

Synapse Electricity Snapshot 2026

A review of the U.S. electric system through December 2025

May 2026

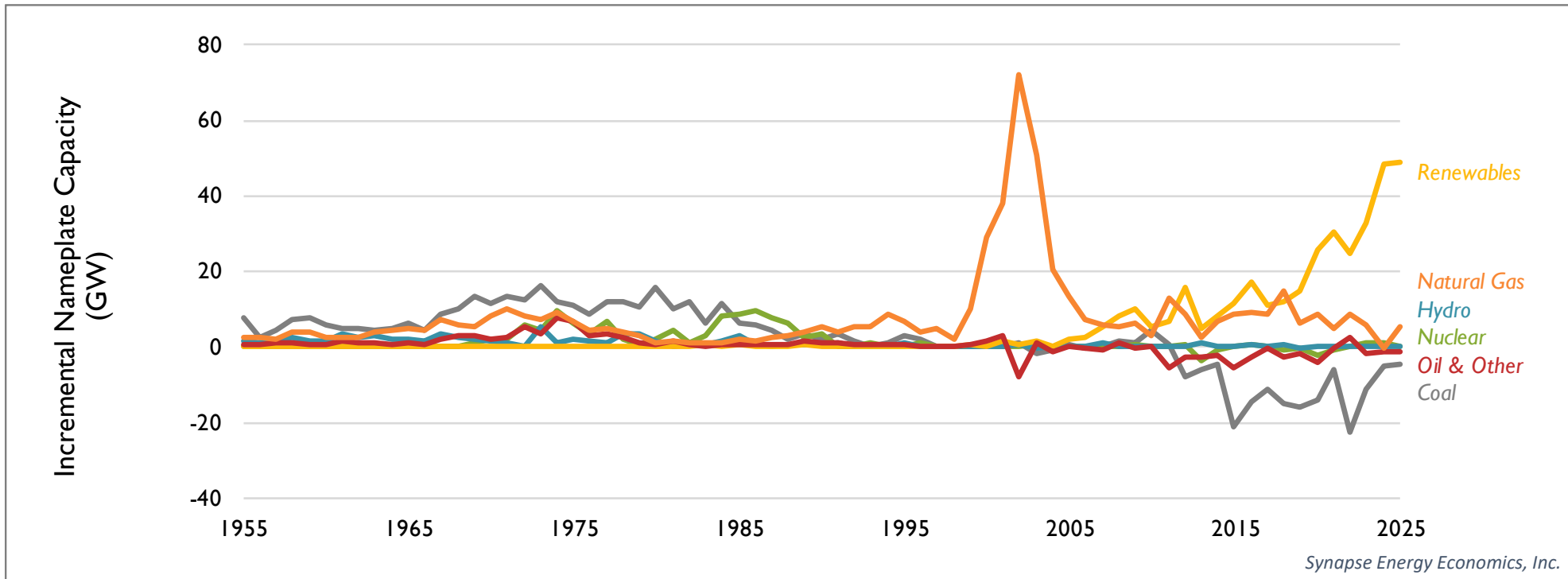
Pat Knight | pknight@synapse-energy.com

Synapse Electricity Snapshot 2026

- Renewable capacity (inclusive of wind, solar, and battery-storage resources) continues to climb. The United States added 49 GW of renewables in 2025, with over 70 GW slated to come online in 2026.
- Non-CO₂-emitting resources (renewables, nuclear, and hydro) make up 41 percent of the nationwide capacity and accounts for 41 percent of all generation.
- In both 2024 to 2025, annual sales increased by more than 2 percent, driven by greater commercial sales (linked to increased deployment of large loads such as data centers) and greater residential sales.
- Electric sector CO₂ emissions remained flat at about 1.5 billion metric tons. Since reaching an all-time peak in 2007, electric sector CO₂ emissions have declined to one of the lowest observed levels since the 1970s.
- Since 1990, CO₂ emitted per dollar of GDP has decreased by 65 percent, from 0.13 to 0.04 kg per dollar.

All values in this document are based on preliminary 2025 data and are subject to future updates and revisions.

