harvey. "It's a game changer for us," German-Wilson says.

She hopes the new hub will solve a problem her organization has tried to tackle for years: "How do we identify medical needs, housing issues and connect families to help, not just for one week, but for the long haul?"

"Communities that are connected and help one another before a crisis are more resilient," explains Lewis, "because they've already built the social muscle it takes to survive and recover together." That's why, as part of the planning, EDF is helping to connect community groups with health providers and other local organizations to form a coordinated disaster response network.



Huey German-Wilson at new resilience hub

ANNIE MULLIGAN

99%

Houston's northeast neighborhoods are at greater risk from climate change than all but 1% of the United States.

Source: EDF's Climate Vulnerability Index

The area has lacked healthcare access since its nearest hospital closed in 2014. And the goal is to effectively meet both disaster-related and the community's regular medical needs all year round with a health clinic inside the building that offers sliding-scale and free care.

A model for the future

What's happening in Houston isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. "This work is about relationships and trust, and meeting people's actual needs," says Denae King, associate director of the Bullard Center. "That varies by community."

Still, as climate change makes disasters more frequent and more dangerous, Houston's resilience hubs offer a model for other communities to reimagine disaster preparedness not just as surviving a single weather event but as building a support network, so that residents are in a stronger position to weather any storm.

Vanessa Glavinskas



Champions of sustainable fisheries: FRUMAR CEO Irma Cervantes, left, her son Javier Valdez and business partner Claudia Higuera.

From collapse to comeback

How a Mexican fishery charted a sustainable course to prosperity.

By Tom Clynes

IRMA CERVANTES STILL REMEMBERS when the Gulf of California stopped feeling generous.

Cervantes grew up in Guaymas, Sonora, a busy port at the edge of the Sonora Desert where shrimp boats lined the docks and the fishing industry set the rhythms of life. Boats returned to port heavy and hopeful. Processing plants hummed. Her family's company, FRUMAR, expanded and planned their futures around the next season. Guaymas, like so many port cities along the Sonora coast, pulsed with the promise of work and wealth.

But by the early 2010s, after years of mounting pressure and falling productivity, the shrimp fishery in the Gulf of California effectively collapsed, leaving

ports like Guaymas scrambling for a viable future. Overfishing, warming waters, rising fuel costs and a flood of low-cost, farmed shrimp pushed the Gulf shrimp fishery into economic crisis.

"We killed the goose that laid the golden eggs," says Cervantes, now CEO of FRUMAR, which runs five boats and a fish-processing plant.

Cervantes and other local fishermen struggled to find alternatives. Some of them discovered an answer swimming in the Gulf's deeper and colder water. Hake, a silvery whitefish, had long gone largely unexploited. As fishermen refitted boats and turned their nets toward the new target, the docks again filled with hope.

But that optimism was tempered by memories of how quickly a fishery could unravel when harvests outpaced what nature could replace. Rather than rushing to pull as much hake as possible out of the sea, the region's fishing leaders — some of whom are women — reached out to scientists, policymakers and nongovernmental organizations with experience in building sustainable fisheries.

"We had seen Environmental Defense Fund's work on fisheries in the region," says Cervantes, "and we wanted to know what we could learn from them. How could we reshape the industry to do things right, to manage the resource sustainably? How could we fish without repeating the same mistakes?"

Reinventing the fleet

What followed was a partnership built around science and collaboration to pursue a shared goal: to build a fishery correctly from the start. If it worked, the transition to hake could become a model — not just for the Gulf of California, but for any region trying to escape the boom-and-bust trap of overfishing.

The first challenge was technical. Shrimp boats weren't designed to harvest finfish like hake. EDF helped the industry develop adaptations that allowed shrimp boats to catch hake in a hygienic way that protected the harvested fish from damage.

Fishermen were able to boost profit margins by reducing trawling times, leading to fewer fish bruised in nets and less

26,000

Tons of sustainably harvested hake pulled from the Gulf of California in 2024.

Source: EDF Mexico

fuel consumption. Smaller-size bins in holds led to less fish compression under layers of ice and less ice burning. Crews were trained to ice and pre-cool fish immediately, protecting a species prized for its delicate flesh.

