



Building strong communities through a well-trained workforce

A publication of the Municipal Electric Systems of Oklahoma

September 2022

Register today for the MESO Decision Makers Conference

The MESO Decision Makers Conference is a two-day event focusing on enhancing skills and knowledge essential for today's municipal leaders and decision-makers

The event will be held November 2 & 3, 2022 at the Reed Conference Center in Midwest City, Oklahoma. Registration is open at www.meso.org.

"Attendees will learn from best practice experts in the areas of error reduction, worker recruitment and retention, the need for municipal engagement in the legislative process, and self-improvement," said MESO General Manager Tom Rider. "Or more simply put these skills and knowledge can help lead municipal leaders to the next level.

Anyone who is in a leadership, or decision-making role for any municipality. This includes Mayors, City Council Members, Managers or Administrators; Treasurers; Clerks; Fire or Police Chiefs; Public Works Directors; and, Human Resources Directors or Managers.

Conference sessions and speakers are:

- Error Reduction: Why We Get Things Wrong
• Speaker: LTC Dave Young (retired), Kansas Deputy Homeland Security Advisor
 - Legislative Learning Lab • Speaker: Joe Dorman, Chief Executive Officer, Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy
 - Catch and Retain • Speaker: Christy Driskel, IMPA-HR SCP, HR Director, City of Stillwater
 - Jedi-Judging: How to Be the Smartest Person In The Room • Speaker: James "Dee" Graves, Attorney-at-law
 - Accountability: Who's Doing Who's Job?
• Speaker: Tom Rider, General Manager, Municipal Electric Systems of Oklahoma
 - Electrifying Your Memory • Speaker: Paul Mellor
- The conference registration fee is \$199 for MESO members and \$399 for non-members. The deadline

(see REGISTER TODAY, page 2)

MESO rolls out "MESO Weekly"

Look for the "MESO Weekly" in your email inbox Tuesday, September 21.

This new format will allow members to quickly know what is happening with their statewide trade association in a single weekly email.

"We heard from our members that we were sending too many emails, for example, an event announcement, a weekly safety message and more on any given day," said Cheryl Adams, Assistant General Manager. "We will give our members a quick snapshot of the important information they need to know while reducing the number of emails they will receive."

The "MESO Weekly" will be sent every Tuesday and include MESO News & Events, our Weekly Safety Message, and Industry News.

"In situations where we need to immediately communicate with our members such as weather-related emergencies or legislative updates requiring swift action, we will send a stand-alone email," Adams added. "We will be very selective before we choose this option."

To submit ideas for the "MESO Weekly," contact Jeff Kaufmann at jeffk@meso.org. To be included in the weekly email contact Deborah Miner-Gonzales at deborah@meso.org.

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Register today

(continued from page 1)

to register is October 21, 2022. The registration fee includes all session materials, meals, and session attendance.

The Sheraton Midwest City Hotel at the Reed Center (5800 Will Rogers Road, Midwest City, OK) is the designated conference hotel. Call 888-236-2427 for room reservations and provide the event name.

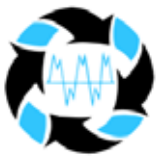
Any questions about the MESO Decision Makers Conference may be directed to Rider at tom@meso.org. All registration inquiries should be directed to Deborah Miner-Gonzales at (405) 528-7564 ext. 1 or deborah@meso.org.

SIGN UP AS A
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The Suppliers Show

www.meso.org

November 1 & 2
Midwest City, OK



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Sponsor/Exhibit Opportunities are available for the Suppliers Show

The second annual Suppliers Show will be held November 1-2 in Midwest City, OK in conjunction with the 2022 MESO Decision Makers Conference, the MESO Suppliers Show is a two-day event focused on Products & Services for Municipal Utilities. Learn more at www.meso.org.

The show offers the opportunity to connect with decision-makers and end-users who influence decision makers. This is a great marketing opportunity for any company wanting to partner with and serve municipalities.

