

The Leader-Post (Regina)

Going nuclear: your thoughts

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Murray Mandryk's April 7 column--"Why the rush to nuclear judgment?") contains a significant error of fact. In his column, he claims that 50 per cent of Denmark's base load electricity comes from renewables.

In fact, Denmark's electricity comes from very different sources. The country consumes about 40 terawatt hours of electricity each year. Over 80 per cent of this electricity is produced by thermal generation, primarily coal, with some natural gas-fired generation. Of the remainder, deemed to be renewable generation, the largest portion is from incineration of biomass and waste. At most 10 per cent of Denmark's electricity comes from wind generation, none of it suitable for base load use because of its fluctuating production.

Moreover, Denmark is only able to utilize its wind fleet because of its connection to the much larger Scandinavian grid to the north and the German electric grid to the south, allowing export of wind-generated electricity when surplus to Danish requirements. It is a fact that over the past two decades, coal-fired generation in Denmark has risen steadily along with its wind generation fleet, as noted by International Energy Agency statistics. It is also therefore a fact that wind generation has neither shut down a single coal-fired station in Denmark, nor has it demonstrably reduced coal-fired generation in that country.

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