More new capacity continues to come from renewables than from any other resource



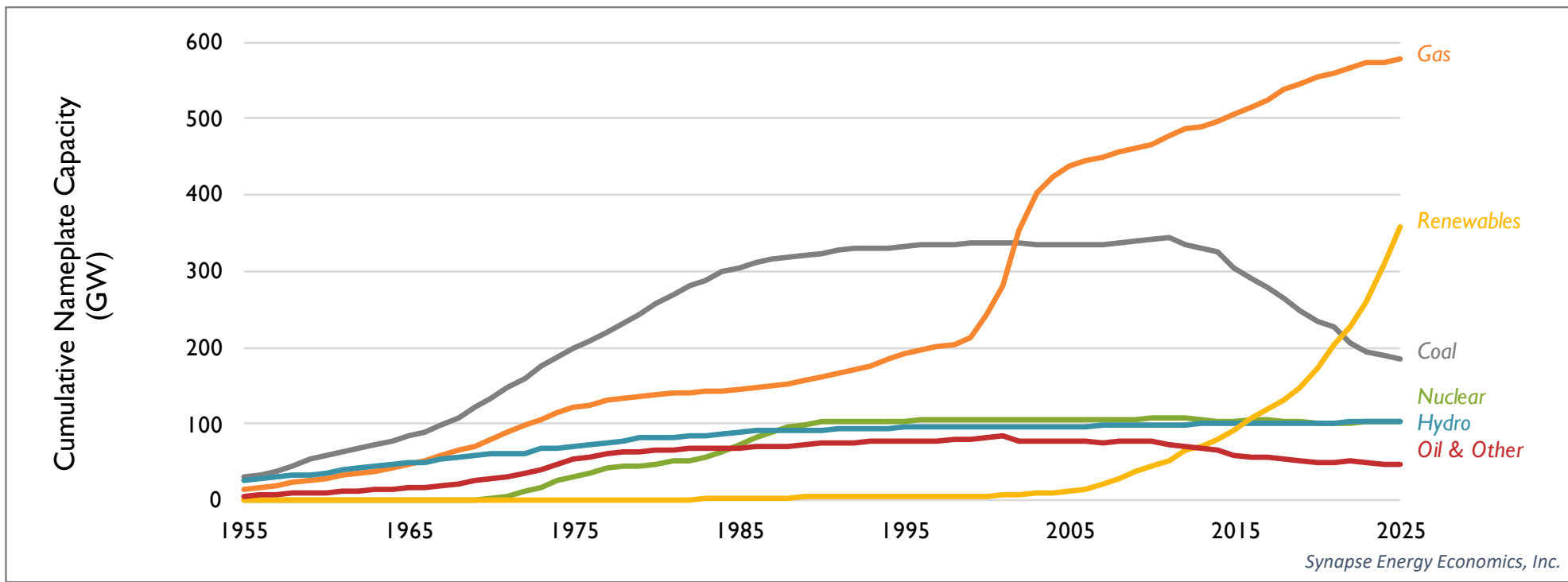
Note: This figure displays net nameplate values for utility-scale generators; annual capacity retirements are subtracted from annual capacity additions.

In this and all other figures, "Renewables" contains wind, solar, geothermal, and storage. "Oil and Other" contains oil, biomass, and other misc. fuel types.

New renewable capacity installations in 2025 increased slightly compared 2024 at 49 GW. [Data from EIA](#) suggests that the number of new renewable capacity installations in 2026 will grow, with 8 GW already installed through March, and a further 61 GW under construction.

Coal retirements continued, leading to 185 GW of coal online in 2025, down from a peak of 344 GW in 2011.

The amount of renewable capacity now exceeds the historical maximum amount of coal capacity