The deadline to register as a sponsor/exhibitor is October 4, 2022.

The Suppliers Show is open to any municipal employees November 1 at no charge. Lunch is provided to all who register prior to the show date.

Opportunities for sponsors:

- The opportunity to present at least one 20-minute INFO SESSION on a topic of your choosing on November 1. The session room and time will be published in the Suppliers Show Program. This program will be made available to all registered attendees.
- Outside Displays are available November 1. Depending on the display, may include a demonstration. All demonstration times will be scheduled and announced in show literature.
- Indoor Display (6-foot table) — November 1 & 2

Both Sponsors and Exhibitors, who receive an Indoor Display (6-foot table) — November 1 & 2, will be recognized in the MESO Newsletter, the MESO

Newsletter Suppliers Show Edition, a PowerPoint slide presentation in the exhibit hall, and the conference program.

Only current MESO Associate Members may sponsor and exhibit. If you are not a member, your fee includes annual membership (includes listing in the online directory on the MESO website).

Sponsor/Exhibitor Show Schedule-*

Tuesday, November 1

7 a.m. – 8 a.m. Exhibit Hall Set up

8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Suppliers Show (as scheduled) and Exhibit Hall is open

5 p.m. – 6 p.m. Conference Reception with the Suppliers Show

Wednesday, November 2

8 a.m. – 4 p.m. Exhibit Hall is open

4 p.m. Exhibit Hall tear-down begins

***-Lunch on both days will be from 12:15 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.**

The Suppliers Show will be at the Sheraton Midwest City Hotel at the Reed Conference Center (5800 Will Rogers Road, Midwest City, OK). Please make your room reservation by calling at 888-236-2427 and providing the event name.

Registration questions may be directed to Deborah Gonzales, Director of Administration and Finance, at deborah@meso.org, and event questions may be directed to Tom Rider, General Manager, at tom@meso.org.

REGISTER TODAY FOR THE

MESO Decision Makers Conference

www.meso.org

November 2-3
Midwest City, OK

FROM OMPA

Costs remained higher than normal in power markets

OMPA sent out a communication to its member cities in August, regarding wholesale power prices at the time. Cities could use the communication as a way to update their customers about unusually high market prices throughout the summer.

The customers of member cities would have felt the impact of the high prices on their bills, through the implementation of the Power Cost Adjustment or Fuel Cost Adjustment.

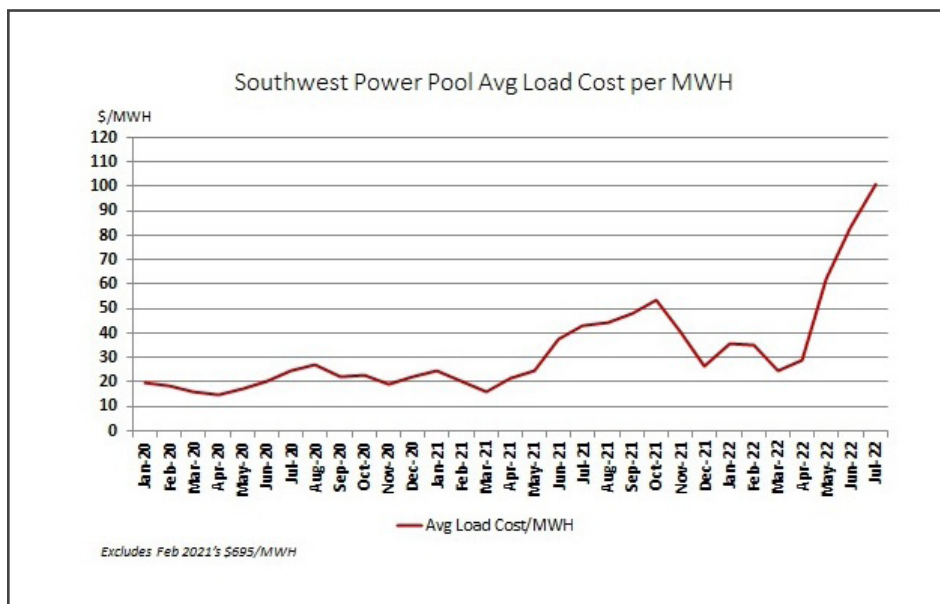
Some of the reasons cited in the communication for power costs this summer were:

