

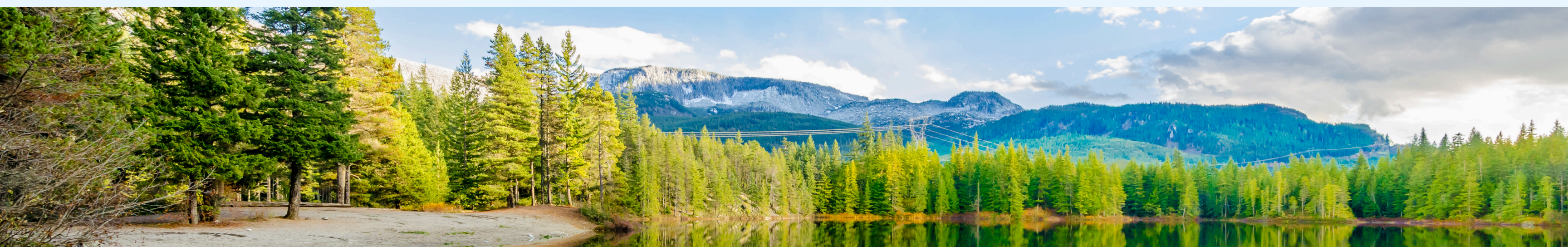
DATA CENTERS IN WASHINGTON: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Recently, data center operations and proposed projects have received a significant amount of attention from Washington policymakers, pundits, and industry analysts. A 2026 [analysis](#) by the commercial real estate services firm CBRE Group, Inc. found that Washington State set a record in data center leasing for the second year in a row. CBRE [notes](#), “Washington State data centers recorded 154.5 megawatts (MW) of net absorption [a leasing activity indicator] in 2025, a 117 [percent] increase from the year prior, reaching a record-high for the state ... Central Washington is one of three markets to surpass the New York Tri-State area in inventory for the first time since CBRE began tracking the market in 2016.” This flurry of activity has resulted in a significant influx of jobs, tax revenue, and economic growth to the state.

PROPOSED AND PASSED RESTRICTIONS ON DATA CENTERS

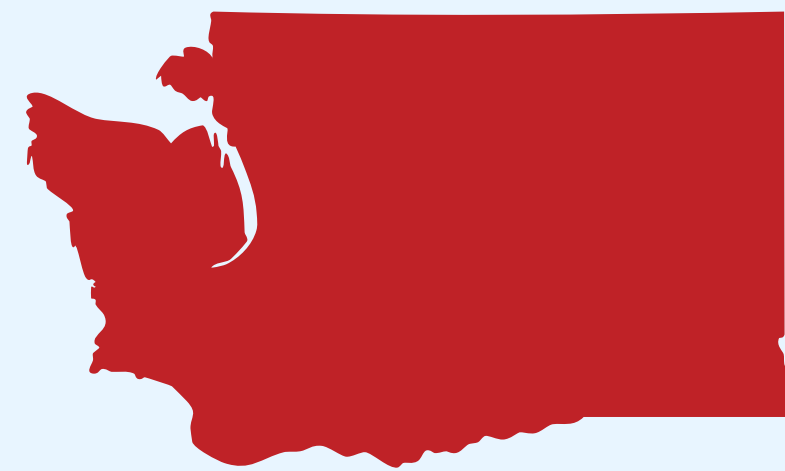
- * Recently, the Seattle City Council [adopted](#) two highly consequential pieces of legislation to halt data center projects. Amended [Council Bill 121214](#) freezes new data center siting for a year while the city conducts comprehensive impact studies. Amended [Resolution 32204 on data centers](#) enacts “a strict policy framework based on Seattle values for handling data center proposals. It directs departments and the Mayor’s Office to analyze how these high-density computing facilities impact Seattle’s electrical grid capacity, water usage, utility rates, land use, local jobs, and public health.”
- * In the Washington Legislature, [House Bill 2515](#), “Addressing Emerging Large Energy Use Facilities,” passed the House but died in the Senate. The bill would have [required](#) that electric utilities develop specific tariffs or policies for “large energy use facilities,” and would have forced facility owners to release sustainability reports highlighting their energy and water consumption, refrigerant use, and emissions. The bill also contained strict renewable requirements for data center projects.
- * On June 15, the Spokane City Council [delayed consideration](#) of a proposed one-year moratorium on new data centers, citing questions about its scope and potential impacts on other economic development projects. The proposal would bar city officials from accepting or approving new building permit applications for data centers. According to [Council member Paul Dillon](#), “We need a regulatory framework to address this ongoing issue as we see data centers across the country drive up utility costs and water and noise pollution.”



