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Does New York City Need More Gas Pipelines?



The Indian Point nuclear plant north of New York City, set to be shut down in 2021.

Industry study says steps must be taken to offset closing of Indian Point nuke.

Fracking may be a dirty word in **New York State** – where it is banned – but a new industry study predicts that **New York City**'s high consumption of **natural gas** will continue to move in one direction: straight up.

The report, called **“[Electricity Outlook](#),”** was released this week by the **New York Building Congress, Crain's**[reports](#). It states that 81.5 percent of the electricity now coursing through the city grid comes from natural gas, and the appetite for the fossil fuel will go up as the city's population increases and the two **Indian Point** nuclear reactors – which now produce a quarter of the electricity used in **Westchester County** and **New York City** – are mothballed in 2021. Many New York co-ops and

condos have recently converted their boilers from oil to natural gas, increasing the appetite for the cleaner fossil fuel.

"The state and city should work together to convene a working group of key stakeholders, including utilities and natural-gas suppliers, to develop a strategy for the planning and approval of new natural-gas pipelines directly into New York City," the report recommends.

The report lists its underwriters as **Consolidated Edison**, Indian Point owner **Entergy**, the Cuomo-controlled **New York Power Authority**, and real estate company **Rudin Management**. It names gas provider **National Grid** and the **General Contractors Association of New York**, which represents unionized building firms, as supporters.

With **cogen** systems and **solar panels** [gaining popularity with New York City co-ops and condos](#) – as well as in large commercial structures – environmental groups have argued that Indian Point's power can be replaced by renewable energy, projects to make the electric grid more efficient, and conservation measures. But there are skeptics.

"If you shut down Indian Point," says **Lewis Kwit**, president of the consultancy **Energy Investment Systems**, "you're not going to make it up with conservation and renewable energy."

The answer might be more natural gas pipelines, as "Electricity Outlook" suggests, to import the fuel from Canada and out of state. Or the answer might be more power plants.