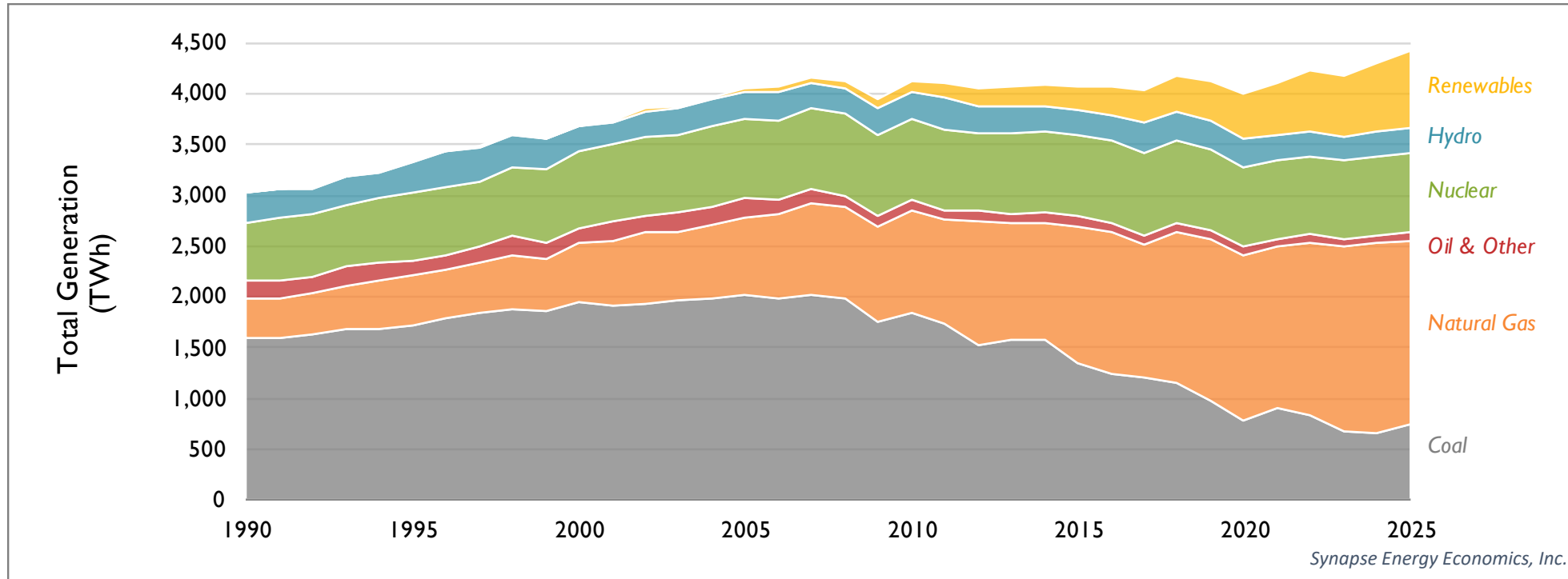
Note: This figure displays net nameplate values for utility-scale generators; annual capacity retirements are subtracted from annual capacity additions.

In 2025, renewable resources exceeded one-quarter of total U.S. generating capacity.

In the 10 years since 2016, renewables have increased by 250 GW, compared to a 64 GW increase in natural gas capacity over the same period.

