2025 Colorado General Assembly Legislative Wrap Up - Signed Bills

The Colorado Legislative Session adjourned on Wednesday, May 7th. Governor Polis must sign or veto passed bills by June 6th as required by law.

HB25-1040 "Adding Nuclear Energy as a Clean Energy Resource"

Adds nuclear energy to Colorado's definitions of "clean energy" and "clean energy resource." This change allows nuclear energy projects to qualify for clean energy financing and enables utilities to use nuclear power to meet state clean energy targets. However, for property tax purposes, nuclear energy generated by a public utility is excluded from the "clean energy resource" definition. The bill does not authorize new nuclear plant construction but signals state support for considering nuclear energy as part of Colorado's clean energy future.

HB25-1049 "Communication Rights for Persons in Custody"

Expands and clarifies the rights of individuals in custody in Colorado to communicate with others. The bill ensures that people in custody have the right to make and receive private, unrecorded legal telephone calls without cost, as well as the right to a reasonable number of other communications. These protections are intended to enhance access to legal counsel and maintain essential outside contact for those in custody.

HB25-1056 "Local Government Permitting Wireless Telecommunications Facilities"

Streamlines the permitting process for wireless telecommunications facilities by requiring local governments to act on applications from telecommunications providers within 60 days.

- If a local government does not approve or reject an application within this 60-day window-and the provider has met all public notice requirements and notified the local government-the application is automatically deemed approved.
- The 60-day period can be paused if the local government requests additional information or extended by mutual agreement between the provider and the local government.
- The bill prohibits local governments from requiring new applications or additional permits for the removal, discontinuance, or replacement of telecommunications equipment at existing facilities, as long as the changes are not substantial and proper notification is given.
- The legislation aims to expedite the deployment and modification of wireless infrastructure, potentially improving cell phone connectivity across the state.
- HB25-1056 takes effect on January 1, 2026.

HB25-1080 "Wireless Telephone Infrastructure Deployment Incentives"

Requires the Colorado Broadband Office to implement a grant program for wireless telephone infrastructure deployment, modeled after the existing broadband deployment grant program. Grants may be funded using High Cost Support Mechanism (HCSM) money to incentivize the deployment of wireless telephone and communication services, particularly focusing on rural and underserved communities. Counties, special districts, and school districts are permitted to provide property tax relief to qualified businesses that expand wireless telephone infrastructure.

HB25-1096 "Automated Permits for Clean Energy Technology"

Requires counties and municipalities in Colorado with populations over 5,000 to adopt an automated permitting platform for residential solar panel installations.

- The automated system must process at least 75% of residential solar installation permit applications for existing single-family or two-family homes with a maximum 200-amp main service disconnect.
- Counties and municipalities must notify the Colorado Energy Office of compliance and submit annual reports on platform usage and the software used.
- The Colorado Energy Office will provide funding and technical assistance to help local governments implement these platforms.
- The State Electrical Board is also required to implement an automated platform for reviewing and issuing electrical permits for residential solar installations and report annually to the Colorado Energy Office.
- The bill includes provisions for remote inspections via video or photography at no greater cost or delay than in-person inspections for permitted projects.

HB25-1110 "Railroad Crossing Maintenance Costs"

Addresses the allocation of costs for maintaining railroad crossings in Colorado. The bill requires the PUC to adopt rules clarifying how maintenance costs for railroad crossings are distributed among responsible parties, ensuring fair and consistent cost-sharing statewide.

HB25-1117 "Vehicle Immobilization Company Regulation"

Establishes comprehensive regulations for companies that immobilize or "boot" vehicles:

- The bill requires these companies to obtain permits, and authorizes the PUC to deny, suspend, revoke, or refuse to renew permits if it is not in the public interest or for violations, including certain felonies.

