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Cheap solar energy set to displace n-power

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 28 (UPI) -- New research has established that sophisticated new solar energy production methods make it far and away the cheapest and least hazardous energy source, certainly cheaper and safer than nuclear power.

The latest findings come through research by a British market leader in renewable energy production following on from studies at Duke University in Durham, N.C.

The nuclear power generation industry and its various lobbies have successfully campaigned for the nuclear option as the most economical for consumers planning for large increases in demand for electricity.

Outside the United States, too, nuclear power generation has won new friends in recent years despite controversies over nuclear energy's dual use -- the other as a weapon of mass destruction.

Ken Moss, chief executive officer at U.K. solar power developer and producer mO3, said: "The generation game has changed so much over the last decade that electricity generated from solar energy will be cheaper than electricity generated from nuclear plants, including the new ones planned to be set up in Britain.

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"The cost of generating power from solar photovoltaic systems has steadily fallen over the last 10 years while the projected costs of constructing the new nuclear plants have ballooned.

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"The cost of producing and installing PV cells has been steadily dropping for some years," he said. "A PV system now costs about half of what it did in 1998."

Developments in solar technology and manufacturing processes combined with a steady increase in demand are causing the reduction in costs, he said, adding that mO3 expects that decline to continue.

The average price of a PV module in 2010 was \$1.50 per kilowatt and by midyear in 2011 that figure is expected to drop to a maximum of \$1.10 per kilowatt.

Research at Duke concluded that the costs of solar power had reached the point of "historic crossover" with the nuclear industry in North Carolina. The price of nuclear is expected to be 16-18 cents per kilowatt as compared to solar PV at 14 cents per kilowatt in 2011.

"It can be predicted with some confidence that the same will be true in the U.K. by the time that the new nuclear reactors have been built," said Moss. "Nuclear electricity's strength is being able to provide CO2 free base load electricity to the grid, as nuclear is not flexible and can only operate 24/7. Therefore the future requires a mix of technologies with renewable and nuclear being able to provide a sustainable solution."

He said, "Solar PV's time is now coming of age with predictions of 30 percent of the world's energy coming from PV by 2050, by which time economic storage of electricity will be possible and we will no longer need base load power stations or possibly even a grid!"

"With its fuel for free, the sun, solar electricity will be the mainstream clean energy for our, and our children's, future!" said Ray Noble, a director at mO3.

Moss asked for the risk factor to be taken into account.

"An accident at a solar park would be a small local affair but an accident at a nuclear plant is a global affair," he said. "We have to ask ourselves if we want to be subsidizing the building of so many new nuclear plants."

The company says it plans to generate 1 gigawatt from renewable power from solar parks in the United Kingdom.

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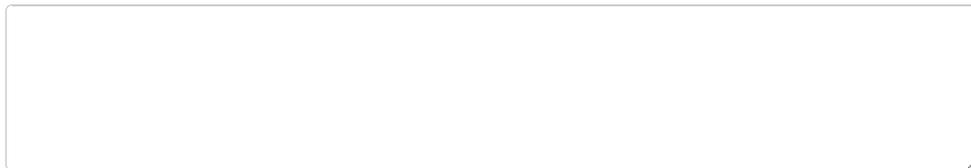
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Rod Adams (0 seconds ago)



The primary source for the statement about solar electricity cost versus the cost of nuclear electricity is a commissioned paper, not a peer reviewed study. It was not conducted by Duke. Most likely, it was not even conducted AT Duke, since the paper's primary listed author retired from Duke University 31 years ago. According to the obituary that is posted for Dr. Blackburn (PhD Economics) on the site of his patrons at NC Warn Dr. Blackburn moved to Maitland, Florida in 1980 upon taking early retirement from Duke.

I suppose I could be wrong - the second listed author on the commissioned paper is a "candidate" for a Masters of Environmental Management at Duke, so perhaps he prepared the paper using the University's library and computer resources.

The other source of the information about solar energy is the CEO of a company that is begging the UK government to maintain its current feed in tariff structure so that the hundreds of millions in venture capital that funds his company will not disappear. His business model is depending on selling electricity at mandated prices that are 2-4 times the market price because it comes from solar photovoltaic panels.

