The Texas AG's office seems to do little else besides battle against EPA, and Texas Senator Ted Cruz is in the vanguard of anti-environmentalism. Yet even in Texas there are some rays of hope. While Texas is attacking the Clean Power Plan, the city of Houston is leading a coalition of cities defending it.

Other cities are taking action for non-environmental reasons. The city of Georgetown, Texas, for instance, has announced plans to become 100% renewable. Lest there be any misunderstanding, the major hastens to explain that "environmental zealots have not taken over our city council. . . Our move to wind and solar is chiefly a business decision based on cost and price stability."

A similar move is taking place in Denton, Texas, while El Paso and San Antonio are phasing out coal. (see here for more details) Energy efficiency is another area where Texas does well, with a recent study putting Houston, Dallas and San Antonio in the top twenty U.S. cities for energy efficiency, with El Paso and Fort Worth not far behind.

People are often surprised to learn that Texas is the national leader in wind power, with the twice the generating capacity of any other state. On one notable night last December, the state got 45% of its power from wind, though the year-round average was only about 10%. Texas was one of the first states to adopt a renewable portfolio standard and has invested heavily in transmission capacity for wind. Coal is only 28% of the generation mix, a bit more than nuclear and wind combined, with almost half of Texas energy produced by natural gas.

None of this is to deny that the general political atmosphere in Texas remains anti-environmental. Maybe that will shift as climate change begins to have a greater impact there. As a coastal state, Texas will be impacted by sea level rise, which will amplify current storms risks in places like Houston, while the state will also suffer from growing temperatures and up to 4500 additional heat-related deaths per year. In the meantime, however, it's good to know that there are actually some positive developments already taking place in the Lone Star State.