- Companies must document the vehicle's condition and the reason for immobilization (including photographs) before booting a vehicle, and provide this documentation upon request.
- Immobilization companies must display their name, permit number, and phone number on their vehicles.
- The bill prohibits companies from:
  - Immobilizing a vehicle already booted by another company or charging multiple removal fees for multiple devices.
  - Immobilizing vehicles on private property without proper authorization or a court order.
  - Immobilizing a vehicle in a parking space or common area without placing a detailed written notice on the windshield at least 24 hours in advance.
  - Immobilizing vehicles unless adequate signage is posted by the property owner.
  - Patrolling or monitoring properties to enforce parking rules on behalf of property owners.
- Companies are required to carry commercial liability insurance.
- Violations of these regulations are classified as deceptive trade practices, enforceable by the Attorney General or district attorneys.
- The bill aims to promote fairness, transparency, and consumer protection, and to prevent predatory booting practices while allowing property owners to enforce parking rules.

HB25-1130 "Labor Requirements for Government Construction Projects"

Aligns labor requirements for public construction projects and energy sector public works projects.

- The bill allows counties to opt in to state-level apprenticeship utilization and prevailing wage requirements by entering into intergovernmental agreements with the Department of Personnel and Administration or other state agencies.
- These agreements outline how the requirements will be implemented, administered, and enforced, and may include annual fees paid by counties for state support.
- The bill aims to standardize labor practices across public construction projects, potentially increasing state expenditures to support administration and enforcement.

HB25-1154 "Communication Services for People with Disabilities Enterprise"

Transfers management of telephone relay services from the PUC to the "Communication Services for People with Disabilities Enterprise" within the Department of Human Services (CDHS). It will consolidate existing programs and services for individuals who are blind, print-disabled, deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind under the new enterprise and establish a Board of Directors for the enterprise, appointed by the Governor by June 30, 2025.

HB25-1175 “Smart Meter Opt-In Program”

- Establishes a Smart Meter Opt-In Program for residential customers of large investor-owned utilities (serving over 500,000 customers) in Colorado.
- Beginning July 1, 2025, utilities are prohibited from installing smart meters at a residential property unless the customer submits a signed opt-in request.
- Utilities must remove and replace any smart meter installed without the customer’s permission prior to July 1, 2025, with a manual (noncommunicating) meter within 90 days of a customer’s request.
- Requires utilities to provide an online website and a phone number for customers to request installation or removal of smart meters.
- Utilities deploying smart meters after September 1, 2025, must submit a customer communication plan to the Public Utilities Commission by December 31, 2025.
- The communication plan must detail:
    - Deployment strategy for smart meters
    - Advance notifications to customers (at 90, 60, and 30 days before installation)
    - Information about the right to refuse a smart meter and opt for a manual meter
    - Information for new customers about existing meters and their rights to request a manual meter.

HB25-1177 “Utility Economic Development Rate Tariff Adjustments”

Adjusts the economic development rate tariff for investor-owned electric utilities in Colorado.

- Requires that approved economic development rates do not increase costs for other electric customers.
- Clarifies that utilities must still comply with greenhouse gas emission reduction requirements, even when offering economic development rates.
- Authorizes utilities to apply for an extension of the maximum duration of economic development rates from 10 years up to 25 years.
- Increases the maximum load threshold for a qualifying commercial or industrial project (without commission approval) from 20 megawatts to 40 megawatts.
- Updates the application process:
    - The Public Utilities Commission must approve or deny an application within 120 days, following a 14-business-day notice period after filing.
- The bill aims to encourage large-scale commercial and industrial development while protecting existing ratepayers and environmental standards.

HB25-1234 “Utility Consumer Protection”

Enacts new consumer protections for electric and gas utility customers in Colorado. The bill:

- Prohibits utilities from disclosing, selling, or reselling customers' personal data to third parties or government entities, except when required for assistance programs.
- Expands situations where utilities cannot disconnect service for nonpayment, including during extreme heat or cold, poor air quality (AQI over 100), or a customer's medical emergency (with a doctor's certificate).
- Extends these disconnection protections to municipal and cooperative utilities unless they opt out.
- Requires energy assistance funds to be available year-round, including for those awaiting low-income program help.
- Bars the Department of Human Services from requiring or sharing applicants' citizenship or immigration status for energy assistance, unless legally mandated, and provides denied applicants at least 60 days to complete their application without risk of disconnection during that period.