- **Fuel.** In May and June of this year, OMPA's system fuel cost averaged about 65 percent higher than the previous two years. Natural gas costs, in particular, have been well above their average, with Henry Hub prices peaking at approximately double what they were the previous April through July.
- **Demand.** The markets in the Southwest Power Pool set all-time records for peak demand multiple times throughout the summer. Those demands force the least efficient generation available to be used on the grid, resulting in higher prices. OMPA's system energy delivered in May and June was also approximately 17 percent greater than the previous two years.

The communication also offered ways for customers to conserve energy to keep costs down, including keeping thermostats at the highest comfortable temperature, making use of ceiling fans, keeping blinds closed during the day and turning off lights and appliances that are not being used.

Member cities fielding high-bill complaints are encouraged to remember that OMPA offers free residential energy audits that can be used to find ways to make their homes more efficient.

OMPA staff is available to assist in marketing the audits, at the request of members.



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See "Associates" @ meso.org

From the American Public Power Association

EIA Forecasts Rising Electricity Demand This Year, Higher Retail Prices

Electricity consumption will increase this year by 2.4 percent over 2021 levels, before falling slightly, by an expected 0.3 percent, next year, according to the Energy Information Administration's (EIA) Short-Term Energy Outlook (STEO).

The increase is being primarily driven by increased economic activity and hot summer weather throughout most of the country, the EIA said.

"This summer has been hotter in the United States than normal, even in the context of the pretty hot summers of the last few years," Joe DeCarolis, EIA administrator, said in a statement. "High temperatures have contributed to more air conditioning load, which is a significant driver in our forecast for more electricity consumption this year compared to last year."

Most of the increased electricity demand this year will be met with renewable energy, according to the [August 2022 STEO](#). The EIA expects renewable sources to provide 22 percent of U.S. generation in