106 GW of coal was retired over this same 10-year period.

Coal generation remains low, reaching the third-lowest year on record

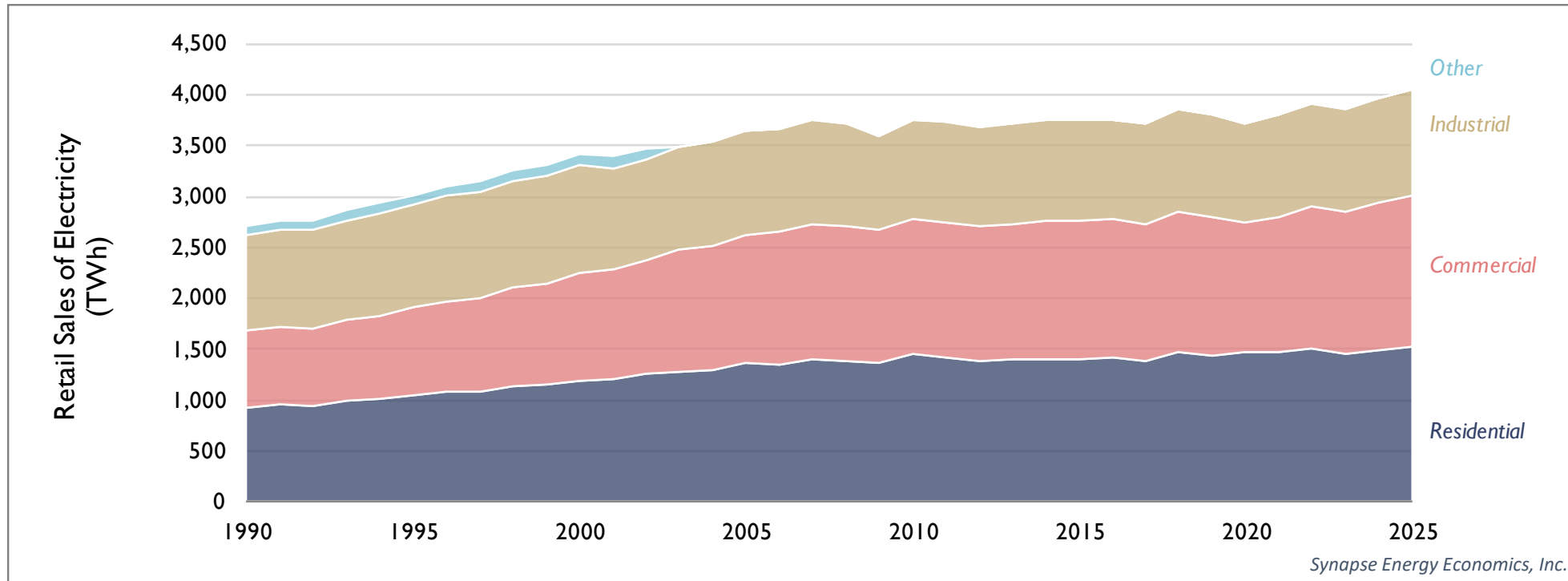


In 2025, coal generation rose slightly compared to output in 2024. Coal continues to make up about one-sixth of electricity generation in the U.S.

Non-emitting generation (renewables, hydro, and nuclear) made up 41 percent of total generation in 2025.

In the 10 years since 2016, generation has increased by 0.9 percent on an annual average basis, with larger increases in the two most recent years.

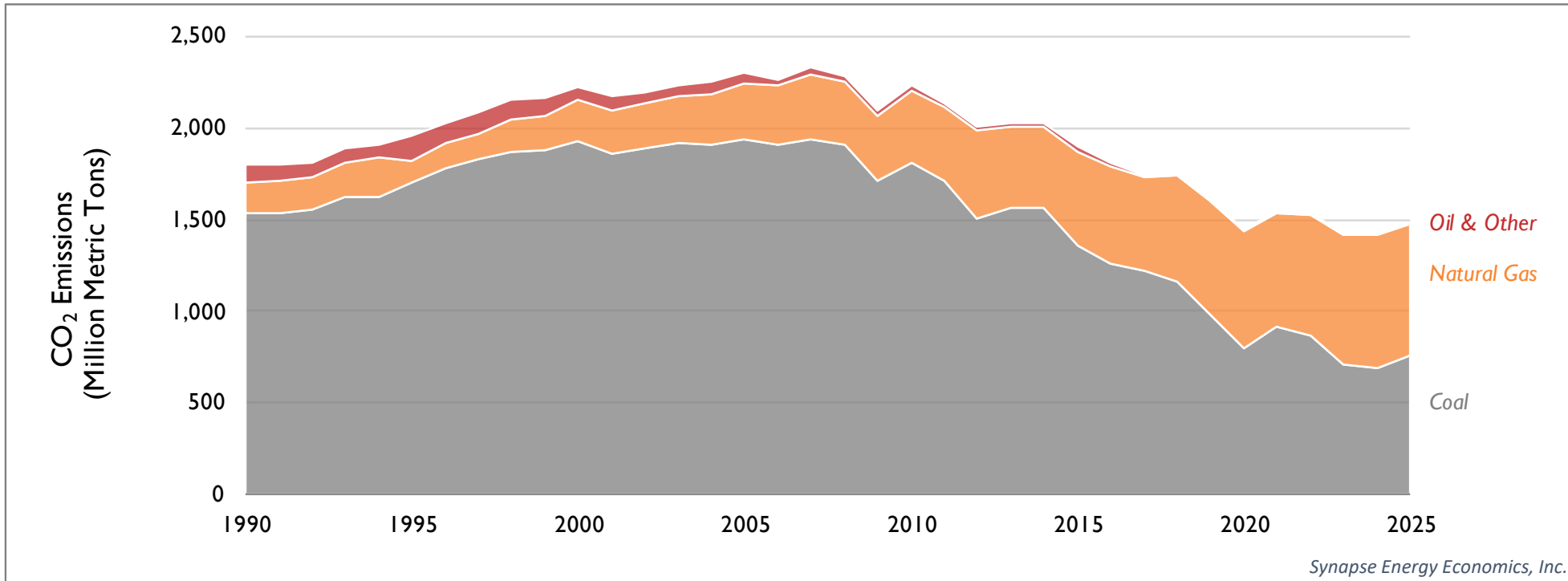
Retail sales have grown by 1.8 percent over the past five years



In many states, sustained lower sales are linked to increases in energy efficiency measures and behind-the-meter solar.

