

Opinion: Geothermal power is Nevada's energy solution

By Lisa Shevenell and Daphne LaPointe

Nevada often has been in hot water, but this time it's doing us some good. Nevada's wealth of hot springs already hosts several operating geothermal power plants, and international companies are investing in an ever-increasing number of new geothermal development projects – more than anywhere else in the country.

Geothermal power could become a billion-dollar-per-year business in Nevada and account for 35 percent or more of the state's electricity needs.

Nevada state law requires that 25 percent of our electricity must come from renewable power by 2025, and geothermal energy alone is more than enough to meet this legal requirement.

Production capacity from all active geothermal power plants in Nevada is about 425 megawatts.

Geologists at the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology at the University of Nevada, Reno and other geothermal experts estimate that by 2025, Nevada could add up to 3,000 megawatts of geothermal power-generating capacity – enough to power 1.5 to 3 million homes (one megawatt can power 500 to 1,000 average-sized homes). This would significantly decrease Nevada's dependence on fossil fuels for power generation.

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