

Conversations Conferences



on Nebraska
Environment
and Sustainability

Energy: Questions to Explore

Questions to Trigger Exploration and Learning

- What are all the ways we consumed energy, directly and indirectly, during the course of one day, say, yesterday?
- With increasing demand for energy and global energy supply pushing its limits, what can we in Nebraska do to become more resilient to a future of a strained energy supply reflected in increased energy prices?

For example, if we look gasoline consumption. . .

What would the impact on our economy and lifestyle if gas reached \$6/gallon?

- What aspect of my life would I have to change if gas reached \$6 per gallon?
- What are ways our community can build its resilience to withstand the impacts of \$6/gallon gasoline?
- What are other ways we can increase our resiliency to decreasing energy supply and higher energy cost?

Questions to Trigger Ideas for Change, New Action

- What actions can I take today to reduce the amount of energy I consume? What practices can I initiate where I work, and in my community, that could reduce energy consumption?
- What recommendations for action can we formulate today, to be shared with whom, when, and how best that could influence:
 - Energy consumption practices among everyday citizens of Nebraska?
 - City, state and federal policies that impact energy consumption practices??

Background Reference Questions

- What educational opportunities can we encourage/initiate (sorry) that would serve to inform everyday citizens, including children and youth, as well as professional service providers about energy issues and sustainable energy practices in Nebraska?
- How viable are sustainable sources of energy in Nebraska? What constitutes a sustainable energy source? What are our best options? What can we do to speed up movement toward development/use of sustainable energy options?
- Are you ready for higher energy prices? Is your workplace ready for increased operating costs due to higher energy bills?
- Why, in the context and history of “public power” has Nebraska turned over the development of renewable power sources to private interests, as opposed to making public investments in the development of alternative sources for both export sales and local consumption?
- When will Nebraska establish “Carbon Emission” goals and guidelines (for communities, cities, commerce and industries)?
- Why do we not have either a public utilities, or a State sponsored strategy, for managing community and urban growth in the demand for energy without relying upon coal-fired generation? (For example, an “Energy Conservation Increment Financing” program, similar to the existing Tax Increment Financing Incentives to urban development)?
- Is it possible to dispassionately study the pros/cons of more nuclear energy generation?

continued

- Is it possible to thoroughly study the pros/cons of moving from a “centralized, big system of power generation” to a decentralized system of generators? (For instance, farm based renewable generators, and commercial and institutional buildings that generate more electrical power than they consume.)
- Nebraska has some of the best natural assets of wind and solar sources of power production in North America. Why are there not more programs to incentivize more rapid development of the resources?
- Eighty-five to ninety percent of the existing building stock in the state will still exist in 50 years. These buildings are the largest users of energy. Why are there not more programs to incentivize energy efficient retrofits of our existing buildings?
- In Lincoln and Omaha why could we not use the streets and public right-of-ways, and public lands for well fields for geothermal energy systems for retrofitted existing buildings?