Colorado is a national leader in the wind energy industry.

Colorado ranks eighth in the country for installed wind capacity and generates 19% of its electricity from wind power. There are also 18 manufacturing facilities in the state creating high quality jobs and producing components for the wind industry, including global companies such as wind turbine manufacturer Vestas and steel producer O’Neal Steel. Thanks to companies like these, Colorado ranks third in the nation for wind industry employment. Xcel Energy recently completed the 600 MW Rush Creek Wind Project, injecting $1 billion into the economy.

**Jobs & Economic Benefits**

The U.S. wind industry is a major economic development driver. In addition to job creation and billions of dollars in project investment, the wind industry invests heavily in local communities, providing significant revenue in the form of property, state, and local taxes.

- Direct wind industry jobs in 2019: **7,001 to 8,000**
- Capital investment in wind projects through 2019*: **$7.6 billion**
- Annual state and local tax payments by wind projects: **$11 million**
- Annual land lease payments: **$14 million**

*Source: Based on state and national averages from LBNL, NREL

**Wind-Related Manufacturing**

Over 500 manufacturing facilities in the U.S. make products for the wind industry, from blades, towers, and turbine nacelles to raw components such as fiberglass and steel.

- Number of active manufacturing facilities in the state: **18**
Wind Projects as of Q1 2020
- Installed wind capacity: 3,762 MW
  » State rank for installed wind capacity: 8th
- Number of wind turbines: 2,275
  » State rank for number of wind turbines: 8th
- Wind projects online: 26 (Projects larger than 10 MW: 19)
- Wind capacity under construction: 970 MW
- Wind capacity in advanced development: 455 MW

Wind Generation
In 2019, wind energy provided 19.20% of all in-state electricity production.
- State rank for share of electricity: 9th
- Equivalent number of homes powered by wind in 2019: 1,002,400

Wind Energy Potential
- Land-based technical wind potential at 80 m hub height: 395,378 MW
  (Source: AWS Truepower, NREL)

Environmental Benefits
Wind energy reduces emissions and water consumption by avoiding generation from fossil-fuel power plants.
- In-state carbon dioxide emissions avoided in 2019*: 5.6 million metric tons
  » Equivalent cars' worth of emissions avoided: 1.2 million
- In-state water consumption savings in 2019**: 2.9 billion gallons
*Estimated using Aurora power sector model.
**Based on national average water consumption factors for coal and gas plants.

Renewable Portfolio Standard
The Colorado Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) requires investor-owned utilities to provide 30% of their 2020 electricity through renewable energy, large cooperatives (>100,000 customers) to provide 20%, and small cooperatives (<100,000 customers) and municipalities to provide 10%. Wind energy has historically been the renewable resource of choice to meet RPS requirements in Colorado.