Annual sales increased by more than 2 percent per year in both 2024 and 2025, due to growth in the commercial sector (likely associated with large loads like data centers) and the residential sector.

Total U.S. electric-sector CO₂ emissions increased slightly from 2024 to 2025.

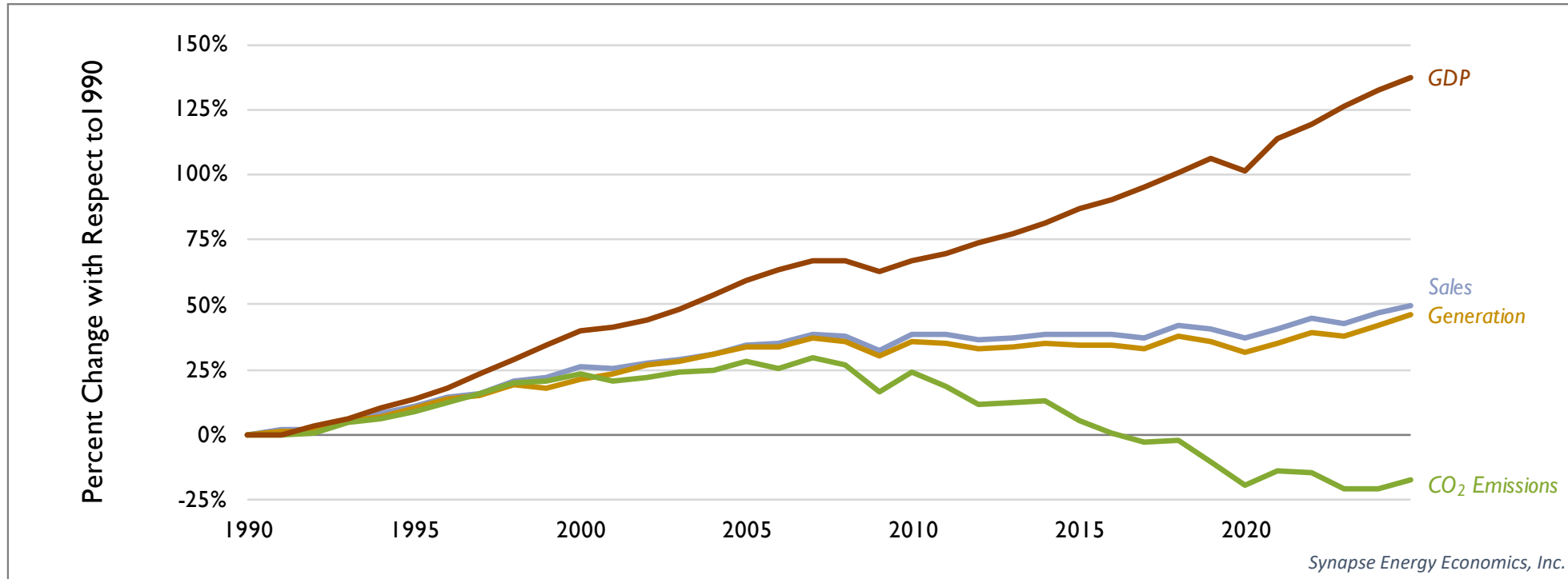


Note: Emissions in 1995 and later years are only inclusive of CO₂ emissions from plants larger than 25 MW.

Electric sector CO₂ emissions increased in 2025, relative to 2024. Annual electric sector CO₂ emissions were the fourth lowest of any year since the early 1980s.

Since hitting an all-time peak in 2007, CO₂ emissions from the electric sector have dropped by 36 percent.