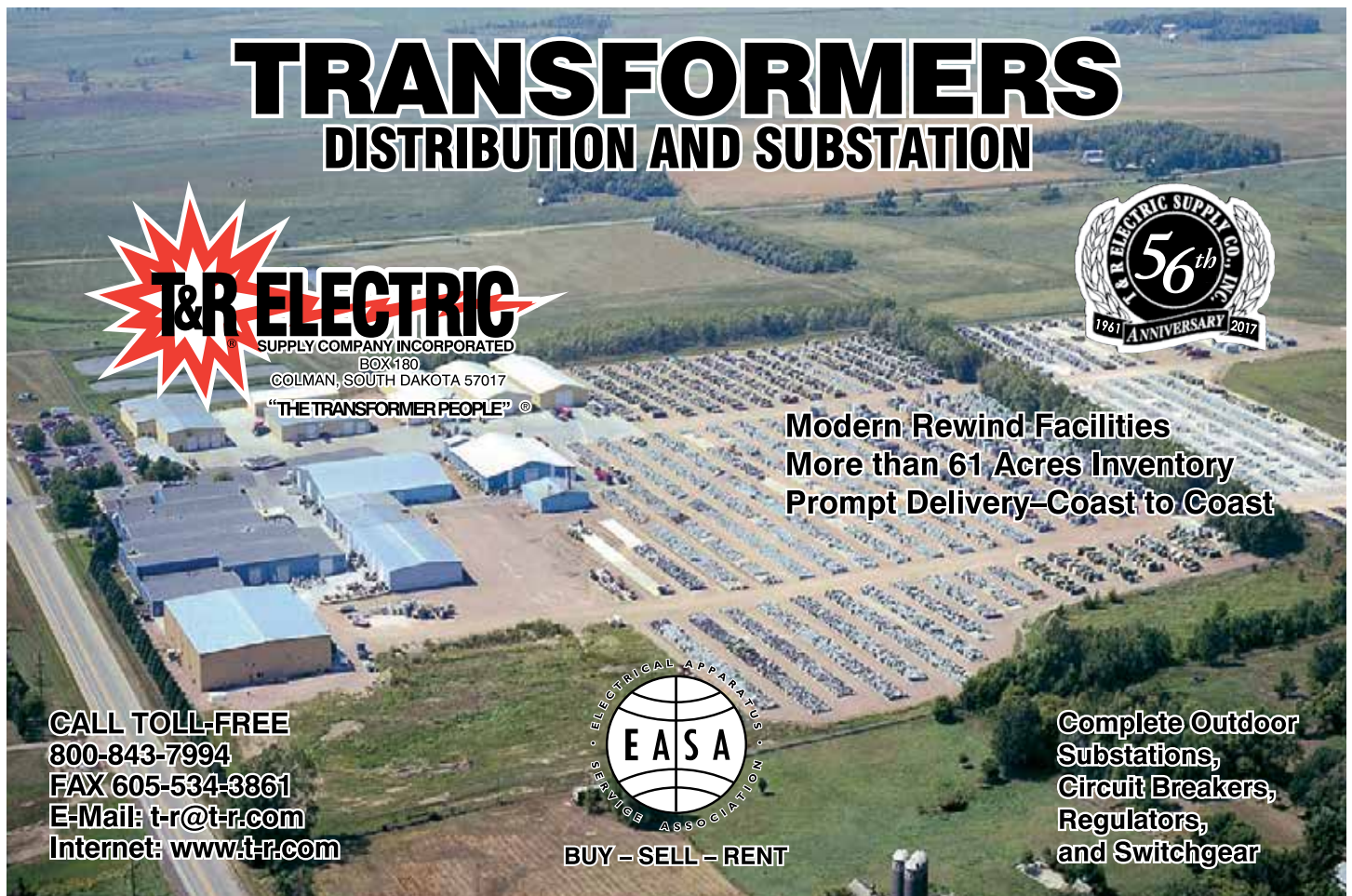
2022 and 24 percent in 2023, up from 20 percent in 2021.

The EIA also expects solar power capacity to continue to rise, increasing by 20 gigawatts (GW) in 2022 and 24 GW in 2023, representing an addition of 31 billion kilowatt hours (kWh) of electric power generation in 2022 and 41 billion kWh in 2023, the EIA said.


Meanwhile, the United States consumed more natural gas to meet electricity demand so far this summer than the previous five-year average, according to the STEO.

Natural gas consumption in the electric power sector continues to increase as a result of limited switching from natural gas-fired generators to coal-fired generators for power generation, despite elevated natural gas prices, the STEO said. And continued demand for natural gas to generate electricity has contributed to relatively high prices


(see EIA FORECASTS, page 6)




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FROM GRDA

Tulsa's Sublett is new GRDA Board Chair

Charles Sublett (Tulsa) will lead the Grand River Dam Authority Board of Directors as chairman over the next 12 months. Sublett began his tenure at the board's September 7 meeting in Langley and succeeds outgoing Chairman Dwayne Elam (Wagoner). Michael Westbrook (Tulsa) will serve as chair-elect during that period.

Sublett was appointed to the GRDA Board in November 2019 by Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt. He earned a Bachelor of Arts from Brown University in 1968 and a Juris Doctor from the University of Oklahoma in 1975. He has practiced law in Oklahoma for over 45 years. A military veteran, Sublett also served five years on active duty with the United States Air Force and 20-plus years in the reserves. He also served for many years on the board of the South Grand Lake Regional Airport and still maintains a Grand Lake residence.

"Chairman Sublett brings a wealth of legal and board experience to the GRDA," said GRDA President/CEO Dan Sullivan. "We are pleased to have him serve as Chair this year as we continue to grow and serve a customer base that is changing and evolving."

