

DATA CENTERS IN NEW MEXICO: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

TAXPAYERS
PROTECTION
ALLIANCE



Recently, data center operations and proposed projects have received a significant amount of attention from New Mexico policymakers, pundits, and economic analysts. A former chief executive officer of the New Mexico Technology Council Mia Petersen notes, “New Mexico has for decades looked for ways to grow its economy and bring permanent, high-wage jobs into its communities...The state is already a hub of scientific innovation...It is also home to world-class research institutions, growing engineering programs, and a workforce increasingly equipped to participate in advanced technology industries. The question is, why would we not encourage data centers to choose New Mexico as their home so we can build on this solid foundation?”

PROPOSED AND PASSED RESTRICTIONS ON DATA CENTERS

- * According to a July report in *Source NM* by editor Julia Goldberg, “Several Democratic state lawmakers...announced they intend to introduce legislation in next year’s legislative session to create a statewide moratorium on ‘large-scale’ data centers. State Reps. Eleanor Chávez of Albuquerque and Micaela Lara Cadena from Mesilla, along with Rep. Angelica Rubio and Sen. Carrie Hamblen, both of Las Cruces, say the moratorium would ‘prohibit new large-scale data center projects’ while the state developed a ‘framework’ for evaluating such developments’ impact on water, energy, emissions, ratepayers and overall ‘community benefits related to this industry.’”
- * On June 30, Santa Fe County Commissioners unanimously approved an 18-month moratorium on new data center development permits. While an initial draft of the moratorium placed the regulatory threshold at 100 megawatts, the final version set the threshold at just one megawatt—comparable to a large retail store. Additionally, the moratorium was originally slated to be one year but was extended to placate concerns that the initial period was not enough to study data center projects.
- * On July 21, the Sierra County Commission unanimously approved an 18-month data center moratorium. While an initial proposed resolution would have had the county send letters to state leaders expressing concerns about the environmental toll of data centers, Commissioner Sandy Jones advocated for a moratorium instead: “I’m kind of convinced that the state Legislature is going to look at this pretty hard. If we fire our shot now and significantly let the state Legislature know that we are concerned here, it carries a bit more weight than just a letter to six people who’ll be out of office in six or seven months.”



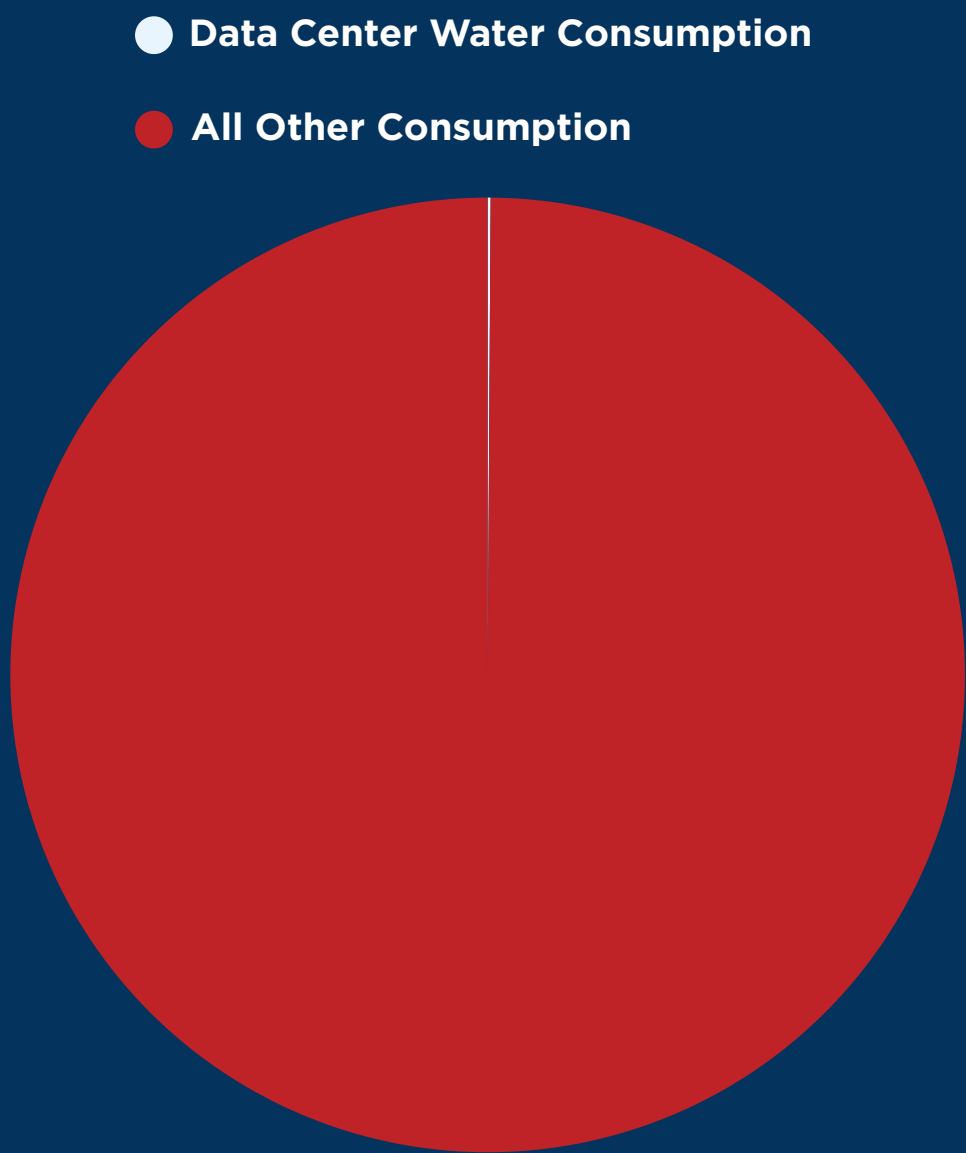
DATA CENTER DANGERS SIGNIFICANTLY OVERSTATED

