

## Lignite: The Region's Best Kept Secret!

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- Electricity from coal is abundant, domestic, reliable and affordable.
- Who are the players
  - Lignite Energy Council is regional trade association with more 340 members
  - Basin Electric is the largest U.S. generation and transmission cooperative, serving customers from Canada to New Mexico
  - Minnkota serves customers eastern North Dakota and northwestern Minnesota
  - Great River Energy serves about two-thirds of the geographic area in Minnesota
  - Montana-Dakota Utilities serves customers in North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana and Wyoming
  - Otter Tail Power serves customers in western Minnesota, North Dakota and eastern South Dakota
  - Minnesota Power serves customers in northeast Minnesota
- History of the lignite industry is tied to North Dakota history. Examples include Lewis & Clark and General Custer
  - Homesteaders used coal to heat their homes
  - Coal was used in some of the state's earliest power plants
  - North Dakota currently has eight coal-fired power plants
  - Lignite production has averaged about 30 million tons since the late 1980s.
- Economics
  - 4,000 direct employees and another 13,000 indirect jobs
  - Total business activity for the lignite industry is \$3.5 billion
  - Industry pays annual taxes to the state of about \$100 million.