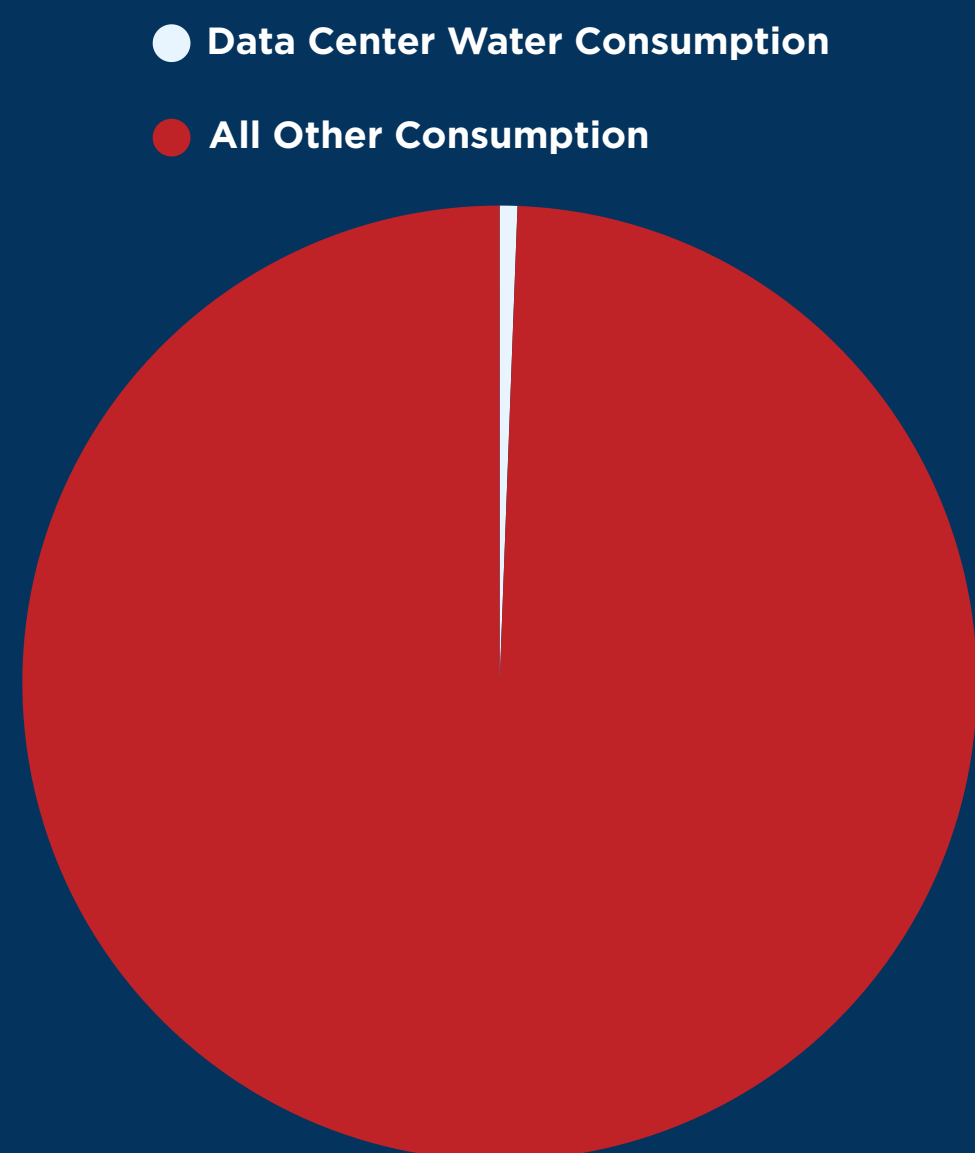
DATA CENTER DANGERS SIGNIFICANTLY OVERSTATED

Advocates of bans or restrictions such as Dillon often cite supposedly excessive water or electricity consumption by new data center operations. For example, Seattle Mayor Katie B. Wilson [cited](#) “community concerns about the potential impacts of large-load data centers on utility rates and the environment” in voicing her support for Seattle’s moratorium. However, these concerns are simply not supported by the evidence.