Some captains have outfitted their boats with a single net at the stern that is sized and shaped to easily empty the fish into a specially designed ramp that allows the catch to slide aboard gently. Below deck, the fish go straight into a sterile hold, where stainless steel processing tables have replaced wood.

“Doing it this way, the fish is less damaged, the quality is higher and they can sell it for a better price,” says Juan Quimbar, who leads EDF’s hake project. “They realized they could profit by moving from quantity to quality.”

Science-based successes

For the fishery to remain sustainable, the fishermen needed to understand the size of the hake population in the Gulf, its reproductive patterns and ecosystem health. Science quickly became the backbone of the decision-making process, as fishermen worked with EDF to develop a management strategy based on real data.

“We financed a program beginning in 2015 with observers aboard the boats,” says Gilberto Márquez, CEO of the fishing company Pesquera Gilmasa. “These biologists and technical specialists went out with the crews and they began to record the captures and bycatch” — fish or marine animals caught unintentionally. “We need good data about the stocks,” he says, “because when we don’t know what’s inside the sea, we can come to believe that the supply is infinite and that it will never end.”

Most fishing companies still run only one or two boats, but as crews refitted their gear and turned to hake, landings surged. For years, annual catches stayed below about 7,000 tons. Then the shift accelerated. After hake was formally recognized as a national fishery in 2018, the fleet grew from fewer than 20 boats to more than 80.

By 2022, catches had jumped to roughly 17,000

tons, and by 2024 they were approaching 26,000 — cementing hake as a new economic engine along the Gulf.

Permits issued by the national fisheries authority brought order to what Cervantes recalls as “chaos,” when anyone could fish without oversight. Strict practices keep by-catch low and allow the fishery to remain within biological limits, keeping harvests below 10% of the stock to protect hake’s ability to reproduce.

“ My dream is for the fish to stay in Mexico so that our children can continue to work in this industry, continue to prosper. ”

— Irma Cervantes, FRUMAR CEO

In recent years, revenues have climbed as new markets opened and buyers from Asia and Africa sought out Mexican hake. Today, the fishery supports more than 700 fishing jobs and another 1,100 jobs in processing, logistics and related industries across Sonora and Baja California, making it a cornerstone of coastal economies. To reach additional markets, industry leaders are now pursuing Marine Stewardship Council certification, which provides independent proof of sustainable management and opens access to premium buyers.

“MSC certification tells buyers that the fishery is playing the long game — protecting its stock, reducing its footprint and delivering a product whose quality comes from doing things right,” says EDF’s Quimbar.

Still, challenges remain. With uneven enforcement of permits and catch limits, illegal fishing continues to shadow the gains the fishery has made. To safeguard their gains, producers have rallied around a comprehensive fishery improvement project, with the goal of setting new standards for best practices.

A future anchored in sustainability

Up and down the Gulf coast, hope now rides on the same waves that once carried crisis. “The lesson of shrimp hasn’t been forgotten,” Quimbar says. “It’s been transformed into a shared purpose to build a fishery that lasts. Now other regions are looking to the Gulf of California’s hake fishery as a model for stewardship and long-term health, especially as warming seas and other climate pressures bear down on Mexico’s fishing industry.”

Cervantes says she imagines a future where sustainable fishing is not just a local strategy, but a national standard.

“My dream is for the fish to stay in Mexico,” she says, “so that our children can continue to work in this industry, continue to prosper. That will only happen if we have a sustainable approach. Right now, we are heading in that direction.” ■



POWER PLAY

Across the country, EDF is working to promote clean energy and keep electricity prices down.

By Liz Galst

THE ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA CONVENTION in Las Vegas this summer might be the highlight of Cheryl Watson's social schedule. A member of the sorority for more than 50 years, she looks forward to the renewed connections with her sisters, the events, the outfits in salmon pink and apple green.

But with prices rising all around, affording the convention will be tough, says Watson, a retired biology teacher who lives on a fixed income on Chicago's South Side.

In particular, her electric bill has increased significantly. "It's not just me," she says. "I hear my neighbors talk about their bills all the time."

