

# Electric power thermal generating station fuel consumption, 2020 (final)

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In 2020, electric utility thermal plants in Canada generated 183.2 million megawatt-hours (MWh) of electricity, down 5.4% or 10.5 million MWh from 2019.

While there were offsetting movements of major thermal fuel sources, thermal electric generation declined in 2020, in part due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent fall in demand. Coal, uranium and natural gas continued to be the largest fuel sources used in 2020. Combined, these fuel types accounted for 95.9% of the total thermal generation of electricity.

Among the thermal fuel sources, coal showed the largest decline, with a drop of 19.3% or 8.6 million MWh in 2020. Generation from coal was the lowest level since 2005 at 35.9 million MWh. Coal generation fell in all provinces with the largest provincial decline in Alberta (-19.1% or -5.3 million MWh).

At the national level, Alberta accounted for 61.5% of the total decline in coal based electricity generation, with Saskatchewan accounting for a further 24.9% of the decline.

Uranium was the second-largest contributor to the decline in electricity generation through thermal plants, falling 3.8% or 3.7 million MWh. This decrease was mainly attributable to a combination of lower demand, refurbishment and maintenance at certain nuclear stations in Ontario in 2020.

Natural gas was the only major thermal fuel source with a year-over-year increase in 2020, of 4.3% or 2.0 million MWh. Among the provinces that showed a decrease in coal based electricity generation, there was a rise in use of natural gas as a source of thermal electricity generation. This is a pattern that has continued for a third consecutive year.

## Note to readers

The *Annual Survey of Electric Power Thermal Generating Station Fuel Consumption* provides data on the amount of fuel consumed by thermal generating plants, the cost of the fuel consumed for electric power generation, and the amount of electricity generated from these fuels.

Data for 2019 have been revised.

The *Annual Survey of Electric Power Thermal Generating Station Fuel Consumption* is now administered as part of Statistics Canada's *Integrated Business Statistics Program (IBSP)*. Detailed information about the IBSP is available from the *Behind the data* module of our website.

Visit the [Energy statistics portal](#) to find data, tools and reports to provide you with the latest information on energy in Canada.

Available tables: [25-10-0017-01](#) to [25-10-0019-01](#) .

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [2196](#).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca)) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; [STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca)).

