

Could Spain's Electricity Meltdown Be Coming to a State Near You?

0

0

Save



A woman uses her phone's torch while she walks her dog during a massive blackout affecting the entire Iberian Peninsula on April 28, 2025. Miguel Riopa/AFP via Getty Images



By Diana Furchtgott-Roth
5/16/2025 Updated: 5/16/2025

A A Print

Commentary

Spain's electricity supply went down last month due to cascading failures traced to faults in two [solar plants](#) in Spain's southwest region, causing a blackout on the Iberian Peninsula. Americans should not be complacent because the North American Electric Reliability

Corp., a nonprofit international regulatory authority, [has warned](#) that it might happen in the United States.

On April 28, the day of the Spanish meltdown, [solar provided 59 percent of electricity](#), [wind about 12 percent](#), and [nuclear and gas approximately 22 percent](#). When the two solar plants went down, insufficient backup, or inertia, was available to keep the system going.

The sun shines and the wind blows for free, but providing electricity to people with [intermittent renewables](#), such as wind and solar, is more difficult than with baseload power, such as coal, natural gas, and nuclear power.

The North American Electric Reliability Corp. forecasts inadequate current U.S. [electricity supplies](#) as coal and some gas-fired generators face retirement and energy demand is growing due to data centers and artificial intelligence technology. America faces high and elevated risks of shortages from 2025 to 2029.

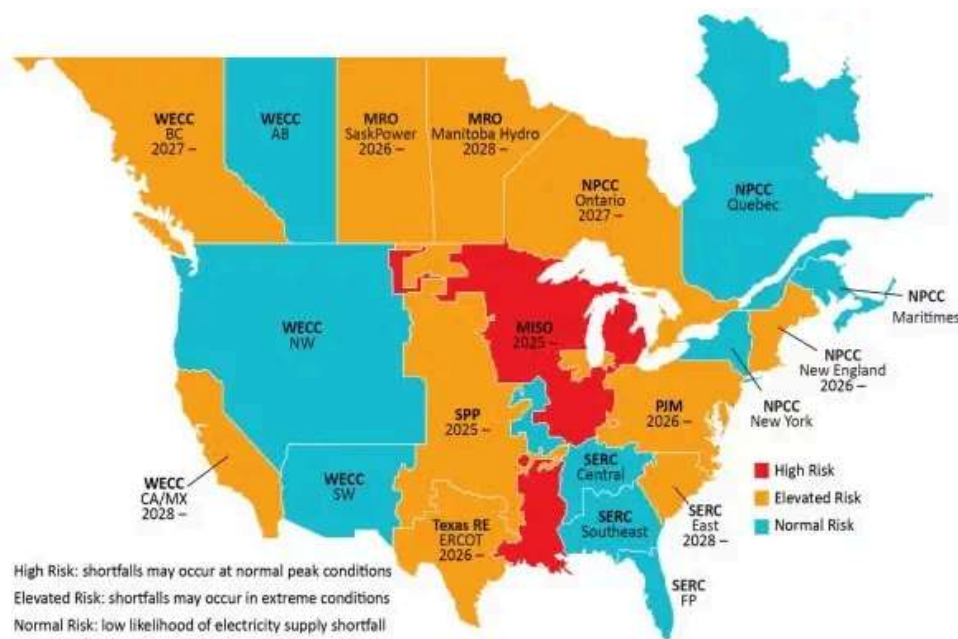


Figure 1: Risk Area Summary 2025–2029

For instance, in 2025 the Midcontinent Independent System Operator, which provides electricity for 15 states from Wisconsin to Louisiana, may suffer a [shortage of electricity](#) in the high-demand months of summer and winter.

Europe's solar and wind power receives subsidies from the European Union. In America, [Inflation Reduction Act](#) subsidies for wind and solar, now being reconsidered by Congress, are central to the problem. Continuous, dense power from gas, coal, and nuclear is needed to back up renewables. But since these do not get tax subsidies, there is less incentive for companies to invest in them.

The danger of potential blackouts is why President Donald Trump declared an energy emergency on his first day back in office and has called for ending the Inflation Reduction Act subsidies.

As well as requesting an end to the act's tax credits, he is taking several steps to avert the blackouts forecast in the regulatory report. These steps could also be emulated by Europeans if they want to ensure a reliable grid.

The president has asked the Environmental Protection Agency to end rules that require coal-fired and new natural gas-fired power plants to close if they cannot bury 90 percent of the carbon dioxide emissions. The combination of ending the subsidies for renewables and keeping open the existing power plants should avert the blackouts forecast in the report.

Trump is reopening Alaska to [oil development](#) and is fast-tracking permitting for fossil fuel projects, so approvals come in 28 days or fewer. He has asked the EPA to reconsider the finding that greenhouse gases such as CO₂ and methane are pollutants.

On the international front, Trump has ordered the United States to withdraw from the [Paris Agreement](#) and other associated U.N. agreements, a process that takes a year.

The real winner from renewable energy use is China, which makes a significant share of turbines and panels used in renewable energy generation, as well as batteries for solar backup and electric vehicles. Trump's China tariffs, as well as removal of the tax credits, should tilt American energy policy in a more resilient direction.

The blackout in Spain is a wake-up call about the risks of relying too much on solar and wind. America could face similar problems, especially with energy demand increasing. The president is taking steps to prevent blackouts by cutting subsidies for renewables; keeping existing power plants running; rolling back some environmental rules; and pulling out of net-zero international agreements.

The goal is to make sure America has a reliable power supply, learning from Spain's problems.

Reprinted by permission from [The Daily Signal](#), a publication of [The Heritage Foundation](#).

Views expressed in this article are opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.

Sign up for the Epoch Opinion newsletter. Our team of Canadian and international thought leaders take you beyond the headlines and trends that shape our world.

[Sign up with 1-click >>](#)



Diana Furchtgott-Roth

Author

Diana Furchtgott-Roth is an economist who is adjunct professor of economics at George Washington University, where she teaches Transportation Economics. From 2019 to 2021, she was Deputy Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology at the U.S. Department of Transportation. Prior to joining USDOT, Furchtgott was Acting Assistant Secretary for Economic Policy at the U.S. Department of Treasury. She has been a senior fellow and director of Economics21 at the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research. She previously served as chief economist of the U.S. Department of Labor; chief of staff of the President's Council of Economic Advisers; and deputy executive director of the Domestic Policy Council. She is the director of the Center for Energy, Climate and Environment and the Herbert and Joyce Morgan Fellow at The Heritage Foundation. Furchtgott is also president of Furchtgott International and the author or coauthor of six books and hundreds of articles on economic policy, most recently "United States Income, Consumption, Wealth, and Inequality" (2020). She received her BA in economics from Swarthmore College and her M.Phil. in economics from Oxford University.



[WEBSITE](#)

Author's Selected Articles

Biden's Latest Power Plant Power Grab

Apr 26, 2024



Biden's Ill-Advised Alaska Oil Ban Bodes Continued Pain at Pump

Apr 22, 2024



A Lesson for America: Green Policies Crush German Economy

Mar 12, 2024



Senate Opens Door to Massive Carbon Tax Despite Critical Economic Concerns

Jan 23, 2024