Growth in GDP remains unrelated to growth in CO₂ emissions



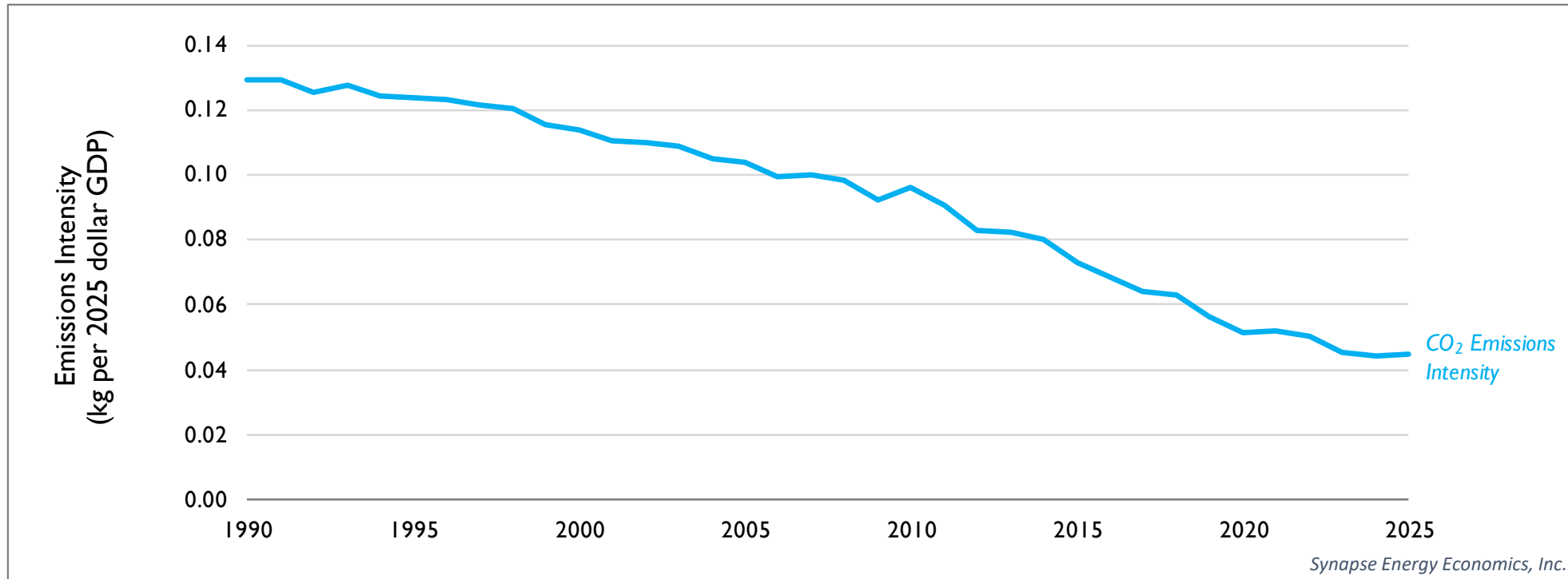
Note: Values for GDP have been adjusted for inflation and are in constant-year dollars.

GDP grew by 2.1 percent compared to 2024. GDP has increased by 137 percent compared to 1990.

Meanwhile, CO₂ emissions are 18 percent below 1990 levels.

Retail sales and generation have grown by 46–50 percent since 1990, with larger growth in the past five years.

Carbon intensity (CO₂ per GDP) continues to decline



Since 1990, the kg of CO₂ emitted per dollar of GDP has fallen by 65 percent, from 0.13 to just over 0.04 kg/\$, and has remained stable over the past three years.

Notes and Sources

- All 2025 values are preliminary and are subject to future updates and revisions.
- “Renewables” contains wind, solar, geothermal, and storage, unless defined otherwise.
- “Oil and Other” contains oil, biomass, petcoke, solid waste, landfill gas, tires, purchases, and other miscellaneous fuel types.

Generation: All generation values are utility scale and do not include distributed generation (e.g., rooftop PV) or energy efficiency. Generation values are from the U.S. Energy Information Agency (EIA), form EIA 923, 1990–2025.

Capacity: All capacity values are utility-scale nameplate capacity. These values do not include distributed generation (e.g., rooftop PV) or energy efficiency. Capacity values are from EIA 860 and EIA Electric Power Monthly, 2001–2025.

Sales: Prior to 2003, “other” sales included sales to transportation, public street and highway lighting, sales to public authorities, agricultural irrigations, and other miscellaneous sales. After 2003, this category only includes sales to transportation—all other miscellaneous sales types were re-distributed to either the industrial, commercial, or residential sectors. Sales values are from EIA 826, 1990–2025.

Emissions: CO₂ emission values for 1995–2025 are from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Air Markets Program Data (note that data only includes emissions from plants that are 25 MW or larger). CO₂ emission values prior to 1995 are electric sector emissions from EIA’s State Carbon Dioxide Emissions database.

Gross Domestic Product: GDP values are from the Bureau of Economic Analysis, National Economic Accounts, accessed April 2026.

For more information, contact Pat Knight at pknight@synapse-energy.com.