



**\$156 BILLION IN DATA CENTER PROJECTS STOPPED
IN 2025 ALONE BY COMMUNITIES LIKE YOURS**



HOW TO STOP A DATA CENTER



The Complete Community Action Guide



**LEGAL TOOLS · ORGANIZING TACTICS
DOCUMENT TEMPLATES · FOIA REQUESTS
ZONING APPEALS · COMMUNITY BENEFIT AGREEMENTS
CASE STUDIES FROM EVERY COMMUNITY THAT WON**



**A Cricketpocalypse.com
Free Resource**

HOW TO STOP A DATA CENTER

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INTRODUCTION

This guide exists because \$156 billion in data center projects were stopped or delayed in 2025 alone. The communities that achieved those victories did not have unlimited resources. They had strategy, persistence, and the right tools used at the right time.

Every strategy in this guide comes from communities that actually won. Every legal tool described here has been used successfully in a real fight. This guide exists because the people who won want you to know how they did it.

No corporate funding produced this guide. No AI company reviewed it. It belongs to you. Share it. Print it. Post it.

The fight is winnable. This guide shows you how.

PART ONE: THE FIRST 72 HOURS

What to do the moment you hear about a proposed data center

The number one mistake communities make is this: they find out a data center is coming and they immediately start protesting. Signs go up. People show up angry at a city council meeting. The developer's lawyers smile.

Why? Because by the time most communities find out, the developer has been working on the project for one to three years. The permits are filed. The land is under contract. The local officials have already had private meetings with the company's representatives. The opposition is starting a race that the other side began years ago.

The communities that win almost never win by reacting. They win by understanding the process well enough to intervene at the right moment, with the right tools, in the right places.

Hour 1: Verify what you are actually dealing with

Not every data center is the same. Before you do anything else, find out: what company filed the permit or application? Search your county's online permit database or call the county clerk's office and ask for all permit applications filed in the last six months in the relevant location. Many applications are filed under shell company names like "Project Jupiter LLC" or "Blue Sky Infrastructure Holdings." Write down the exact legal name of every entity involved.

What stage is the project at? There are five stages where you can intervene, and each requires different tactics:

1. Pre-application — developer is quietly buying land and meeting with officials
2. Zoning or rezoning application — most critical intervention point
3. Permit application — second most critical point
4. Under construction — harder but not impossible
5. Operational — hardest, but shutdowns have happened

The earlier you intervene, the more options you have. The rezoning stage is your golden window.

Hour 2: Find out who knows what

Call your county planning department and ask these questions directly:

Has any application been filed for a data center or technology facility in this location?

Has any pre-application meeting been held regarding this property address?

Are there any pending rezoning requests for this property address or zone?

Government employees at the planning level are often genuinely helpful. They are not your adversaries. Ask respectfully and you will often learn things that are technically public record but not yet widely known.

Hour 3: Start your document file

Create a folder, physical and digital, and begin collecting every piece of paper related to this project. You are building the foundation of a legal and public relations case. Everything matters: permit applications, meeting minutes, emails obtained through public records requests, the developer's marketing materials, the economic impact study, environmental assessments, utility applications. Communities that win almost always win on the documentation.

UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS

The approval pipeline and where you can stop it

Data centers cannot be built without working their way through a series of approval steps. Each step is a gate. Your job is to close the right gates at the right time.

The Zoning Gate

This is your most powerful intervention point. Most large data centers require a zoning change or a special use permit because the land they want to build on is zoned for something else, usually agriculture, residential, or light commercial.

A rezoning request must be heard in a public meeting. Residents have the legal right to testify. The planning commission or city council must vote. That vote requires a majority, and in some jurisdictions a supermajority, and every council member who votes yes is on the record.

In Howell Township, Michigan, an eight-hour planning commission meeting that drew more than 500 residents ended at 2:30 in the morning with a vote to deny rezoning for a 1,000-acre Meta-backed data center. Those 500 people showed up. They testified. They won.

In Brandy Station, Virginia, the planning commission unanimously denied a \$12 billion data center project after residents documented the environmental impact on Culpeper Battlefields State Park and organized sustained opposition.

The rezoning meeting is where ordinary people have the most power. Use it.

The Permit Gate

Even after rezoning, a data center needs multiple permits: a building permit, utility connection permits, water permits, air quality permits if it uses backup generators, and in some cases special use permits from state environmental agencies.