That conversation has echoed across the country, where electricity prices rose by an average of 13% in 2025. Even in 2024, more than 23% of households couldn't afford their energy bills at least once in the previous 12 months, according to the U.S. Census. "We know that nationally, 30 million households are struggling every single day with unthinkable challenges. Are

they going to adequately heat their homes or are they going to put food on the table?" says Anne Evens, who leads Elevate, a nonprofit EDF partner working to make affordable, clean energy available to all.

As demand for electricity continues to rise, driven in part by new data centers that could consume as much as 12% of U.S. electricity by 2028, an energy affordability crisis is brewing.

The Trump administration is throwing up roadblocks to the quickest-to-build forms of power generation — wind and solar energy — even though electricity from renewable sources is cheaper than electricity from fossil fuels in most places. That simple economic truth presents a critical opportunity to clean up the grid — currently responsible for 24% of U.S. climate pollution — and make electricity more reliable and affordable.

"The incredible decreases in the price of clean energy," says Mark Brownstein, who directs EDF's energy work, "have created an opportunity to remake the system so it better meets everyone's needs now and in the future."

With decades of technical expertise, on-the-ground advocacy, legal acumen and collaboration across the world of energy, EDF is redoubling our efforts to deliver clean, reliable, affordable electricity to all.

Here's how we're making progress. ▶



The world's largest machine: the U.S. electric grid

Working across the labyrinth

The U.S. electric system has been called "the largest and most complex machine ever assembled." From control rooms across the country, grid operators coordinate supply and demand among 164 million users, more than 20,000 power plants, 60,000 substations and more than 3 million miles of power lines. All of these elements need to work in perfect sync so that when any of us wants to flip on a light switch or operate a huge data center, the power is there as we need it.

This complicated machine is governed by an equally complicated constellation of lawmakers and regulators, including Congress, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, regional and state grid operators, state legislatures and utility commissions, electric cooperatives and, sometimes, municipalities.

How do you begin to make change in a system this complex? "There's that saying, 'If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go with others,'" says Brownstein. "Going far is very much how we approach our work."



Cheryl Watson

CHERYL WATSON - WBEZ

“ Incredible decreases in the price of clean energy have created an opportunity to remake the system so it better meets everyone’s needs now and in the future. ”

— Mark Brownstein, EDF energy lead



Improving transmission

Tackling transmission is key to improving the grid. “Being able to get the cheapest energy from where it’s being generated to where it can be used is a big benefit that saves a lot of consumers a lot of money,” explains Ted Kelly, who directs EDF’s clean energy program. By 2050, expanding and improving transmission could lower U.S. electric costs by \$270–490 billion, according to a U.S. Department of Energy study.

EDF has worked with FERC, which regulates interstate transmission, to speed approval times for new transmission lines and to improve transmission planning.

Our experts also work with federal and state authorities and utilities to promote the roll out of “grid-enhancing technologies” — new ways of stringing the existing system of wires so that it can carry far more electricity than it does now.

“This is the kind of deeply wonky work that can yield big results for everyday consumers,” Kelly says.



WATTTRANSMISSION.ORG

11 billion

Tons of climate pollution that could be eliminated by 2050 through improved transmission in the U.S.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

Defending clean energy

The courts are another area where EDF is using our deep expertise to fight for lower-priced, cleaner electricity — and we’re winning. In December, a federal judge in an EDF-supported lawsuit struck down a Trump administration attempt to ban permitting for wind power, including for partially completed projects such as the offshore wind power project Vineyard Wind. (The working turbines there saved New Englanders \$2 million a day on energy costs during a December cold snap.)

After the administration’s permitting ban failed, it issued stop-work orders for five offshore wind power projects that could power as many as 2.5 million homes. Federal judges then overturned every one of those stop-work orders. “Because the courts have seen these cases before, they understand the issues and are able to move more quickly,” Kelly says. (At press time, the Trump administration has appealed the initial

ruling and plans to appeal the stop-work decisions as well.)

EDF and partners are also challenging Trump administration orders that force utilities to keep operating dirty, expensive and unreliable fossil fuel power plants slated for retirement. This despite their enormous costs to customers’ finances and health, and despite the fact that utilities and grid operators have more than enough electricity to replace them.