GRDA is governed by a seven-member board of directors comprised of representatives from each GRDA customer class (municipals, electric cooperatives, and industrials) as well as the GRDA lakes area. Two at-large representatives also sit on the board. Board members serve staggered, five-year terms, with one position opening each year, to ensure continuity.



Charles Sublett



Michael Westbrook

EIA Forecasts

(continued from page 5)

for natural gas, even as more natural gas enters the domestic market, because of the June shutdown of the Freeport liquefied natural gas terminal.

Rising supplies of natural gas have caused prices to fall over the past two months. The STEO forecasts the U.S. will produce 96.6 billion cubic feet per day (Bcf/d) of gas in 2022, which would be 3 percent more than in 2021, and expects dry natural gas production to average 100 Bcf/d in 2023.

Nonetheless, natural gas prices increased by almost 50 percent, from \$5.73/ per million British thermal units (MMBtu), on July 1 to \$8.37/MMBtu on July 29, because of continued high demand for natural gas from the electric power sector. "We expect the Henry Hub price to average \$7.54/MMBtu in the second half of 2022 and then fall to an average of \$5.10/MMBtu in 2023 amid rising natural gas production," the EIA said.

Rising natural gas prices will drive up wholesale electric prices and, consequently, retail electricity prices, according to the STEO, which forecasts the price of residential electricity will average 14.6 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh) in 2022, up 6.1 percent from 2021. Forecasts of annual average wholesale prices for 2022 range from an average of \$62 per megawatt hour (MWh) in Florida to \$95/MWh in the ISO New England and New York ISO markets, according to the STEO.

And, as coal plant shutdowns continue and natural gas prices fall, the EIA expects coal consumption to decline by 9 percent in 2023. The STEO, however, expects U.S. coal production to increase by 21 million short tons (MMst) to 599 MMst in 2022 and to 601 MMst in 2023 and coal exports to increase from 85 MMst in 2021 to 87 MMst in 2022 and to 98 MMst in 2023.

From the City of Edmond

Edmond Electric working toward AMI (Smart Choice) Program

New metering infrastructure is leading to new programs and new opportunities for electric and water customers of the City of Edmond.

Edmond Electric has begun upgrading customer meters to Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI). The process will allow them to implement Smart Choice, which is a group of programs and services designed to provide utility customers with more information about their electric and water usage.

“This is really the first step to allow for future programs and services,” said Glenn Fisher, Director of Edmond Electric. “With this new technology, customers can access their usage data and be an active part of tracking how they are using their utilities. That helps them see if there are adjustments to their usage needed and helps us see much earlier if there might be an issue we can help address.”

Converting the meters to AMI is expected to be a multi-year process. The new meters will allow customers to access detailed usage information to better monitor and control their electric and water usage while allowing for automatic meter readings, more timely and accurate billing, better reliability and quality of service, and automated outage notification.

“What the new technology brings is next-day available data, automatic meter readings, more customer understanding of when water is used, and overall better quality and reliability,” said Kris Neifing, Director of Water Resources. “Because water is such a vital resource in this region, this kind of investment and technology is important and can make a huge difference both for us and customers.”

The meters use a low-powered radio to send usage readings to the City of Edmond electric and water offices through a secure mesh network. This data is then processed and validated so customers can see their previous days’ hourly usage, as well as long-term historical data.

(see EDMOND ELECTRIC, *page 8*)



From the American Public Power Association

New DOE Program Offers Cybersecurity Assistance To Public Power Utilities

The Department of Energy’s (DOE) Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response (CESER) recently launched the Rural and Municipal Utility Advanced Cybersecurity Grant and Technical Assistance Program.

The program will prioritize rural, municipal, and small investor-owned utilities that have limited cybersecurity resources, are critical to the reliability of the bulk-power system, and/or those that own defense critical electric infrastructure.

