

Amicus Brief



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Diane Denham

Rural Resident Osage County, KS

I'm Diane Denham. I am part of the amicus brief, supporting the civil case out of Jackson County, Kansas, regarding the, environmental impact of industrial solar, complexes and, I am a resident of Osage County. I've lived here for 20 years and moved to Osage County for the, rural hometown feel and to get away from the industrialized

Osage County, Kansas also has a 25 year moratorium on utility-scale solar, which was implemented in January of 2025. So with those two in effect, there should be no, activity coming in from industrial solar, developers in Osage County.

My concerns, are environmental impact studies. Have they really been done? We do not believe that they have done any of them. One concern is runoff. There is actually a creek that runs through part of the utility-scale solar leased property in Osage, it runs right into Malvern Lake, where some of the surrounding communities get their water. If anything should happen, with the toxins coming off of the solar project, either from hail, storms that could cause toxicity to be released from the panels, and sediment runoff into Malvern Lake, that would be very bad environmentally.

Another concern is fire danger. The energy companies say, large scale solar facility fires are exceedingly rare. However, I did a quick search and there have been quite a few fires. In fact, I have a little quote here from Insurance Business magazine, and it states fire is a major hidden danger for solar farms. Renewable energy providers underestimate this critical risk. Experts say. To be clear, fire risk is present across all utility scale, high voltage renewable business, and renewables.

The, clean energy development manager at Far Trace International was the quote on that one. And he said fire risks cannot be totally engineered out as a result of fire, wind and hail exposure years. Insurance companies will likely start increasing rates or just dropping insurance for properties bordering near solar fields. Now there are several homes nearby, some, you know, adjoining property, some right across the road from where these leased, properties are going to have solar panels.

That could be really bad if they did catch on fire. Osage County has seven volunteer fire departments, but most of their equipment is pretty old. And I don't think that they would be able to handle, any kind of solar panel fires or grass fires resulting from them.

With regards to utility-scale solar facility fires. If it's electrical, a special type of foam is needed to fight fires. And it's pretty dangerous for the firefighters as well. I've been told that the foam is so toxic that some of the firefighters are now getting cancer from using it. Think about this....if the foam goes into the ground and gets in the groundwater you're going to have toxicity in the water.

As far as what large scale solar projects do to communities, it pits neighbor against neighbor. Everyone says, well, they have a right to do what they want to with their property. Yes, they do, unless it damages their neighbor or the community as a whole. And these industrial solar complexes definitely do all of that.

There are health issues. There are property value issues. No one will want to buy property near to those solar panels. Also, there is dirty electricity that can come off of the, transmission lines, just a lot of health issues. These potential issues should not be imposed upon the neighbors. The non-participating neighbors of utility-scale solar.

Please keep our counties' agricultural and rural residential. Please don't let them turn into industrial solar complexes.