

Solar and storage still dominate US power plant construction

Despite Trump's attacks on renewables, it's the same old story so far this year: The U.S. is building lots of solar and storage and a little bit of everything else.

By [Dan McCarthy](#) 21 August 2026

It's a tough time to build renewable energy in the U.S.

In 2026 alone, the Trump administration has [phased out tax credits](#), [frozen clean-energy permitting](#), and [issued tariffs](#) certain to raise the cost of solar — while continuing to [take lazy and misleading swipes](#) at renewables.

And yet 90% of what was built in the first half of this year is either solar, storage, or wind power, per [U.S. Energy Information Administration data](#).

In fact, solar and batteries alone made up more than two-thirds of all new capacity added to the grid between January and June. As one analyst told [Inside Climate News](#) in a story parsing this same data, solar-plus-storage has become the grid's "workhorse."

Texas, [of course](#), has led the way in building solar and energy storage — and in overall power plant construction. New Mexico, powered by the gigantic 3.65-gigawatt SunZia wind project that was completed [in June](#), added the next-most overall capacity. (Yes, for those keeping track, that is the largest wind project in America turning on despite President Donald Trump's vow to block all wind construction during his second term.) Arizona's [continuing](#) solar-plus-storage boom boosted it to the third spot.

It's no surprise that renewables are leading the way in 2026. It's a trend that's persisted for the [last few years](#).

The Trump administration has proved [unable to change that](#), although his tariffs and tax credit cuts have made clean energy more expensive to build. But [costlier renewables are still cheaper than fossil fuels](#), not to mention free of the carbon emissions that are baking the planet.

If bold plans to fuel the AI race with natural gas actually materialize, it's possible that gas could challenge renewables' dominance. After all, [Amazon](#) and [OpenAI](#) plan to build individual gas-fired facilities that could, on their own, eclipse the *total* amount of gas built across all of the U.S. last year.

But those monster gas plants are [far from a done deal](#). What's more certain, whatever becomes of the grand plans to build more gas, is that solar and storage will continue to soar.