

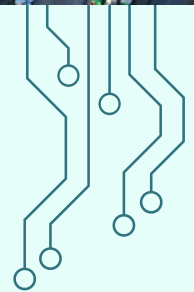
Data Centers & Fracking in PA



Data center: a warehouse-like building containing rows of networked computer servers and equipment used for the remote processing, storage, and distribution of data.

What's Happening in Our State?

Towns across Pennsylvania are currently receiving many proposals for large-scale data center projects, primarily to allow technology companies to power AI tools and cloud computing. These hyperscale facilities can cover thousands of acres of land and require **unprecedented** amounts of energy.



Potential Impacts on Residents and the Environment

Increased Electric Costs

AI data centers demand hundreds of megawatts (MW) or even several gigawatts (GW) of energy. That's as much demand as a mid-size city like Pittsburgh. People in northern Virginia, the "Data Center Capital of the World," are already facing rate hikes as data centers consume more than **25% of the state's electricity.**

Expanded Fracking

A sudden influx of energy intensive data centers will strain resources and is already encouraging more oil and gas development. Many of these facilities are proposed alongside gas-fired power plants, posing additional air pollution concerns. SWPA residents already bear the burdens of fracking in the form of **negative health impacts, disturbances, and stress.**

High Water Usage

Data centers have become a top 10 water consuming industry in the United States. Hyperscale facilities can consume up to **5 million gallons of water per day** to cool their servers. Not all water authorities may be suitable for serving data centers. High water usage could also pose a problem during periods of drought.

Air Pollution

Data centers are often equipped with backup diesel generators, which kick on during power outages or routine testing. These noisy generators produce **particulate matter and nitrogen dioxide**, which can cause breathing problems in exposed populations.

Noise and Light Pollution

Data centers emit constant, low-frequency noise, which can affect physical and mental health. **Cryptocurrency mines are especially loud.** Careful siting and design is necessary to prevent data centers from emitting nuisance noise.



What Can Our Leaders Do to Protect Us?

Local Government

Local municipalities can enact protective ordinances to regulate data centers, taking actions such as restricting them to industrial zones, establishing mandatory setbacks from residential zones, and setting noise and light limitations.

The PA Public Utility Commission (PUC)

The PUC held a public hearing on interconnection and tariffs for large load customers, i.e. data centers, and is developing a model tariff to protect ratepayers from undue costs. This model tariff will serve as a nonbinding recommendation to PA utilities.

The PA Legislature

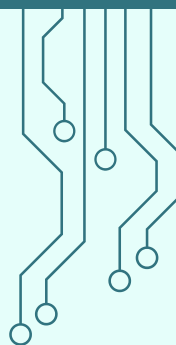
It's up to our legislature to create binding regulation for utilities and companies across our state. Many bills have been introduced to address data center impacts. Tell your legislator why this issue is important to you!

Resources to Learn More

- Visit www.protectpt.info/data-center-videos to browse our playlist of educational videos and webinars.
- See where data centers have been proposed across the country: www.fractracker.org/2025/07/national-data-centers-tracker/
- Learn about policy interventions to slow data center expansion: <https://datacenters.ainowinstitute.org/>

Not-So-Fun Facts:

- 1 Each 100-word email generated by an AI Chatbot using GPT-4 requires **519 milliliters of water** for cooling, which is more than 1 standard bottle of water.
- 2 AI data centers could pose a significant roadblock to a clean and healthy energy future, **stalling decarbonization** and climate change mitigation efforts.
- 3 Data centers create the **lowest number of jobs per square foot** when compared to other large facilities like office parks, warehouses, or factories.



Want to Get Involved?

Sign up for email updates on our data centers campaign at www.protectpt.info/data-centers-interest-form

Visit www.protectpt.org/data-center

Email info@protectpt.org or call (724) 392-7023 with any questions or concerns!