Keeping Michigan’s J.H. Campbell coal plant online, for instance, cost Midwestern power consumers \$135 million from June through December. And those high charges continue, yet the administration has extended its orders for J.H. Campbell and other power plants around the country. A decision in the Campbell case is expected in May and could serve as a precedent in other lawsuits.



GETTY

Supporting state progress

When states implement bold policies, they can make affordable, clean energy available to their residents and serve as models for progress.

That's why EDF has helped deliver innovative energy policies in states across the country, including in Illinois, where a new "grid transformation program" will modernize and expand the state's electric grid. To avoid disturbing undeveloped and private lands, and to ease construction, a vast majority of those lines will be rebuilt along existing corridors and located with existing facilities.

In Massachusetts last year, EDF worked with utility regulators to help

develop a wintertime pricing system for households using energy-efficient heat pumps that will encourage more people to use them and save those consumers an average of \$540 annually.

In Colorado, we're working on legislation that will require data centers to pay all costs associated with their electric supply and meet that demand with 100% renewable energy. "Colorado has some of the most ambitious climate and energy policies in the country," says Alex DeGolia, who directs Colorado state climate and energy policy at EDF. "And our expectation here is to establish a high bar for what's needed."



Special rates save heat pump users even more.

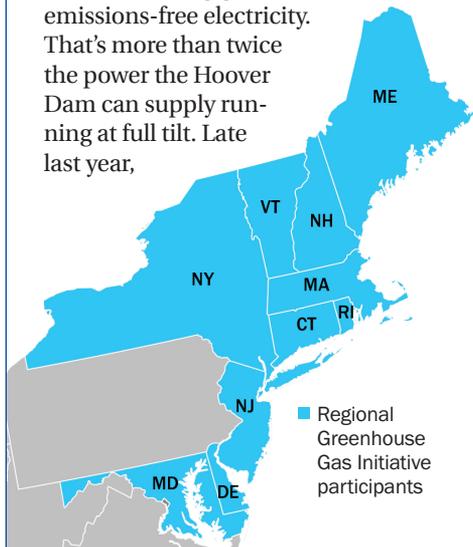
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Advancing regional cooperation

Another way to make electricity cleaner, more reliable and more affordable is regional cooperation.

"Bigger is better when it comes to electric grids," explains Michael Colvin, who leads EDF's California energy policy work. "You have more opportunities to save money and overcome extreme weather events that can lead to blackouts, and more options to bring renewable energy online."

In the West, EDF is championing a 13-state "West-wide" electricity market that could save residents \$2 billion a year, create more than half a million good-paying jobs and bring online as much as 4.4 gigawatts of emissions-free electricity. That's more than twice the power the Hoover Dam can supply running at full tilt. Late last year,



EDF helped the California legislature take an important first step toward making this market a reality.

\$1.9 billion

Lifetime energy-bill savings from 2023 RGGI investments in energy efficiency.

Source: RGGI, Inc.

In the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic region, EDF has worked for more than two decades on the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, a multi-state compact that cuts carbon pollution from power plants while saving consumers serious money on their energy bills. (There are currently 10 states that participate in RGGI; Virginia is in the process of rejoining the compact.) The cap-and-invest program requires power plants to buy allowances for every ton of carbon pollution they produce and then distributes the funds to states each year to spend on affordability and clean energy. In 2023 alone, states applied \$128 million in RGGI money to direct electric bill credits and spent more than \$545 million on energy efficiency projects that are expected to cut power and heating charges by \$1.9 billion over these projects' lifetimes.

Community collaborations

Most electricity decisions are made by elected officials, state regulators and utilities. In the process, community needs can be overlooked. EDF helps empower local communities to participate in energy proceedings.

Community Voices in Energy, a joint project of EDF and the Chicago-based nonprofit Blacks in Green, helps members of communities impacted first and worst by pollution to become advocates in state utility commission proceedings where energy prices and sources are set.

Cheryl Watson is among several electric customers who have gotten involved, beginning a few years ago when she testified before the Illinois Commerce Commission, the state's utility regulator. "The ICC actually took some of my comments and agreed with them," she says. "They stopped the price increases at that time. But now the prices are rising again."

