



Colstrip Generating Station

A reliable, low-cost power source

Puget Sound Energy strives to ensure reliable electric service at a reasonable cost by acquiring power supplies from a variety of different sources, both PSE-generated and purchased from other suppliers. These sources primarily are hydropower, wind power, natural gas-fired generation, and coal-fired power from Montana. This diversified-portfolio strategy minimizes risk – and costs – in the event that an unforeseen circumstance (a drought, for example) causes regional shortages in one form of power and, in turn, drives up wholesale power prices. While hydroelectricity comprises the single largest share of PSE’s total power-supply mix, low-cost electricity from coal-fired generation also makes up a substantial portion – about one-fifth of PSE’s total, long-term electric supply.

PSE’s power-supply portfolio includes the utility’s ownership interest in one coal-fired power-generating facility, the Colstrip Generating Station in eastern Montana.

Power output

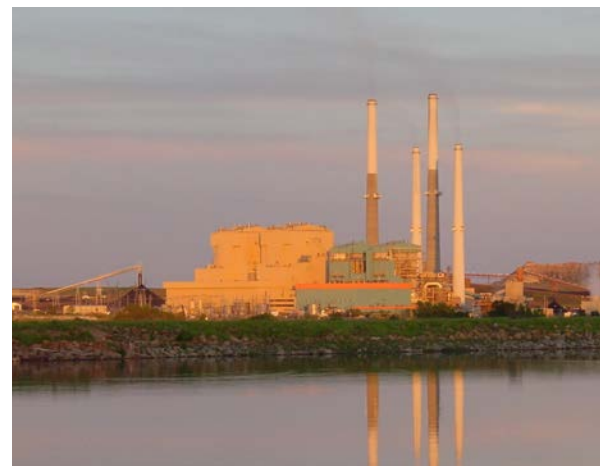
Colstrip has a combined peak output of 2,094 megawatts, making it the second-largest coal-fired generating facility west of the Mississippi River. PSE owns one-third of that output – or 677 MW – enough to meet the electricity needs of about 500,000 households.

Location

Colstrip is located approximately 120 miles southeast of Billings, Mont., or close to 1,000 miles east of Seattle. The facility is situated atop the vast Fort Union coal formation, which underlies much of eastern Montana and parts of Wyoming, the Dakotas, and Saskatchewan.

Facility profile

Colstrip consists of four separate coal-fired generating units, collectively owned by PSE, Talen Energy, Portland General Electric, Avista Corporation, PacifiCorp, and NorthWestern Energy LLC. Units 1 and 2, built in the mid-1970s, each has 307 MW of net generating capacity. Units 3 and 4, built in the mid-1980s, each has 740 MW of net capacity. The facility lies adjacent to the Rosebud coal mine, which supplies Colstrip’s low-sulfur, subbituminous coal (a type of coal used primarily as fuel for steam-electric power generation). PSE holds the largest ownership share in Colstrip, with 50 percent of Units 1 and 2 and 25 percent of Units 3 and 4. Colstrip is PSE’s single largest generating facility. Low-sulfur coal and state-of-the-art scrubbers reduce Colstrip’s sulfur-dioxide emissions below the limits set by Phase One and Phase Two of the Clean Air Act. The plant also has added equipment to reduce nitrogen-oxide emissions and fully meets standards of the Environmental Protection Agency and state of Montana, including Montana’s strict mercury-control rule.



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Power transmission

For PSE and Colstrip's five other Pacific Northwest utility owners, the plant's power output travels about 250 miles west, to Townsend, Mont., over two 500-kilovolt transmission lines the companies collectively own. From there, Colstrip power moves across the Bonneville Power Administration's transmission system before reaching the utilities' individual transmission grids.

Operations

Talen Energy operates Colstrip. The facility employs about 360 people.

Tax benefits to public

Property taxes levied on Colstrip annually provide millions of dollars in revenues for local schools, county roads, and other public services in Rosebud County, Mont., where the power plant is located.