

Electric Power CO₂ Emissions/Generation Mix Shift: U.S. Energy Information Administration Report



Walter Wright, Jr.
wwright@mwlaw.com
(501) 688.8839

06/10/2021

The United States Energy Information Administration (“EIA”) issued a June 9th report (“Report”) titled: *Electric Power Sector CO₂ Emissions Drop as Generation Mix Shifts from Coal to Natural Gas*

EIA states that in the past 15 years the shift away from coal and toward natural gas/renewables has resulted in lower CO₂ emissions from electricity generation.

The United States electric power sector is stated to have produced 1.724 million metric tons of CO₂ in 2019. This is 32 percent less than the 2,544 million metric tons produced in 2005.

EIA attributes this shift to be a result of a movement from coal to natural gas in the electric generation mix. The Report illustrates this by noting that in 2005 coal made up 50 percent of the United States electricity generation. Such share is stated to have declined to 23 percent in 2019.

In contrast, natural gas is stated to have increased from 19 percent of total generation in 2005 to 38 percent in 2019.

Note, however, that EIA states that such trend could be changing. An EIA publication forecasts that higher natural gas prices will lead to less generation by that energy source. As a result, it states that additional coal-fired generation in 2021 could occur. Regardless, EIA states that in 2022 both coal and natural gas could lose a percentage of their shares to renewables.

The Report also focuses on the impact of the increased use of renewables in terms of reduced CO₂ emissions.

A copy of the EIA Report can be downloaded [here](#).