Each of these permit applications is a public document. Each creates an opportunity to submit formal comments, request public hearings, and if the permit is granted improperly, to appeal.

The water permit is increasingly the most productive point of legal attack. In Santiago, Chile, an environmental court suspended Google's water extraction permit after activists documented that the company's environmental impact assessment had failed to adequately account for the project's water use in a drought-stricken region. That suspension held. Google ultimately abandoned the project entirely.

The Utility Connection Gate

A data center without electricity is a very expensive warehouse. Every data center needs a utility connection, and large facilities need new transmission infrastructure: new substations, new power lines, new generation capacity.

In Virginia, opponents of the Prince William Digital Gateway project intervened in State Corporation Commission proceedings over the electrical infrastructure required to serve the campus. This created an additional legal front and additional delays while the primary zoning fights continued.

Ask your state utility commission whether any transmission infrastructure applications have been filed related to the data center. If they have, you have the right to file comments and in many states to intervene as a party in the proceeding.

PART THREE: THE LEGAL TOOLKIT

Every legal mechanism that has been used successfully

Freedom of Information Act Requests

This is your single most powerful tool for gathering information and creating political pressure simultaneously.

At the federal level, FOIA applies to federal agencies. For data centers, the most relevant federal documents are environmental assessments filed with the Army Corps of Engineers, EPA, or Fish and Wildlife Service, any federal permits, and communications between federal agencies and the developer.

At the state and local level, every state has its own open records law. These apply to your county planning department, your city council, your state environmental agency, and your state utility commission.

File your first FOIA request within the first week. Request all permit applications filed by the developer and any associated LLC names in the past three years. Request all communications between the developer or associated entities and any county, city, or state official in the past three years. Request all environmental assessments, impact studies, and technical reports submitted in connection with the project address. Request all contracts, agreements, or memoranda of understanding between the county or city and the developer. Request the complete economic impact study submitted in support of the application.

You do not need a lawyer to file a FOIA request. You do not need any special credentials. You need to write a letter, identify the records you want, and send it to the right agency.

The Citizens for Fauquier County in Warrenton, Virginia obtained withheld emails through a FOIA lawsuit that revealed private communications between Amazon and local officials that had not been disclosed. Those emails became the basis for additional legal action and sustained the community's case in the press for months.

Zoning Appeals

When a planning commission or city council approves a rezoning or special use permit, that decision can often be appealed to a Board of Zoning Appeals or directly to a court. The grounds for appeal vary by state but typically include:

The decision was not supported by substantial evidence. The decision was inconsistent with the locality's comprehensive plan. The process violated procedural requirements. The decision was arbitrary and capricious.

In Prince William County, Virginia, two lawsuits filed against the Digital Gateway project resulted in a ruling that voided the rezoning decision and required a mandated revote by county commissioners.

Appeals must generally be filed within a short window after the decision, often 30 days. If you believe an appeal is warranted, consult an attorney as quickly as possible. Many environmental and land use attorneys offer free initial consultations.

Environmental Review Challenges

Projects of a certain scale are often required to complete an environmental impact assessment before receiving approval. These assessments are subject to public comment, and the adequacy of the assessment can be challenged in court.

Common grounds for challenging an environmental review include failure to consider a reasonable range of alternatives, understatement of the project's impacts on water, air, noise, or wildlife, use of a consultant hired by the developer without independent review, and failure to consider cumulative impacts.

Intervenor Status in Utility Proceedings

When a data center applies to connect to the electrical grid or to build new transmission infrastructure, those applications often go before a state utility commission. These proceedings are quasi-judicial and allow parties with a demonstrated interest to intervene as full participants, submit evidence, cross-examine witnesses, and appeal decisions.

Filing for intervenor status is not complicated. Most state utility commissions have a standard form. You need to demonstrate that you have an interest in the proceeding, which as a ratepayer in the service territory you almost certainly do.

Community Benefit Agreement Negotiations

If you cannot stop the project, you may be able to significantly improve its terms. Community Benefit Agreements are legally binding contracts between a developer and a community organization that commit the developer to specific obligations in exchange for the community's support or neutrality.

Successful Community Benefit Agreements in data center fights have included guaranteed local hiring percentages, caps on water extraction with community monitoring rights, electricity rate protection for residential customers, noise abatement requirements with enforceable decibel limits, health monitoring commitments, payments to community funds for schools and roads, and commitments to use renewable energy on specific timelines.