HB25-1267 "Support for Statewide Energy Strategies"

Requires the Division of Oil and Public Safety in the Department of Labor and Employment to adopt and enforce minimum standards for retail electric vehicle (EV) charging by July 1, 2026, with enforcement beginning July 1, 2027.

- Expands the allowable uses of the Electric Vehicle Grant Fund within the Colorado Energy Office to include operational and policy work supporting EV adoption, charging infrastructure, affordable clean electricity for EVs, and administrative costs related to these activities.
- Supports the development and enforcement of retail EV charging rules using grant funds.
- Allows the Community Access Enterprise to reduce its retail delivery fee to ensure it does not collect more than $100 million in total revenue before June 30, 2026.
- The bill is part of broader efforts to support statewide energy strategies and EV infrastructure in Colorado.

HB25-1269 "Building Decarbonization Measures"

Updates energy use benchmarking and performance standard requirements for owners of certain large buildings, requiring them to meet new energy performance standards by 2040 as set by the Air Quality Control Commission.

- Establishes interim targets: buildings must achieve a 13% energy use reduction by 2026 and a 29% reduction by 2030, both relative to 2019 energy use levels.
- Allows alternative compliance mechanisms for building owners to meet performance standards.

- Increases civil penalties for violations: up to $577 for a first benchmarking violation, up to $2,300 for subsequent violations, and up to $2,300 (or $5,800 for repeat offenses) for every 30 days of non-compliance with performance standards after 2030, with annual inflation adjustments.
- Creates a new Building Decarbonization Enterprise to provide financial, technical, and programmatic assistance to building owners for energy efficiency, electrification, and upgrades.
- Authorizes an annual building decarbonization fee (starting at $400 in FY 2026-27, increasing with inflation) to fund the enterprise's activities.
- Exempts local governments that adopt wildfire resiliency codes from certain state energy code requirements.

HB25-1280 "Advanced Leak Detection Technology Rules"

Requires the PUC to adopt rules for the use of advanced leak detection technology in gas pipelines by November 1, 2025. The law aims to strengthen pipeline safety by ensuring utilities use modern technology to detect and repair leaks, enhancing public safety and environmental protection.

HB25-1292 "Transmission Lines in State Highway Rights-of-Way"

- HB25-1292 allows transmission developers to co-locate high voltage transmission lines longitudinally within state highway rights-of-way, subject to specific criteria and coordination with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT).
- CDOT must provide developers with information about future highway projects that could affect transmission line placement and develop a preconstruction plan review schedule if a site is deemed suitable.
- Developers are required to prioritize existing utility corridors first, then state highway rights-of-way, and finally new utility corridors for transmission line placement.
- Before a permit is issued, developers must submit a report detailing mitigation strategies to avoid negative impacts on affected communities, which CDOT must approve.
- CDOT is authorized to impose one-time and annual surcharges on transmission developers for the use of highway rights-of-way.
- By January 1, 2027, CDOT must update its rules to accommodate high voltage transmission lines in highway rights-of-way.
- The Colorado Energy Office and Colorado Electric Transmission Authority, with other agencies, must conduct a study (funded by private partners) to identify suitable state highway corridors for high voltage transmission; the study must be completed within 18 months of securing funding.
- The bill aims to support Colorado's clean energy, greenhouse gas reduction, reliability, and affordability goals by expanding electric transmission infrastructure.
- Fiscal impacts include increased state revenue and expenditures from surcharges and administrative costs, but no General Fund appropriation is

required; funding comes from the State Highway Fund and private sources for the study.

SB25-031 “Single Point of Contact Wireless Services”

Allows the 911 services enterprise to provide grants to local alerting authorities to implement language and accessibility services for emergency wireless alerts. The bill aims to improve wireless alert systems in Colorado by addressing language and access needs, ensuring better communication during emergencies for all residents.