Advocates of bans or restrictions—including state Reps. Cadena and Rubio—often cite supposedly excessive water or electricity consumption by new data center operations. The truth is data centers account for a small proportion of water and electricity use in New Mexico.

DATA CENTER MYTH V. REALITY



NM WATER USAGE, 2025



MYTH:

Data centers are using up a significant percentage of water.

REALITY:

In New Mexico, data centers accounted for **0.1 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.

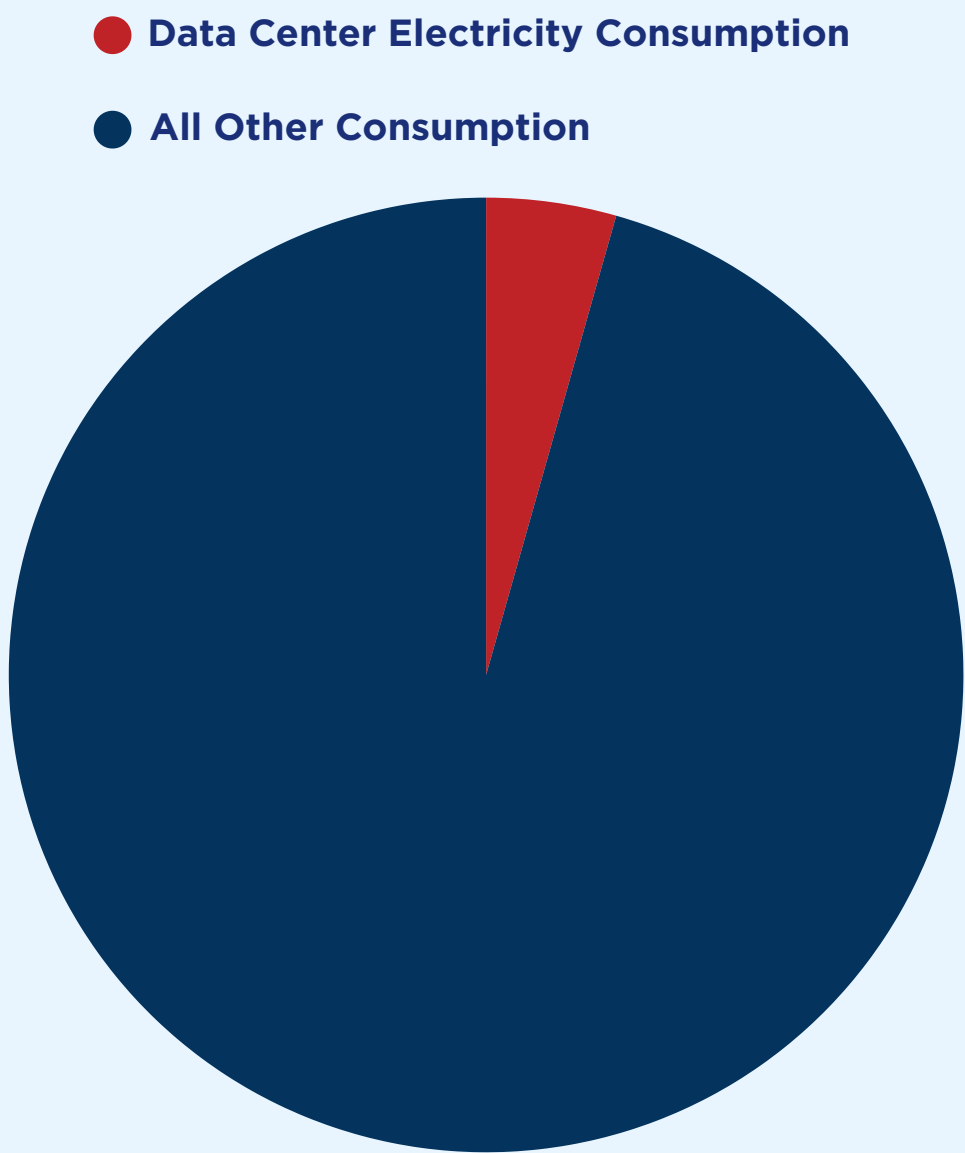
NM ELECTRICITY USAGE, 2025

MYTH:

Data centers are using up a significant percentage of electricity.

REALITY:

In New Mexico, data centers accounted for **4.5 percent** of all electricity consumption in 2025.



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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