

# Making the Case for Renewable Energy



The burning of fossil fuels is the largest contributor to climate change, making up more than 75 percent of greenhouse gas emissions and almost 90 percent of all carbon dioxide emissions. **Renewable energy** is energy derived from natural sources that are replenished by nature and emit little to no greenhouse gases or pollutants into the air. Examples of renewable energy include solar, wind, geothermal, hydropower, ocean energy, and bioenergy.

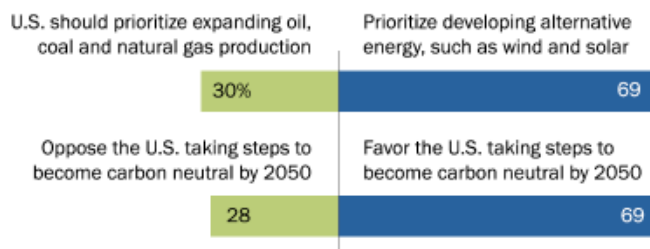
*From the Pew Research Center:*

- A majority favor U.S. efforts to become carbon neutral by 2050.[2]
- Two-thirds of Americans say the United States should prioritize developing renewable energy sources over expanding the production of fossil fuels.[3]

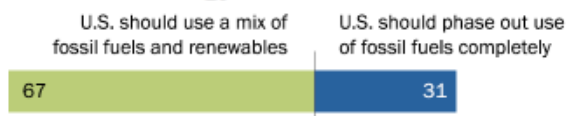


## Majorities prioritize alternative energy development and back U.S. taking steps to become carbon neutral

% of U.S. adults who say ...



## But two-thirds want U.S. to keep a mix of fossil fuel and renewable energy sources



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted Jan. 24-30, 2022.


"Americans Largely Favor U.S. Taking Steps To Become Carbon Neutral by 2050"


PEW RESEARCH CENTER


Investing in renewable energy improves air quality by reducing pollution from fossil fuel combustion. **The World Health Organization predicts that transitioning to renewable energy could prevent 4-7 million premature deaths annually** by reducing air pollution.[4] Additionally, better air quality and a healthier community are beneficial in reducing community healthcare costs.





*The U.S. Department of Energy has identified numerous economic, environmental, and social advantages to using renewable energy.[1] Among these include job creation, energy independence, and improved air quality:*

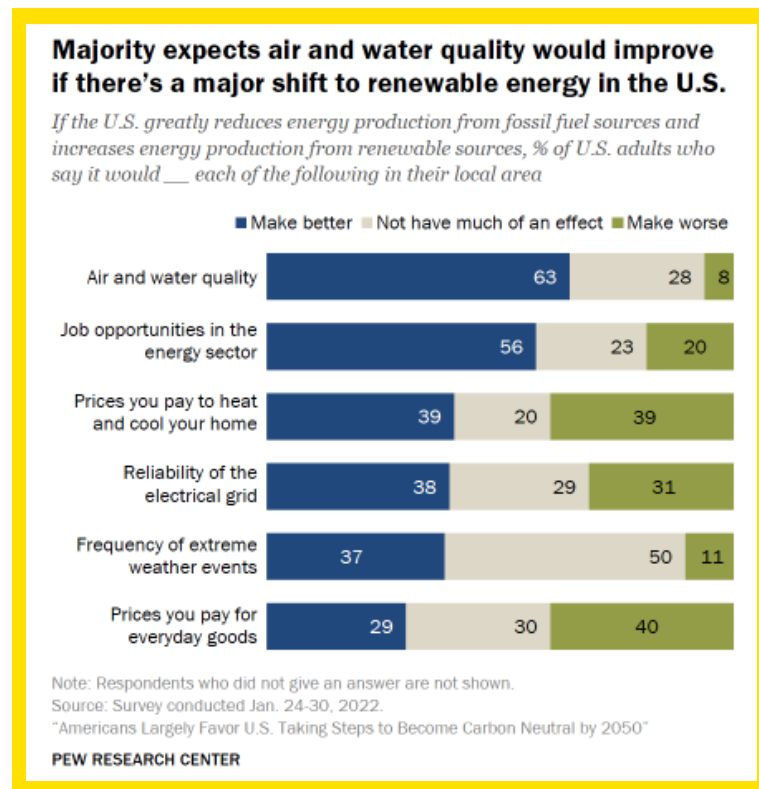
 **Renewable energy projects create local jobs** in manufacturing, installation, and maintenance, stimulating the local economy. U.S. Department of Energy writes that “around 3.5 million Americans already work in renewable energy jobs, and jobs in renewable energy grew at more than twice the rate of the strong overall U.S. labor market in 2023,” creating another path for **economic growth** within the community.[5]

 For municipalities and institutions, investing in renewable energy is a strategic pathway to achieving **energy independence** and **significant cost savings**. Transitioning to clean sources **stabilizes energy costs, reduces reliance on volatile fossil fuel markets, and lowers long-term operational expenses**.

 Initiatives like Orlando’s Resilience Hubs which use “infrastructure...in or near underserved neighborhoods, centers of employment, transit centers, or other public spaces” **strengthen community preparedness** during extreme weather.[6]

 Municipal programs that facilitate residential and business solar adoption further **reduce overall energy demand** and **minimize the need for costly infrastructure upgrades**.[6]

 By prioritizing renewable energy, municipalities can secure financial sustainability while stimulating local economic growth, fostering local research, and **building a more environmentally responsible future**.[6]



[1] <https://www.energy.gov/eere/renewable-energy-pillar>  
[2] <https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2022/03/01/americans-largely-favor-u-s-taking-steps-to-become-carbon-neutral-by-2050/>  
[3] <https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2023/06/28/majorities-of-americans-prioritize-renewable-energy-back-steps-to-address-climate-change/>  
[4] <https://www.who.int/news/item/25-03-2014-7-million-premature-deaths-annually-linked-to-air-pollution>  
[5] <https://www.energy.gov/eere/job-creation-and-economic-growth>  
[6] <https://www.orlando.gov/Our-Government/Departments-Offices/Executive-Offices/CAO/Sustainability-Resilience/Initiatives/Solar-in-the-City-of-Orlando>