Watson now serves on a number of committees and panels examining utility options. "I feel like I'm making an important contribution," she says.

All of these efforts, from community involvement to innovative policy changes, from high-level collaboration to courtroom challenges, are making progress toward a clear goal: an electric system that delivers clean, reliable, affordable energy to all. ■

Canada takes bold action on methane



Minister Julie Dabrusin announced new standards in December.

NATASHA BULOWSKI/CANADA'S NATIONAL OBSERVER

IT WAS JUST A FEW DAYS BEFORE Christmas when Ari Pottens got the call he'd been waiting for — a last-minute invitation to Vancouver.

“I joked that I only wanted to come if it was good news,” says Pottens, who leads EDF’s methane work in Canada.

The next day, Pottens was at a ceremony in the western Canadian city where Minister of Environment, Climate Change and Nature Julie Dabrusin announced the country’s much-anticipated oil and gas methane standards. Methane, the main component of natural gas, is a potent greenhouse gas responsible for around 30% of current global warming; the oil and gas sector is responsible for one-third of all methane emissions worldwide.

Canada is one of the world’s top five oil and gas producers. And EDF and our allies in Canada have been working to secure these regulations for over a decade — building public support and preparing key analyses highlighting the benefits of the standards.

“There was immense pressure on this administration at every turn to scrap or delay these regulations,” says Pottens. “It’s incredible to see them across the finish line.”

Canada’s final standards are among the strongest in the world, requiring a 72% reduction in oil and gas methane emissions by 2030. The rules require more frequent checks for methane leaks, place stricter limits on the deliberate release or burning off of methane and phase out high-polluting pneumatic devices that use pressurized natural gas to power pumps and controllers.

Roughly half of Canada’s methane emissions come from these operations.

The regulations aren’t just good for the climate. A recent EDF analysis found that the standards could support 34,000 new Canadian jobs by 2040. The policy could also increase the supply of natural gas for sale and boost local tax revenues.

“Canada is showing other major producing countries that this isn’t just the right thing to do, it’s the smart thing to do,” Pottens says.

“Canada is showing other major producing countries that this isn’t just the right thing to do, it’s the smart thing to do.”

— Ari Pottens, EDF’s Canada methane lead

EDF’s ideas, resources, advocacy and global methane expertise were cited in government materials announcing the new standards, and Prime Minister Mark Carney personally referenced EDF’s economic analysis in his promotions of the regulations on various social media platforms.

There’s still work to be done to make sure that the rules are effectively implemented by Canada’s provinces, which can propose customized strategies to meet the federal standards.

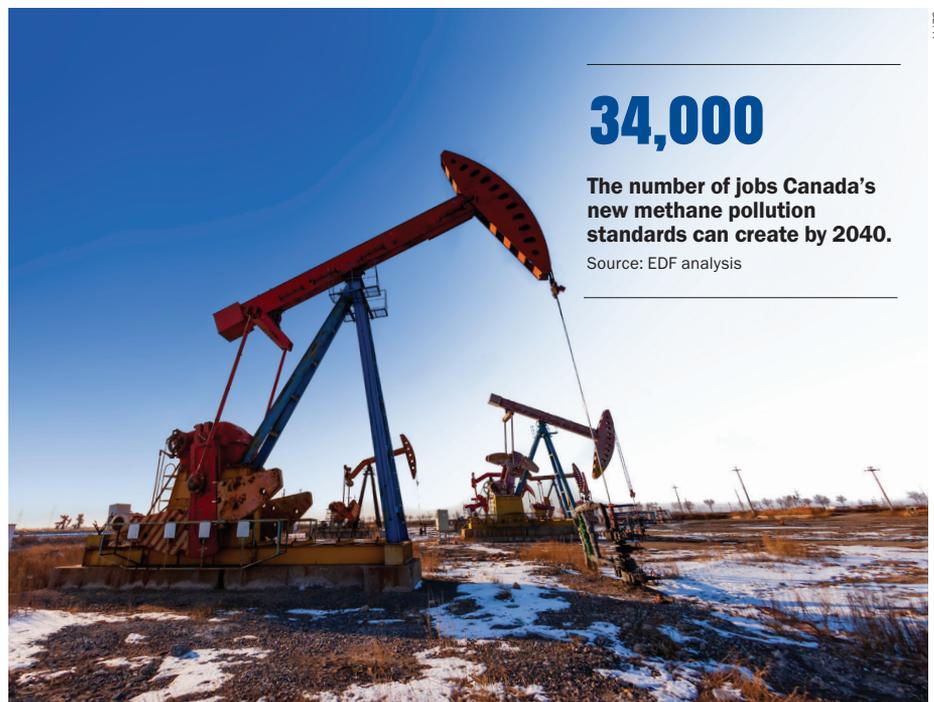
“These standards are only as strong as their implementation,” says Jon Goldstein, who leads EDF’s advocacy on methane in North America, where states including New Mexico and Colorado have implemented strong standards backed by EDF.

