

# Roth: National Clean Energy Week

By [Jim Roth](#), Director and Chair of the Firm's Clean Energy Practice Group. This column was [originally published in The Journal Record](#) on October 2, 2017.

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## National Clean Energy Week

Friday marked the end of the inaugural National Clean Energy Week. The brainchild of several energy groups and associations, the idea is to give clean energy the attention it deserves.

I, for one, am happy to oblige. Imagine this: You electrify your house with rooftop solar panels, perhaps those are backed by a Tesla home battery that provides a charge to your electric vehicle while you sleep, your geothermal system heats and cools your home using heat from the Earth's core, and

water for a hot shower comes thanks to a solar water heater.

Where any of this technology fails to provide the power you need, the local utility provides wind power and when that is intermittent, it is backed by the cleanest of the fossil fuels, natural gas. All of this is quite achievable, especially in Oklahoma, and we should all consider these innovative and renewable energies, even after the close of National Clean Energy Week.

As you ponder that, consider these recent highlights from each major renewable energy source that power our lives – wind, solar, geothermal, electric vehicles.

**Wind:** A newly introduced U.S. Senate bill would create a new investment tax credit to kick-start offshore wind. I look forward to following and discussing this in the future. Here in Oklahoma, the exciting news to keep your eye on has to be Public Service Co. of Oklahoma's announcement of the Wind Catcher project that would provide PSO and SWEPCO's areas with 2,000 megawatts of wind from the Oklahoma Panhandle.

**Solar:** As discussed [last week](#), the holding pattern continues as the entire solar industry awaits the outcome of the International Trade Commission tariff case. Solar has made huge strides in the past few years and it is widely believed that it will overtake wind in the next decade or so. American jobs in solar grew at a 25-percent pace over last year to 260,077 today. The growth projections for solar energy (and solar jobs) are pretty striking since today the total U.S. installed solar capacity is around 40 gigawatts, while wind sits at approximately 82 gigawatts.

**Geothermal:** The science and mechanics of this source is tried and true. The perpetual heat that can be pumped using geothermal systems within "about 33,000 feet of Earth's surface contains 50,000 times more energy than all the oil and natural gas resources in the world." Geothermal has wide

application from residential backyards to large power plants. Ask anyone who has a system installed and prepare to be shocked at how low their utility bills are all year long.

**Electric Vehicles:** Dyson, the company that made us enjoy vacuuming again, just announced it will join the EV industry with plans to have its version available in 2020. If Dyson remains true to its brand, the car is sure to be simple and sleek.

**Move over, Elon Musk?** But seriously, Tesla continues to keep us in awe, this time with a touch-screen in place of traditionally built-in dashboard controls in the new Model 3. That one starts at \$35,000 and gets 220 miles of range, and may finally be in range for more consumers. Moreover, if you do not want a Tesla, there are 12 other EV choices in America today. The projections are that by 2040 more than one-third of all vehicles will be electric or plug-in hybrids.

So while it is clear that clean energy is becoming a daily thing every year going forward, the first Clean Energy Week has just concluded, but really, it has just begun.

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