

Where Does Burbank's Power Come From?

Burbank Water and Power gets electricity from a number of sources, using a wide variety of technologies and fuels, located in California, Arizona, Nevada, Washington, Wyoming, and Utah. Here is one.....



Few power generation facilities are as iconic or inspire as much awe as the Hoover Dam. First envisioned in the early 1900s and constructed between 1930 and 1935 during the Great Depression, the Hoover Dam produces power using 17 hydroelectric turbines rated at 2,080 megawatts (MW) in aggregate. Hoover Dam straddles the Arizona-Nevada border, with one set of turbines on the Arizona side and the other set on the Nevada side.

The facility is currently operated by the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), part of the federal Department of the Interior. With 53 hydroelectric facilities in total, USBR is the second largest producer of hydroelectric power in the western United States.

BWP has been a participant in Hoover since the facility's commissioning in 1936. Burbank's share in Hoover is calculated as approximately 20 MW and is primarily used for reserves, helping BWP ensure

that Burbank's lights will stay on even if there is a problem somewhere else in the electric system.

In recent months, however, drought conditions have reduced the plant's capacity (and, with it, that 20 MW number) somewhat.

The original Hoover contracts had a term of 50 years, running to 1987. Congress extended these contracts to 2017 and then again to 2067.

Water is stored behind the dam forming Lake Mead and is released through the turbines when electricity is needed. The USBR also releases water for river management and environmental purposes.

Although Hoover is a hydroelectric facility, it does not count towards BWP's compliance with California's Renewable Energy Standards which mandate that California utilities procure a significant portion of their energy from renewable sources.