But there’s another growing incentive for the oil and gas industry to reduce methane pollution.

Major fuel importers like Japan, South Korea and countries in the European Union are taking a hard look at, or are legally obligated to reduce the methane footprint of the liquefied natural gas they import. Last year, Canada opened up its first West Coast LNG terminal, positioning it to be the supplier of choice for Asian markets looking for less carbon-intensive fuel.

“Canada is showing what is possible,” says Goldstein. “These standards position Canada to be a leader in the global energy market of the future. And if a major player like Canada can do it, other countries can too.”

Joanna Foster



34,000

The number of jobs Canada’s new methane pollution standards can create by 2040.

Source: EDF analysis

Texas voters say yes to \$20 billion water fund

By Tom Clynes

IN ARID TEXAS, POPULATION AND water-intensive industries continue to surge. In November, voters moved decisively to ensure that tomorrow's prosperity rides on reliable water supplies, not luck.

Proposition 4, which won by more than 70% of the vote, will create the largest water investment in state history: a multiyear, \$20 billion fund to patch leaky pipes, launch bold new supply projects and protect the groundwater resources on which much of the state relies. For ranchers with dwindling wells and communities facing boil-water notices, the vote marks a critical step toward more secure and steady supplies.

With Proposition 4's passage, Texas leaps to the front of a new Western water movement — moving assertively, along with states like California, New Mexico and Colorado, to protect water supplies from drought, shrinking river flows and more frequent, extreme heat from climate change.

“For the first time, Texas has a dedicated source of revenue for water supply and infrastructure,” says Vanessa Puig-Williams, who directs EDF's Texas water program. “It doesn't come close to solving all our water challenges, but it's a major and historic step forward.”

Climate pressure, leaky pipes

Until Proposition 4's passage, local water

systems were forced to rely on a patchwork of ratepayer revenue, municipal bonds, state loans and federal grants, leaving many communities without the resources to plan ahead. Now, rural towns and big cities alike can apply for state funds, all with the goal of building greater water resilience for the future.

30%

The amount of its treated water that Texas may lose each year as a result of leaky pipes.

Source: National Wildlife Federation

The \$20 billion program, supported by existing sales-tax revenue, represents the largest state-level investment in water in Texas history. But it's just a down payment on the enormous needs ahead. As the state's population booms — growing by more than 36% over the past 20 years — Texas has also attracted more energy-hungry industries such as semiconductor manufacturing and data centers. The latter require significant volumes of water to cool servers.

But crumbling infrastructure and droughts fueled by climate change mean the state will need as much as \$150 billion over the next half-century to upgrade aging systems and build new water supplies, according to the research organization

Texas 2036. According to the National Wildlife Federation, up to 30% of Texas' treated water leaks out of aging pipes — enough to supply Houston's drinking water for a year.

United in action

The path to Proposition 4's passage was anything but straightforward. EDF, which has spent five years pushing for stronger water policy in Texas, teamed up with the National Wildlife Federation and other advocates to get the measure on the ballot. Then, early polling showed widespread confusion among voters, with only about 48% supporting the proposition when presented with the ballot text alone. Advocates responded with a voter-education campaign. Once Texans understood that the law would steer up to \$1 billion a year from existing sales-tax revenue to fix leaky pipes and secure future water supplies, support jumped into the 70% range.

