

**GEOHERMAL ENERGY PRODUCTION AMENDMENTS**

2024 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Nate Blouin**

House Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill enacts provisions related to the development and use of geothermal energy resources in the state.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- ▶ defines terms;
- ▶ requires the Office of Energy Development to conduct a geothermal resources study; and
- ▶ creates the Utah Geothermal Task Force.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

None

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

AMENDS:

**63I-1-279**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2023, Chapter 211

**79-6-102**, as renumbered and amended by Laws of Utah 2021, Chapter 280

ENACTS:

**79-6-404**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

**79-6-1001**, Utah Code Annotated 1953



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

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

31 **63I-1-279. Repeal dates: Title 79.**

32 (1) Subsection [79-2-201\(2\)\(p\)](#), related to the Heritage Trees Advisory Committee, is  
33 repealed July 1, 2026.

34 (2) Subsection [79-2-201\(2\)\(q\)](#), related to the Utah Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure  
35 Advisory Committee, is repealed July 1, 2027.

36 (3) Subsection [79-2-201\(2\)\(r\)\(i\)](#), related to an advisory council created by the Division  
37 of Outdoor Recreation to advise on boating policies, is repealed July 1, 2024.

38 (4) Subsection [79-2-201\(2\)\(s\)](#), related to the Wildlife Board Nominating Committee, is  
39 repealed July 1, 2028.

40 (5) Subsection [79-2-201\(2\)\(t\)](#), related to regional advisory councils for the Wildlife  
41 Board, is repealed July 1, 2028.

42 (6) Section [79-7-206](#), creating the Utah Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Advisory  
43 Committee, is repealed July 1, 2027.

44 (7) Title 79, Chapter 8, Part 4, Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Grant Program, is  
45 repealed January 1, 2028.

46 (8) Section [79-6-1001](#), creating the Utah Geothermal Task Force, is repealed July 1,  
47 2029.

48 Section 2. Section **79-6-102** is amended to read:

49 **79-6-102. Definitions.**

50 As used in this chapter:

51 (1) "Appointing authority" means:

52 (a) on and before June 30, 2029, the governor; and

53 (b) on and after July 1, 2029, the executive director.

54 (2) "Electrical corporation" means the same as that term is defined in Section [54-2-1](#).

55 [~~2~~] (3) (a) On and before June 30, 2029, "energy advisor" means the governor's  
56 energy advisor appointed under Section [79-6-401](#).

57 (b) On and after July 1, 2029, "energy advisor" means the energy advisor appointed by  
58 the executive director under Section [79-6-401](#).

59            [~~3~~] (4) "Office" means the Office of Energy Development created in Section  
60 79-6-401.

61            [~~4~~] (5) "State agency" means an executive branch:

- 62            (a) department;
- 63            (b) agency;
- 64            (c) board;
- 65            (d) commission;
- 66            (e) division; or
- 67            (f) state educational institution.

68            Section 3. Section 79-6-404 is enacted to read:

69            **79-6-404. Geothermal resources study required.**

70            (1) The office shall conduct a study that includes:

- 71            (a) a thorough geological survey of current estimates of Utah's geothermal resources;
- 72            (b) identification of challenges, cross-industry overlap, costs, well-data capture,
- 73 environmental impacts, and regulatory hurdles associated with accelerating geothermal energy
- 74 development for electric utility use;
- 75            (c) opportunities for integration of geothermal energy into electric utility portfolios;
- 76            (d) areas of workforce development needed for geothermal energy development;
- 77            (e) identification of resources available, including tax credits, tax exemptions, and
- 78 direct financial assistance from loans, grants, or investments;
- 79            (f) recommendations for additional or better targeted incentives, including tax credits,
- 80 tax exemptions, and other incentives; and
- 81            (g) recommendations for accelerating the incorporation of geothermal resources into
- 82 electric utility portfolios.

83            (2) In conducting the study, the office shall consult with state agencies and relevant  
84 stakeholders and may contract with a third party.

85            (3) On or before November 30, 2025, the office shall report findings and  
86 recommendations from the study to the Public Utilities, Energy, and Technology Interim  
87 Committee.

88            Section 4. Section 79-6-1001 is enacted to read:

89            **79-6-1001. Utah Geothermal Taskforce.**

90 (1) There is created within the office the Utah Geothermal Task Force consisting of the  
91 following 13 members:

92 (a) the director of the office, or the director's designee;

93 (b) each of the following, appointed by the office:

94 (i) one representative from a electrical corporation;

95 (ii) one representative from the geothermal energy industry;

96 (iii) one representative from the drilling and fracturing industry;

97 (iv) one representative from a public interest group with experience in energy and  
98 environmental advocacy;

99 (v) one representative from organized labor

100 (vi) one subsurface geologist;

101 (vii) one reservoir engineer; and

102 (viii) one project financing expert;

103 (c) one representative from the House of Representatives, appointed by the speaker of  
104 the House of Representatives;

105 (d) one representative from the Senate, appointed by the president of the Senate;

106 (e) one representative from the Division of Water Rights appointed by the director of  
107 the Division of Water Rights; and

108 (f) one representative from the Division of Oil, Gas, and Mining appointed by the  
109 director of the Division of Oil and Gas.

110 (2) The task force shall:

111 (a) meet at least bi-monthly each calendar year;

112 (b) review findings from the office's geothermal resources study conducted pursuant to  
113 Section [79-6-404](#);

114 (c) analyze geological data related to Utah's geothermal resources; and

115 (d) make recommendations to the office related to accelerating geothermal energy  
116 usage by electrical corporation, including recommendations on training programs, pilot  
117 projects, and financial incentives.

118 (3) The task force shall report annually on or before November 30, to the Public  
119 Utilities, Energy, and Technology Interim Committee on the task force's activities and  
120 recommendations.

121 Section 5. **Effective date.**

122 This bill takes effect on May 1, 2024.