

Geothermal Study Amendments

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Christine F. Watkins

Senate Sponsor:

LONG TITLE**General Description:**

This bill directs the Office of Energy Development to conduct a study to examine the feasibility of developing geothermal energy facilities at or near existing coal-powered electrical generation facilities.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- directs the Office of Energy Development (office) to conduct a study to examine the feasibility of developing geothermal energy facilities at or near existing coal-powered electrical generation facilities;
- requires the office to report annually on or before the November interim meeting to the Public Utilities, Energy, and Technology Interim Committee;
- requires the office to publish the study on the office's website upon completion; and
- provides a repeal date.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:

AMENDS:

63I-2-279, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 258

ENACTS:

79-6-410, Utah Code Annotated 1953

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

Section 1. Section **63I-2-279** is amended to read:

63I-2-279 . Repeal dates: Title 79.

(1) Section 79-2-407, Study of funding for water infrastructure costs, is repealed July 1,

2025.

(2) Subsection 79-4-1002(2), regarding a pilot program for veteran free admission to state parks, is repealed July 1, 2025.

(3) Section 79-6-410, Geothermal energy facilities study, is repealed July 1, 2028.

~~[(3)]~~ (4) Title 79, Chapter 6, Part 14, Energy Project Assessment, is repealed January 1, 2028.

Section 2. Section **79-6-410** is enacted to read:

79-6-410 . Geothermal energy facilities study.

(1) As used in this section, "coal-powered electrical generation facility site" means a location in the state where a facility that generates electricity using coal as a primary fuel source:

(a) is currently operating; or

(b) has ceased operations but retains existing infrastructure suitable for energy generation purposes.

(2) On or before December 31, 2027, the office shall work with the Utah Geological Survey to conduct a study to examine the feasibility of developing geothermal energy facilities at or near coal-powered electrical generation facility sites in the state.

(3) The study described in Subsection (2) shall include, for each coal-powered electrical generation facility site:

(a) an assessment of:

(i) subsurface temperatures;

(ii) steam quality;

(iii) potential electricity production;

(iv) infrastructure suitability;

(v) estimated capital costs; and

(vi) economic and job impacts; and

(b) recommendations for geothermal energy system development.

(4) The office shall publish the study on the office's website upon completion.

(5) The office shall report annually on or before the November interim meeting to the Public Utilities, Energy, and Technology Interim Committee regarding the status of the study.

Section 3. **Effective Date.**

This bill takes effect on May 6, 2026.