DATA CENTER MYTH V. REALITY



WASHINGTON WATER USAGE, 2025



MYTH:

Data centers are using up a significant percentage of water.

REALITY:

In Washington, data centers accounted for **0.6 percent** of all water consumption in 2025.

Brookings Institution data center water use estimates; Baxtel data center count; U.S. Geological Survey state-level aggregate water consumption figures.

WASHINGTON ELECTRICITY USAGE, 2025

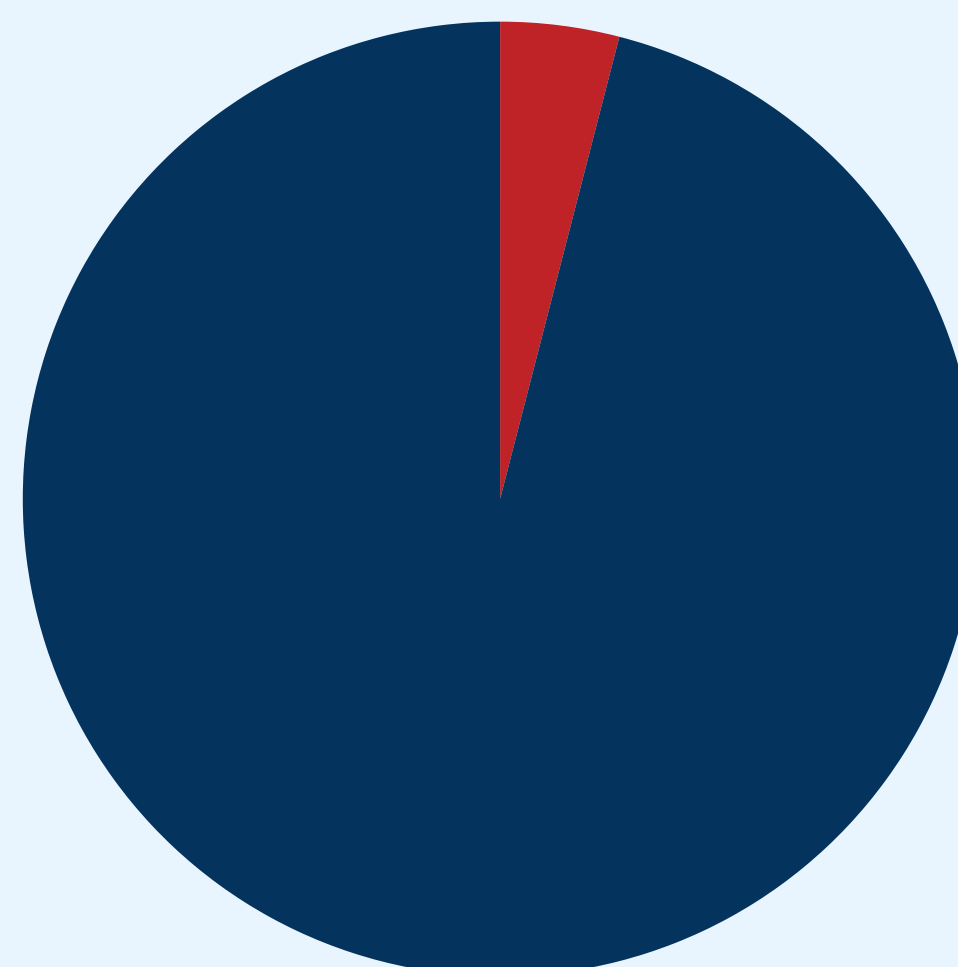
MYTH:

Data centers are using up a significant percentage of electricity.

REALITY:

In Washington, data centers accounted for **4.1 percent** of all electricity consumption in 2025.

- Data Center Electricity Consumption
● All Other Consumption



Electric Choice data center power consumption figures; U.S. Energy Information Administration state-level net generation figures.

To learn more about the long-term projected water and electricity demands of data centers, visit the Q&A section at protectingtaxpayers.org/datacenters

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