



Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of Governor Ralph S. Northam

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Office of the Governor

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**Governor Northam Celebrates New
Virginia Department of Energy**

~ New name for team leading Commonwealth's transition to clean economy ~

RICHMOND—Governor Ralph Northam today announced the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy is now the Virginia Department of Energy (Virginia Energy). The name change was passed by the General Assembly and signed by Governor Northam in April 2021. It became official today, October 1st, 2021.

“Virginia is all-in on clean energy,” **said Governor Northam**. “We've passed one of the most sweeping clean energy laws in the country, and we are transitioning our electric grid to 100 percent renewable energy. These are exciting changes, and they mean new jobs, new investment, cleaner air, and a stronger economy.”

The agency's name change and reorganization follows the 2020 Virginia Clean Economy Act. The act establishes a mandatory renewable portfolio standard to achieve 30 percent renewable energy by 2030, a mandatory energy efficiency resource standard, and the path to a carbon-free electric grid by 2045. The bill also declares that 16,100 megawatts of solar and onshore wind, 5,200 megawatts of offshore wind, and 2,700 megawatts of energy storage are in the public interest. This provides a pathway for clean energy resources to be

constructed, while ensuring that the investments are made in a cost-effective way. The Virginia Clean Economy Act protects customers with a program that helps reduce electricity bills and brings energy efficiency savings to low-income households.

The legislation also changed the former Division of Energy to Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency and the former Division of Mined Land Reclamation to Mined Land Repurposing.

“The Virginia Department of Energy has a long history of working with partners across the energy sector and across government at all levels in the Commonwealth,” **said Secretary of Commerce and Trade Brian Ball**. “Collaboration between the agency and these partners will be critical to meeting the climate goals that are so important to all of us. This change reflects the agency’s mission to support clean energy programs and energy infrastructure development.”

The Virginia Department of Energy was reorganized to increase the agency’s focus on clean energy in January 2021. Resources were shifted toward development opportunities associated with the repurposing of previously mined sites. Projects include those in the solar energy, agriculture, recreational, cultural, and industrial sectors.

“This agency will continue to provide a high level of service to our traditional customer base, while enhancing the communities we serve,” **said Virginia Energy Director John Warren**. “The well-timed clean energy movement has allowed us to respond and realign our staff, enabling us to work on new initiatives while keeping our continued customer service.”

The agency’s new website went live today at energy.virginia.gov. Staff emails will also reflect the change, as their domain names will now be “@energy.virginia.gov.”

Virginia Energy was created in 1985 as the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy. At that time, the agency mostly served the mining industries, ensuring the safety of coal, mineral, gas, and oil workers and environmental compliance at each site. It also housed the state’s energy office, which has expanded significantly after the passing of the Virginia Clean Economy Act in 2020.

Virginia Energy has nearly 200 employees across the Commonwealth, with offices in Big Stone Gap, Charlottesville, and Richmond. The agency serves as the U.S. Department of Energy’s Virginia State Energy Office and manages state-based clean energy policy and deployment initiatives. Virginia Energy serves as the regulatory agency for coal and mineral mining, as well as natural gas production. Federal grants are administered by Virginia Energy staff to reclaim historic mines through the Abandoned Mine Land program. It also houses Virginia’s Geology and Mineral Resources program.

Clean energy means jobs, a strong economy, and a future for our children.

