



MINNESOTA DATA CENTERS: **MAKE BIG TECH PAY**

THE PROBLEM

YOUR BILLS ARE RISING & BIG TECH IS TO BLAME

Big Tech companies like **Amazon, Apple, Google, Meta, Microsoft, and OpenAI** are racing to build massive data centers across the country to power artificial intelligence (AI). These facilities are big-time electricity guzzlers, and all that power costs money at a time when families are already stretched by grocery, gas, and housing costs. Big Tech isn't paying for it – **you are**.

Average Minnesota electric bills rose by **6.8%** in 2025, an increase of roughly **\$90** per household.¹

The data center load already planned by Xcel and Great River – about **2,300 megawatts** – is roughly equal to **every household in Minnesota combined**, and Xcel is seeking a **13.2% rate increase**.²

Data center growth could raise electricity bills by as much as **25%** in some regional markets.³

THEY PROFIT. YOU PAY.

BIG TECH CASHES IN

\$116 million a year in
Minnesota tax breaks, now
locked in as late as 2077⁵

YOU PAY

+\$90 more on your electric
bill in 2025¹

BIG TECH GETS MILLIONS. YOU GET HIGHER BILLS

Taxpayers are subsidizing the data center boom, through backroom deals for subsidies, tax incentives, and special treatment that amount to **giveaways to Big Tech**.

Data centers nationwide receive industry-specific **tax breaks** that shift costs onto households and small businesses.⁴

Minnesota's 2025 data center law ended the sales tax break on electricity – but it **extended** the exemption on equipment and software out to as late as **2077**. That break still costs about **\$116 million a year**.⁵

THE JOB CREATION MYTH

FEWER JOBS. RISING COSTS

"Tech companies are investing hundreds of billions of dollars in data centers across the country. But despite the record-setting price tags, the centers create few jobs."

NPR'S ALL THINGS CONSIDERED⁶

Big Tech promises economic development, but data centers create **few permanent local jobs** while raising costs for existing small businesses.

Data centers are among the least labor-intensive structures in the economy, generating roughly **one permanent job per 5,000 square feet**.⁷

Meta's Rosemount campus – **715,000 square feet** and **\$800 million** – supports about **100 permanent jobs**. The law's prevailing wage protections cover the workers who **build** a data center, not the ones who run it.⁸

THE SECRECY

THEY'RE HIDING WHO THEY ARE

Local officials are forced to sign **non-disclosure agreements**, and companies **sue towns that say no**.^{10 11}

In Hermantown, a Google project ran under the code name **"Project Loon"** and stayed hidden from the public for a year, until a newspaper obtained the records.⁹

In Pine Island, officials bound by non-disclosure agreements knew for **two years** before residents did. The area's own state senator was told the day before it became public.⁹

PUBLIC OPINION

MINNESOTANS OVERWHELMINGLY OPPOSE BIG TECH'S DEMANDS

A September 2025 survey found **74% of Minnesotans** would support a law holding Big Tech accountable for the energy use and environmental harm caused by massive data centers.¹²

Nationally, **71% of Americans** oppose building an AI data center in their local area – **more than oppose a nuclear power plant** nearby (53%).¹³

Overall, **85% of Americans** want lawmakers to pass a law that forces Big Tech, not taxpayers, to pay for the true cost of data centers.¹⁴

WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE

- **Big Tech creates these costs, so Big Tech should pay them.** Not the family down the road, and not the small business trying to keep the lights on.
- Stop the false choice between community investment and giving trillion-dollar companies **blank checks**. Force tech giants to pay for their data centers, instead of hardworking Minnesotans.
- Pass **real state-level ratepayer protections** into law and end the billions in annual state and local tax breaks for data center construction. That's money that should fund schools, healthcare, and strategic, sustainable long-term economic development.
- Minnesota passed a bipartisan law in 2025 that ended the tax break on the electricity data centers burn and ordered regulators to create a **very large customer class** by **December 15**. Regulators have started, setting the threshold at 100 megawatts for the state's largest utility. But the same law **extended the equipment tax break** for decades.¹⁵
- **End the remaining exemption** rather than letting it run to 2077, and hold regulators to the December deadline with a definition that covers **every utility** – so the costs land on the data centers that cause them, at every company, not just the biggest one.¹⁵

MAKE BIG TECH PAY!

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