



2009 GUIDELINES ON ENERGY

Background

1. Meeting the increasing demand for energy by wisely developing domestic resources is critical to the continued growth of the economy, fiscal health of our community, and our overall national security. Western Colorado contains a significant portion of the nation's future energy resources and stands to greatly benefit from its utilization through the intricate balance of energy development and environmental impact mitigation.
2. The Energy Policy Act of 2005 will help our nation meet its growing demand for energy while reducing our dependency on foreign oil through an enhanced strategic balance of energy options derived from coal, natural gas, petroleum products, nuclear power, and renewable resources such as wind, solar and biomass technology. With an abundant supply of coal, natural gas, uranium, oil reserves and oil shale reserves in the region, Western Colorado is rapidly becoming an "energy hub." As such, the energy industry is a primary driver of economic growth and sustainability for Mesa County.
3. In November of 2004, Colorado voters approved Amendment 37. It requires utilities with at least 40,000 customers to produce 3 percent of their electricity from renewable energy by 2007. The requirement rises to 6 percent in 2011 and 10 percent in 2015. Competitive renewable energy technologies and applications are emerging in the marketplace. The National Renewable Energy Laboratory found that Colorado is in the top 12 for wind potential, top 5 for solar and geothermal, and has strong biomass potential; no other state ranks as high in all categories.
4. Federal mineral lease payments and severance tax were created to mitigate local impacts of energy development on communities and pay for regulatory agencies.

The Chamber Supports:

1. The development and delivery of technical training and workforce readiness programs through Western Colorado Community College and other post secondary training programs in the community for the energy industry.
2. Public education about the energy industry and its impact on our local economy.
3. Energy industry activities that protect our environment and promote good corporate citizenship.

4. The responsible development of Colorado's energy resources, including natural and renewable energy, using the best available technology.
5. A distribution policy of severance taxes and mineral lease payments that gives priority to communities impacted by energy development.
6. Recognizing the rights of both surface and subsurface owners in the regulatory and legislative environments.
7. Research and development of local energy research facilities.
8. Local participation in the development of state and federal energy policies and activities.
9. Market Based incentives and educational efforts that motivate businesses to utilize conservation practices that reduce the use of conventional energy resources in their businesses.
10. A market based approach that encourages utilization of all traditional and non-traditional energy sources to meet our increased demand for energy while helping us strive toward energy independence as a nation.

The Chamber Opposes:

1. Energy policies that are not based on sound science and economic principles.
2. The use of energy impact funds for purposes other than energy related mitigation measures.
3. Actions that are motivated solely by politics instead of sound science and economic principles.