

ENERGY SECTOR IS IMPORTANT, BUT MUCH MORE IMPORTANT ARE THE JOBS IT GENERATES



Everywhere the only thing that is being discussed is jobs, jobs and more jobs. In this Presidential election year it could very well be the deciding factor in determining who rules the roost for the next four years. Energy is another really important issue and the lack of it can spell disaster for the economy and finally there is the issue of global warming, failure to address which could leave the earth a much warmer and hazardous place for our generations to come. Green Energy Jobs are the answer, but where do these jobs come from and what are they? Are they really what they are being touted out to be? Comparing one job with another must be on a yardstick of how much it is contributing towards the local economy. All energy sources produce jobs, be it manufacturing products, building things, mining stuff or transporting things will require manual effort and the only way to compare the jobs is to regularize the number of jobs to the amount of energy produced by those jobs, and see which are local and which are not. In energy jobs are categorized in two groups, investment and operating. The former includes manufacturing, construction, and installation. The latter are mostly local and last the length of the unit. For coal the jobs last 40 years, wind 20 years and for nuclear they last 60 years. Politicians generally are anxious about jobs in their district, so they are always concerned about energy sources that generate the most operating jobs. They also like to see manufacturing plants, or fossil fuel mining or drilling operations set up in their areas – that keeps the populace happy, as that translates into more jobs and provides security to the politician. Manufacturing jobs are generally not local but happens where the manufacturing plant is built. For large fixed units like coal, hydro and nuclear, the jobs are mostly local and last between 4 and 6 years. For wind and solar they are mostly not local and last between two and three years. Gas falls between the two of them. Construction work requires 1000 jobs to consume 1,000 MW of installed capacity, coal requires around 1,500 jobs, nuclear 5000 jobs, whereas wind is on par with construction with a 1000 jobs. On the other side, operating jobs fewer jobs per 1000 MW of installed capacity gas calls for only about 60 jobs per 1,000 MW of installed capacity, wind needs 90 jobs, coal 220 jobs, and nuclear 500 jobs. Senator Hoeven says, “Jobs in the oil industry create spending power and generate the need for services of many other kinds. Thus, many more jobs are created – a multiple of those in the oil industry itself.” So it is more important to have reliable affordable energy in a region that can generate and attract manufacturing or production growth. All companies will locate in those areas where their required sources of energy are available. For example a big automobile plant, that will bring in its wake thousands of jobs, will not locate near energy provided by wind-buffered-by-gas but will locate in a coal, hydro, or nuclear-supplied region. So the conclusion is that more than the energy jobs, the jobs that they energy source bring are much more important to the regional economy and tax base than the comparatively few energy jobs. Energy sources provide us with the heat, light and power to run our factories that provide goods and jobs.