

Data centers in Nevada: who pays?

What every Nevada household should know, and what you can do this month

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The short version: a data center is a very large buyer of things we all share: the power grid, water, land, and the local tax base. The real question isn't "yes or no." It's **who pays, and is it in writing before they build?** Most of that is decided by the state, and the biggest shared cost reaches you through your electric bill.

1 YOUR POWER BILL

- **You can't switch providers.** NV Energy owns its power plants, so the cost of new plants and lines goes into the rates we all pay, unless the rules say otherwise.
- **The demand is enormous.** Data centers were 5% of NV Energy's sales in 2025. Its own plan forecasts 64% by 2046. Inquiries total about 22,000 MW, against a 2025 peak of about 8,200 MW for both NV Energy utilities combined.
- **Who pays matters to you.** NV Energy's own rate tables show 2032 home bills about **\$12 a month** (south) and **\$37 a month** (north) lower if data centers carry their extra energy and transmission costs instead of spreading them over everyone. (Both versions already assume data centers pay up front for new gas plants.)
- **The scale.** PUCN staff estimate about **\$29 billion** in resources needed solely for the big new customers, and call that "likely on the lower side."

2 YOUR TAXES

- Data center tax breaks cost local governments **\$785.7 million** in sales tax from fiscal 2017 to 2026, including about \$345 million meant for schools (State Controller).
- Since 2025 the state economic development board **can say no** to these breaks. It has approved all three that came before it since then.
- For new deals, a September 2026 executive order ends breaks on the state and school shares. The remaining breaks fall on counties, cities, and districts like fire and libraries.

3 WATER, HONESTLY

In Southern Nevada, data centers use about **0.5%** of water (SNWA), and new evaporative cooling has been restricted since a 2021 rule. The live water fights are in **northern and rural Nevada**, where several communities and tribes have moved to ban or pause data centers.

4 THE ONE QUESTION TO ASK

Every data center deal comes with promises. "We'll pay our own way." "It won't be noisy." "We'll bring jobs." For each one, ask:

"If it doesn't, then what?"

A promise only protects you if it's written down with a number, a way to measure it, a deadline to fix it, a penalty if it isn't fixed, money set aside to cover it, and terms that still bind the next owner if the project is sold.

5 WHERE IT STANDS RIGHT NOW

- The Public Utilities Commission of Nevada (PUCN) is reviewing NV Energy's contract for data centers (Docket 26-05007).
- **PUCN staff and the state's consumer advocate both recommend rejecting it as written.** NV Energy asks for approval. Developers say tougher terms would push projects elsewhere.
- NV Energy's own illustrative numbers show other customers' rates still rising "less than 0.5 percent." Staff: "There should be no impact to existing customers."
- As of Oct. 14, only **six** public comments were on file.

6 WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. **File a written comment** before **Mon., Oct. 26, 10 a.m.** (aim for Oct. 23). Your name and address become public; comments go in the record but aren't treated as evidence.
2. **Speak for 3 minutes** at the PUCN meeting **Tue., Oct. 27, 10 a.m.** (Carson City or Las Vegas), or email BPA@puc.nv.gov.
3. **Call the consumer advocate**, who represents households in the case: **702-486-3132**, Docket 26-05007.
4. **Write your state legislators.** The Legislature meets **Feb. 1, 2027** with at least three bill drafts "relating to data centers." leg.state.nv.us/whosmylegislator
5. **Tell your county commissioner.** Counties approve local permits, where noise, water, and cleanup promises can be put in writing.

Step-by-step guide and a comment template:
info.soprio.com/nevada-energy/hearing