SB25-052 “Railroad Investigative Report Confidentiality”

Updates Colorado law regarding the confidentiality of information related to railroad operations. The bill repeals the previous blanket confidentiality requirement for all railroad investigative reports, allowing for more transparency while still protecting sensitive information as needed for regulatory and safety purposes

SB25-060 “Repeated Phone Calls Obstruction of Government Operations”

Expands the crime of obstructing government operations to include repeatedly calling public safety emergency entities (like 911 dispatch centers) without a justifiable reason, after being warned to stop. Violators can be charged with a class 2 misdemeanor. The law aims to deter misuse of emergency services and has minimal fiscal impact on state and local governments.

SB25-162 “Railroad Safety Requirements”

Establishes the Office of Rail Safety within the PUC, granting it exclusive statewide authority over railroad safety inspections, investigations, and regulatory enforcement.

- Grants the PUC sole regulatory authority over railroad safety, preempting conflicting local regulations and creating a consistent statewide safety framework.
- Requires railroads to fund regulatory activities through fees assessed by the PUC, ensuring adequate resources for safety oversight.
- Mandates immediate notification of local emergency services and the PUC in the event of train accidents, hazardous material spills, or other emergencies, with detailed requirements for emergency response coordination.
- Provides civil liability immunity for railroad workers acting in good faith during emergencies, such as assisting with evacuations or emergency response efforts.
- Emphasizes hazardous material safety, including regular inspections of railcars transporting such materials, emergency response planning, and environmental mitigation efforts.
- Eliminates shared inspection authority previously held by the Department of Public Safety and Department of Transportation, consolidating it under the PUC for Class I, certain other, and passenger railroads.

- Requires comprehensive data gathering and reporting on railroad safety and emergency incidents to improve oversight and transparency.

SB25-165 "Licensure of Electricians"

Addresses the regulation of electrical work in Colorado, specifically focusing on the licensure of electricians.

- The bill updates and clarifies requirements for individuals performing electrical work, ensuring that only properly licensed electricians can operate within the state.
- It aims to enhance public safety and professional standards by strengthening oversight and compliance within the electrical industry.
- The legislation is part of Colorado's ongoing efforts to regulate skilled trades and protect consumers by maintaining high standards for professional licensure.

SB25-175 "Sunset Bill Towing Task Force"

Extends the existence of the Towing Task Force, which was previously set to be repealed on September 1, 2025, and now continues it until September 1, 2035.

- The bill implements recommendations from the 2024 sunset review conducted by the Department of Regulatory Agencies to ensure continued oversight and evaluation of towing practices in the state.
- The purpose of the Towing Task Force is to review and advise on towing regulations, consumer protections, and industry standards in Colorado.
- The bill was sponsored by several Democratic legislators and passed through the Senate Transportation & Energy Committee.

SB25-299 "Consumer Protection for Residential Energy Systems"

Applies to agreements between consumers and solar sales companies for residential solar electric systems or battery energy storage, including purchases, leases, and power purchase agreements, entered into on or after December 31, 2025.

- Key Requirements for Solar Sales Companies:
    - Must provide clear disclosures to consumers before agreements are signed, including payment terms and company contact information.
    - Agreements must contain specific terms, and companies must retain signed agreements for at least four years.
    - Consumers have at least three business days to cancel an agreement without penalty (except for nonrefundable deposits), and this cancellation period begins only after a required "welcome call" is conducted and recorded.
    - Must comply with data privacy laws regarding consumer information.
- Sales Practices and Protections:

    - Prohibits use of misleading sales materials suggesting affiliation with utilities or state incentive programs without explicit written consent.
    - Requires warranties for installation and workmanship of residential solar systems.
    - Sets standards for salespeople and financing documents.
- Utility Obligations:
    - Investor-owned utilities offering solar incentives must provide clear information about those incentives to customers.
- Enforcement:
    - Violations are treated as deceptive trade practices under the Colorado Consumer Protection Act.
- Overall Effect:
    - Establishes strong consumer protections and transparency in the residential solar market, limits misleading sales tactics, and strengthens consumer rights regarding cancellation, privacy, and warranties.