It surprising to find that industry source quoted as reliable in the same story where the author denigrates the entire nuclear industry by implying that the use of our technology is only expanding due to successful lobbying efforts. I wonder if the author has ever tried to lobby for political favors in China, South Korea, Finland, Japan or the UAE, all countries where the leaders have determined that building new nuclear plants is in their country's best long term interest.

Rod Adams
Publisher, Atomic Insights

Reply

Craig Schumacher (5 hours ago)



This article is based on a fraudulent study put out by NC Warn, an avowed antinuclear activist group. Six months ago, the New York Times issued an editorial correction addressing some issues which were recognised as severely compromising the integrity of an article they had published which was based on the same misinformation as this one. That article was titled: Nuclear Energy Loses Cost Advantage
By DIANA S. POWERS
Published: July 26, 2010

Reply

Russell Lowes (1 hour ago)



Craig,
This study's figures are clearly newer than the study by NC Warn, referring to up-to-date prices. Apparently you didn't read the NC Warn study and compare the numbers used.

Reply

Markus G. (6 hours ago)



Lies by proxy are still lies. This particular pile of dreck is from the NC warn "study". Which even admits in the appendix that the cost of solar is an astronomical 35 cents per kWh.

Solar is a better buy in the same way that bank robbery is a better occupation than making an honest living; until you get caught.

Reply

Jason (7 hours ago)



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Renewable Solar Energy

Generate Your Own Power And Save Money. Learn How It's Done Today.
DailyLife.com

Solar Energy Supplier

Commercial & Residential Solar Serving MD, VA, DC
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This article is pure horsesh*t

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Russell Lowes (13 hours ago)



Nuclear energy and the mythical clean coal are likely to be the next financial bubble in the U.S. While all these utility companies get bigger and bigger through consolidations, their goal is to continue the large centralized plant paradigm of coal, nuclear, and natural gas. In the mean time, while those three options are getting more expensive in real dollars, solar, wind, energy efficiency and energy storage are all coming down in price. All of these four options are already cheaper than the mythical clean coal and than nuclear energy per kilowatt-hour.

[Reply](#)

Dennis Franklin Nester (17 hours ago)



The 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl meltdown is this year. A new book cites it already killed about 1 million people. The most long-lasting, permanent DNA damage is produced by nuclear power plants and 528 atmospheric atom bomb 'tests'. Over a hundred in Nevada alone. Everyone eats, drinks and breathes radioactive fallout since 1945.

There are worldwide epidemics of obesity, diabetes, cancers, birth defects, etc. A Geiger counter reading reveals radiation. There is overwhelming data on the Internet, news stories, Youtube videos, and email lists about the permanent health effects of radiation. The late Dr. John Gofman MD, of the Manhattan Project said, "there is no safe dose of radiation".

All we can do now, is minimize exposure to radiation, natural and man-made. A dermatologist will tell you to stay out of the sun! We need less radiation, not more! Ocean wave power can supply the world with electricity, hydrogen etc.

[Reply](#)

dave (18 hours ago)



France has 80% of its power from nucleur. Why cant we?

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Russell Lowes (14 hours ago)



In 1973, France thought it could do nuclear on the cheap. They thought it had plenty of uranium reserves. And they thought it could reprocess its fuel to supply at least 50% of its plants. These 38 years later, France's nuclear electricity is more expensive than its fossil-fuel energy, and is now much more expensive than its coal energy. This is despite the massive nuclear subsidies of their socialist government. They ran out of uranium years ago, so they import all of their uranium. They have only been able to get 10% of their fuel from reprocessing due to overestimation of the reprocessing yield and technical problems with reprocessed fuel.

They also send their low level waste into the ocean via a pipeline near Normandy. This has been tracked to the Canadian Arctic Circle.

France is not a good example, in this case. They do much better with wind turbines, wine and great food.

[Reply](#)

sdr (19 hours ago)



lets see - we haven't actually built a plant that does this but we probably will if you give us more real cash and don't take away the current subsidies - because since we will - we must be cheaper than nuclear now - maybe we ought to build an actual solar plant that operates without real cash subsidies for 40 years, operates 95+% of the time and produces 1000MW then it might actually be cheaper than nuclear - this company plans to build 1 GW - is that per hour or total production in a year - what a scam in the making - nuclear is currently ranked slightly safer than a wind farm

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