

A [new report](#) finds lots of room for energy efficiency in the American South.

Here are the main findings. Energy efficiency improvements could:

1. *Prevent energy consumption from growing over the next 20 years.* In the absence of such initiatives, energy consumption in these three sectors is forecast to grow by approximately 16 percent between 2010 and 2030.
2. *Generate new jobs, cut utility bills and sustain economic growth.* Overall utility bills would be reduced by \$41 billion each year in 2020 and \$71 billion in 2030; the average residential electricity bills would decline by \$26 per month in 2020 and \$50 per month in 2030; electricity rate increases would be moderated; and 380,000 new jobs would be created by 2020 (annual job growth increases to 520,000 new jobs in 2030). The region's economy is anticipated to grow by \$1.23 billion in 2020 and \$2.12 billion in 2030.
3. *Reduce the need for new power plants.* Almost 25 gigawatts of older power plants would be retired and the construction of up to 50 gigawatts of new plants (equal to the amount of electricity produced by 100 power plants) would be avoided.
4. *Result in substantial water conservation.* The reduction in power plant capacity would save southern NERC regions 8.6 billion gallons of freshwater in 2020 and 20.1 billion gallons in 2030.