CESER will develop the program in coordination with other government partners, leveraging the \$250 million made available in [Section 40124](#) of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

On Aug. 18, CESER hosted the first in a series of listening sessions for eligible entities and other interested parties.

CESER will collect input from the listening sessions to create a comprehensive program plan that bolsters cybersecurity for eligible utilities based on the needs identified by session participants, DOE said.

A listening session scheduled for Sept. 29 will focus on the unique needs of electric municipal utilities and their key priorities.

Registration will open approximately two weeks before the listening session date. Additional details about this and other listening sessions are available [here](#).

From GRDA

Celebrating our Team

Like many other organizations, the Grand River Dam Authority recognizes the important achievements of its workforce. Each month, milestone service anniversaries are highlighted in the internal informational flyer, and employees reaching these milestones are also given pins to commemorate their years of service.

However, while employees receive the recognition, GRDA and its customers continue to receive the real benefits. To operate an organization like GRDA, where hundreds of daily tasks are rolled into the key priorities of electricity production, environmental stewardship, and economic development, takes an efficient team of experienced employees.

Today, the GRDA workforce contains many employees with 30-plus years of service and dedication. These employees are on the job every day, putting their experience to work, to help carry out

the GRDA mission. At the same time, new employees, with innovative ideas, skills, and knowledge of their own are helping prepare GRDA for the future. Their efforts also add to GRDA's goal to meet the needs of our stakeholder and serve the state of Oklahoma for many years to come.

So, as we head towards Labor Day 2022, it is an appropriate time to say "thank you" to our GRDA coworkers, as well as to the rest of you who are on the job every day, helping to make Oklahoma a great place to live, work and play.

GRDA is Oklahoma's largest public power electric utility; fully funded by revenues from electric and water sales instead of taxes. Each day, GRDA strives to be an "Oklahoma agency of excellence" by focusing on the 5 E's: electricity, economic development, environmental stewardship, employees, and efficiency



Edmond Electric

(continued from page 7)

The meters will also provide notification if there is an issue, and the enhanced technology will allow customers to access the previous day's hourly usage for water and electric service. Additionally, historical hourly usage will be available to view and graph. In time, Edmond Electric plans to offer additional programs and services under the Smart Choice program.

The citywide implementation was approved by the Edmond City Council in October 2019. Utility Partners

of America (UPA) is handling the changeouts. The \$16 million multi-year project will also include a portal for customers, where they can pay a bill online and more, making information even more accessible. That portal is targeted to go online in Fall 2022.

In 2020, the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) reported that there were 120 million AMI meters installed in the U.S., meaning that well more than half of all electric customers were being served by such meters.

From the American Public Power Association

President Biden Signs Bill That Provides Public Power With Direct Access To Energy Tax Credits

President Biden on Aug. 16 signed into law the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), which will extend and expand various energy tax incentives and give public power utilities direct access to such credits through a refundable direct payment tax credit.

The U.S. House on Aug. 12 passed the IRA after the U.S. Senate passed the bill earlier this month.

The Joint Committee on Taxation estimates the value of energy-related tax incentives to be worth \$25 billion in 2022 alone. However, because public power utilities are exempt from tax, they have not been able to take advantage of these incentives for projects they own. Rural electric cooperatives face a similar challenge. As a result, using the tax code to incentivize energy investments has excluded utilities serving nearly 30 percent of all retail utility customers in the United States.

Instead, to take advantage of these energy tax incentives, tax-exempt, community-owned utilities have had to enter power purchase agreements with third party developers -- who often themselves would enlist a tax equity partner to monetize energy tax credits.

The result has been profound, the American Public Power Association (APPA) recently noted. For example, recent surveys of public power utilities showed they own just two percent of the non-hydropower renewable energy used to serve their customers: the remaining 98 percent had to be secured through power purchase agreements.

The IRA corrects this by allowing tax-exempt entities to claim energy tax credits directly. APPA has long supported this approach, which will lead to lower costs, local jobs, and more equitable energy service for all customers.