EDF and its partners were able to ensure that innovative and cost-effective

“For the first time, Texas has a dedicated source of revenue for water supply and infrastructure.”

— Vanessa Puig-Williams, EDF Texas water program director



Drought and falling water infrastructure force West Texas residents like José Acosta to haul water home by the tank.

MOHAMMAD SHAHMOUSENI

projects, including wastewater reuse and agricultural water conservation projects, could compete for funding alongside traditional infrastructure. Proposition 4 also includes support for projects such as wetlands restoration efforts and land conservation programs that allow nature to filter water and refill underground aquifers.

The measure strengthens protections for rural groundwater, barring state funds from supporting new water-supply projects that would export fresh groundwater and put local aquifers at risk. And by prioritizing alternative water supplies and stronger conservation, Proposition 4 helps reduce demand on already stressed groundwater reserves.

EDF also led the charge to allocate \$7.5 million for local groundwater data and science, laying the groundwork for smarter management of Texas' precious underground water resources. Just as notable, the effort brought together an unprecedented coalition of groups — including agriculture groups, environmental organizations and municipal water suppliers — all united around the importance of groundwater.

Continuing water challenges

Even with the passage of Proposition 4, deep-rooted legal doctrines continue to contribute to the uncertainty about the future of Texas' groundwater supplies — supplies that provide over half of the water used annually in Texas and nearly a third of the water in the state's rivers and springs.

One central challenge is the state's "rule of capture." It's a 100-year-old policy that lets landowners pump as much groundwater as they want without legal consequence, regardless of impacts on neighbors. In many rural counties, where no groundwater conservation districts exist to issue permits or set pumping limits, the rule operates with almost no guardrails. Last year, investor Kyle Bass proposed drilling more than 40 high-capacity wells in the Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer beneath his East Texas ranch. The project would pump tens of millions of gallons per year with the potential to export water outside the local area. The new law prevents use of the newly created fund for groundwater transfers and limits funding for reservoirs to those that are already permitted and ready to build.

Although the Bass project and others like it will not be able to use new water

Western states step up for water security

As climate stress and booming growth squeeze water supplies across the West, leaders are stepping up with bold new policies and investments. Here's how a handful of Western states, aided by EDF, are taking action to secure their most precious resource:

UTAH created new incentives for farmers to convert to water-saving crops and approved the largest conservation funding package in its history.

COLORADO closed a loophole in the state's sports betting tax, generating an extra \$12 million a year and boosting annual water-project funding to \$50 million.

CALIFORNIA is rolling out new groundwater rules and a program that pays landowners to retire farmland, conserve water and repurpose land for community or ecological benefits.

ARIZONA established protections for the vital Ranegras Basin aquifer and required major water users to monitor and conserve groundwater.

NEVADA strengthened limits on groundwater pumping in stressed basins and improved transparency around water rights.



GETTY

supply funds through Proposition 4 to develop groundwater projects, Texas still lacks safeguards needed to prevent over-pumping and protect groundwater. Without stronger, statewide groundwater management — which EDF is supporting — aquifers will remain vulnerable and so will the communities that depend on them.

Replenishing groundwater

Across the drought-prone West, states and communities in Arizona, Colorado and California are dedicating more funding

to building resilient water supplies. Texas' investment sets a new benchmark.

Perhaps more importantly, it has sparked a statewide conversation that goes far beyond politics. Texans are now talking about the future of water in their state — what it means for their communities, their farms, their businesses and their children.

"It's not just about the money," says Puig-Williams. "It's about finally recognizing that water is our most precious resource, and it's time to start acting like it." ■

Electric bill going up?

Here are some green ways to save.

U.S. electricity prices have shot up over the last 18 months and are projected to climb by as much as 40% by 2030. (See pp. 8–10.) What's a billpayer to do? Try these money- and pollution-saving tips.



Switch your rate plan



Check out utility time-of-use rates — programs that offer cheaper electricity when demand on the grid is low — and demand-response programs, which pay you to use less electricity when demand is high. Either way, you can save money with no upfront costs. One Baltimore demand-response program pays consumers \$10 a month to participate; time-of-use rate savings can top \$300 a year. Find out more from your electric provider.

