



# EXPERT ANALYSIS: MidAm Could Save Ratepayers \$5 Billion by Cutting Coal

Climate scientists have spent years raising the alarm about the urgency of a rapid transition to clean energy. Without it, we won't be able to avert the worst impacts of the climate crisis. But in Iowa, MidAmerican Energy (MidAm) has no plans to retire its coal power plants—despite what its flashy branding, filled with pictures of wind turbines, implies. There is a better way forward. If it followed the advice of climate scientists and committed to retiring its coal fleet by 2030, it would not only help mitigate the climate crisis, but also save Iowans money.

Synapse Energy Economics, a nationally recognized energy analytics firm, recently published a study with some eye-opening findings about MidAm's coal fleet:

**Retiring MidAm's coal fleet by 2030 and replacing it with solar, wind, battery storage,**

**and energy efficiency would save ratepayers \$1.2 billion through 2040, while creating high-quality jobs for Iowans.**

- Compared with investments in fossil fuels, investments in renewables and energy

efficiency create between two and three times as many jobs.<sup>1</sup>

**In the likely scenario that high gas prices continue and we finally see a national tax on carbon emissions, MidAm would save \$5 billion by retiring its coal fleet by 2030 instead of allowing it to remain online indefinitely.**

- That same scenario would reduce carbon emissions by **318 million tons** by 2040.

**Today MidAm significantly underinvests in energy efficiency compared to other Midwestern utilities. If MidAm increases its investments in energy efficiency, it could avoid having to build out new energy resources—like an expensive nuclear power plant—without sacrificing reliability.**

- As time goes on, Iowa's energy demand will increase. Increasing its investment in energy efficiency would dramatically decrease demands during the extremes of summer and winter weather.
  - Energy efficiency investments save ratepayers money by reducing utility bills, which can create new jobs when the savings are spent elsewhere in the economy.

This study shows what could be possible if MidAm backed up its greenwashed talking points with meaningful climate action. It also demonstrates how everyday Iowans would benefit from MidAm's transition to clean energy: Their utility bills would shrink, and new jobs would be created in their communities.

**[Recent analysis by the Environmental Law & Policy Center](#)** identified 113 companies already in Iowa's clean energy industry supply chain

creating jobs and revenue that benefit Iowans. In 2019, wind and solar businesses employed over 9,000 and 800 Iowa workers, respectively; energy efficiency businesses provided another 21,000 jobs and those numbers don't even include all the jobs indirectly created in construction, manufacturing, and other sectors by the industry boom. Bold investment in clean energy with a commitment to retiring coal by 2030 will bring long-term economic benefits to rural areas, landowners, and community tax bases.

**It's time for MidAmerican to act!  
Join us in asking them to do so at  
[sc.org/MidAm](https://sc.org/MidAm)**

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**SIERRA CLUB**  
Beyond Coal



<sup>1</sup> Garrett-Peltier, H., 2017. "Green versus brown: Comparing the employment impacts of energy efficiency, renewable energy, and fossil fuels using an input-output model." *Economic Modelling*, 61, pp.439-447.

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