From the American Public Power Association

Solar Power Installations Slow Because Of Supply Chain, Other Issues: EIA

Solar power installations are running about 20 percent behind schedule due to supply chain and other issues, according to the Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration (EIA).

Developers had planned to install 17.8 gigawatts (GW) of utility-scale solar photovoltaic (PV) generating capacity in 2022, according to the EIA's June 2022 [Preliminary Monthly Electric Generator Inventory](#). However, over the first six months of the year, only 4.2 GW of capacity came online, less than half of what the industry had planned to install, a 20 percent shortfall.

"Our preliminary data from January through June 2022 show that PV solar installations were delayed by an average of 4.4 GW each month, compared with average monthly delays of 2.6 GW during the same period last year," according to the EIA. In most cases, the reported delays are for six months or less, the EIA added.

Most of the projects that are due to come online in the next 18 months are already under construction, the EIA noted.

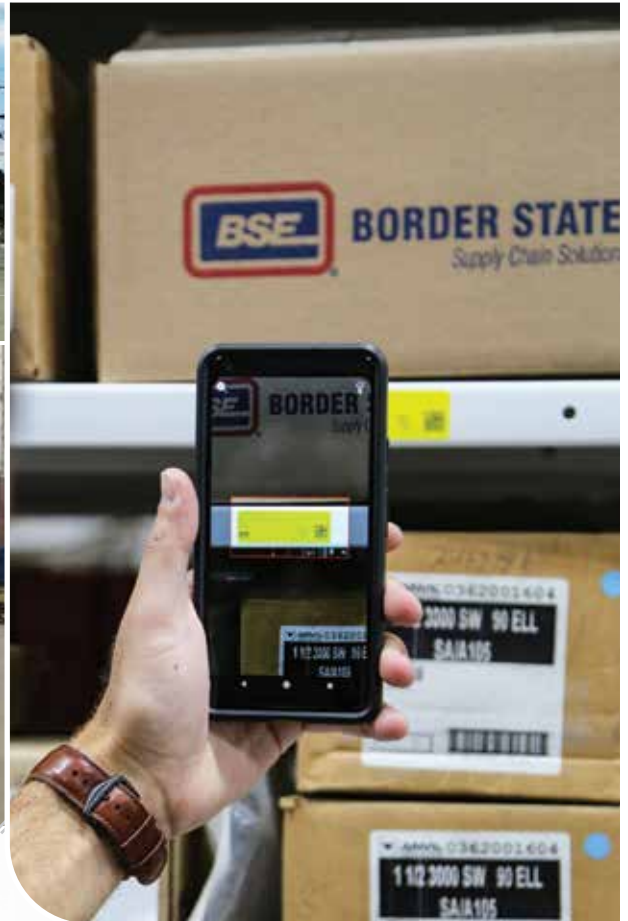
About 1.9 GW of solar installations under construction have been delayed but are still scheduled to come online in 2022, and 1.7 GW of projects under construction have been delayed to 2023, the EIA said.

Various factors could cause delays, the EIA noted, including broad economic factors, such as supply chain constraints, labor shortages, and high prices of components, as well as factors specific to electric generation projects, such as obtaining permits or testing equipment.

In particular, the EIA noted that in February, the Bush administration eased but did not end tariffs on imported crystalline silicon solar products from China, raising the tariff-rate quota, or threshold for imposing higher tariffs, from 2.5 GW to 5.0 GW and excluding bifacial panels from the extended tariffs.

In April, the Department of Commerce announced an anti-dumping circumvention investigation of solar cells and modules imported from Cambodia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam, countries that allegedly use parts made in China that otherwise would be subject to tariffs.

In a June executive action, President Joseph Biden sought to advance the deployment of the U.S. solar panel industry by authorizing the easing of import duties for 24 months for solar cells and modules imported from the countries under investigation. Biden also invoked the Defense Production Act to expand domestic production of solar modules.



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