Try community solar



In 44 states, people who can't install solar panels on their homes or businesses can still share in solar's benefits through offsite solar arrays. The Roman Catholic Church of Saint Dominic, in Oyster Bay, New York, for instance, saved \$15,000 over two years by participating in a community solar project its technology director found online. "This is an easier way of being sustainable than having to put panels on all our buildings," Saint Dominic's Ed Wikstrom says. Visit the advocacy group Rewiring America online to find out more.

Get a home energy audit



A home energy audit pinpoints where your home leaks expensive energy and how to fix those leaks. Many states and utilities offer this service for free or at a reduced price. Find out more at the online Database of State Incentives for Renewables & Efficiency. Want to DIY? Check out step-by-step suggestions from the U.S. Department of Energy at energy.gov/energysaver/

Insulate your attic and weatherize



Insulating your attic will likely save the most electricity of any energy-efficiency measure. Weather-sealing windows, doors and other sites where cooled or heated air can escape also pays off, as do storm windows. In hot, sunny climates, consider solar screens, which block the infrared and ultraviolet light that can overheat homes.

Consider a heat pump



Heat pumps heat and cool homes while saving big bucks. Texas households that swapped their electric resistance heating systems for heat pumps saved more than \$300 a year, according to one 2024 study. Renters can use heat pumps, too: An increasing number of window units and heat-pump air conditioners are now available.

Add solar panels



Solar panels are a surefire way to save on your electric bill — an average of \$57,000 over 25 years, says Emily Walker of the energy consulting firm EnergySage. But solar panels can require a sizeable upfront investment, which is why many state and local governments still support households going solar. (Check out the Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency for more details.) Paying upfront will save you the most money. But there are also leasing and financing options that can help you lower your monthly electric charges from day one.

Liz Galst

★ YOU GOT THIS DONE!

From trash to treasure

EDF member rescues and “rehomes” good stuff headed for the landfill.

IT'S SUNDAY AFTERNOON AND CLAUDIA von Mallinckrodt is driving very slowly around her suburban Chicago neighborhood, eyes scanning the curb. It's the day before trash pickup, and for von Mallinckrodt, that means opportunity.

Since early 2025, the 35-year-old has been documenting what she finds on trash day on social media. Her account, “The Rich Goodwill,” has grown to more than 650,000 followers on Instagram, and another 250,000 on TikTok, by taking viewers along as she digs through her neighbors' trash.

She has found everything from a West Elm chandelier (now hanging in her kitchen) to a designer purse worth more than \$1,000. (She had it repaired for just \$6.)

“It is always going to be most sustainable to use what already exists.”

— EDF member Claudia von Mallinckrodt

Unlike most social media influencers, who encourage people to buy what they endorse (and often make a commission on), von Mallinckrodt offers what she finds to her followers for free. Her goal is simply to keep things of value out of the landfill.

She has “rehomed” everything from baby gear to furniture. “People message

me for items all the time. There are a lot of people struggling to make ends meet,” she says, adding that she wishes people would think twice before throwing something away. “Even though you're done with it, someone else might really need it.”

Her perspective is shaped by experience. Von Mallinckrodt grew up in a wealthy family that lost everything when her father's business collapsed and her childhood home burned down. Her family went from living in a seven-bedroom home to shopping at the local food pantry. “That stays with you,” von Mallinckrodt says.

Her trash day finds are also representative of a larger problem: Every year, Americans throw away millions of tons of usable furniture, textiles and household items.

These items end up in landfills, which harm the environment by contaminating soil and water, destroying habitats, and releasing greenhouse gases as well as toxics like benzene and toluene (*see p. 4*).

EDF experts are working to reduce landfill pollution by strengthening regulations. But there's something everyone can do to help solve the problem: Keep usable items out of the trash.



Von Mallinckrodt scores a giant Connect 4 game.

“It is always going to be most sustainable to use what already exists,” von Mallinckrodt says. “I recently grabbed a Little Tykes basketball hoop right out of the garbage man's hand, and my kids love it.”

Vanessa Glavinskas



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