

Nevada a hotbed for geothermal activity

By Jackie Valley, Las Vegas Sun

Humans have been using geothermal energy for more than 10,000 years, since American Paleo-Indians used hot springs for cooking, bathing and cleaning. But it wasn't until 1904 that the first geothermal electric power plant was invented to generate electricity, when Italian scientist Piero Ginori Conti figured out how to turn steam into power.

The amount of heat in the top 33,000 feet of the Earth's surface contains 50,000 times more energy than all of the oil and natural gas resources in the world.

Worldwide, geothermal power plants produced more than 11,700 megawatts of electricity, enough to meet the annual needs of more than 6 million typical U.S. households. The first geothermal plant in the United States debuted in 1992, and now, two decades later, 69 geothermal plants operate nationally. Several are in Nevada, and more are coming.

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