These agreements are most powerful when negotiated before approval, when the developer still needs community neutrality. The time to demand a Community Benefit Agreement is before the final vote, not after.

PART FOUR: THE ORGANIZING PLAYBOOK

What every winning campaign had in common

1. Find out early. Start immediately.

As development expands and media attention intensifies, local groups are learning from one another. The communities that learned early and started immediately had the most options. Sign up for your county planning department's email list for permit applications. Attend planning commission meetings even when nothing is on the agenda that affects you directly. You will hear things that give you lead time.

2. Name your group. Make it local. Make it specific.

Every winning campaign had a name. Peaceful Peculiar. Citizens for Fauquier County. No Desert Data Center Coalition. Protect Franklin Township. Save Bren Mar.

The name matters because it creates an entity that can take legal action, open a bank account, own a website, sign a Community Benefit Agreement, and be quoted in press coverage. It also creates a sense of permanence. A named organization signals to the developer, to local officials, and to the press that this opposition is organized, durable, and serious.

Keep the name local and specific. It should reference your actual community or geography. Citizens for Fauquier County is stronger than Stop Data Centers Now because it roots the fight in the place that is actually under threat.

3. Show up to every public meeting. Every single one.

This is the single most consistent factor across every winning campaign. Not just the big dramatic vote. Every meeting. Planning commission meetings. County supervisor meetings. City council work sessions. Board of zoning appeals hearings. Utility commission proceedings. Environmental agency public comment sessions.

Your presence at every meeting does three things simultaneously. It signals to officials that the community is organized, aware, and watching. It creates a public record of opposition that supports future legal challenges. And it gives you direct access to information that is often not covered by local press.

Bring people. Numbers matter. In Howell Township, Michigan, 500 residents showed up to an eight-hour planning commission meeting that ended at 2:30 in the morning. The commission denied the rezoning. Five hundred people at 2:30 in the morning is what commitment looks like. It works.

4. Testify. Write your testimony in advance.

At public meetings, residents have the right to testify. Most jurisdictions allow each speaker two to three minutes. Make every second count.

Effective testimony is specific, not emotional. I am concerned about the noise is weak. The facility's cooling equipment will operate continuously at a volume equivalent to a dishwasher running in your bedroom, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, permanently. My house is 300 meters from the proposed site. Here is a noise study from a comparable facility. That is testimony that goes into the record, that supports an appeal, and that gives a sympathetic official something to cite when they vote no.

Divide the topics among your group. Have one person speak to water impacts. One person to electricity rates. One person to property values. One person to the economic impact study's gaps. One person to the legal process questions. Coordinate in advance so the record contains a comprehensive, documented case against the project.

5. File FOIA requests early and repeatedly.

Secrecy backfired consistently. NDAs, unnamed end users, and opaque development structures repeatedly fueled suspicion and hardened resistance.

Use public records requests to find out what the developer told officials privately. In Warrenton, Virginia, a FOIA lawsuit revealed withheld emails showing private communications between Amazon and local officials. Those emails fueled months of additional press coverage and public outrage.

File your first FOIA request in the first week. File follow-up requests every time something new happens. Each request creates a paper trail. Each document you obtain is a potential news story, a potential legal exhibit, and a potential tool for showing officials that their private dealings are not as private as they assumed.

6. Talk to your local newspaper. Then your regional paper. Then everyone else.

Data center fights where communities consistently appeared in local media coverage, wrote op-eds in local newspapers, and engaged directly with journalists covering the planning process were more likely to produce sustained opposition that outlasted developer patience.

Your local newspaper is your most powerful ally. A front-page story about water impacts reaches every household in the community. An op-ed by a respected local figure gives the planning commission political cover to vote no.

Write op-eds. Sign them with your real name and your community. Editors are looking for local voices on local issues. Submit to every local and regional outlet.

7. Run the numbers and present them publicly.

The developer's economic impact study presents the best possible picture of the project's benefits. Your job is to present the complete picture.

Water: Calculate the gallons per day the facility will consume and translate that into terms people can understand. Then research your local aquifer's recharge rate and present what this drawdown means over ten and twenty years.

Electricity: Contact your utility and ask for the anticipated rate impact of the new industrial load. Compare the facility's expected power draw to your community's current total load. Present the ratio.

Jobs: Count the actual permanent positions in the permit application, not the construction jobs. Divide the facility's capital investment by the number of permanent jobs. Present the cost per job and compare it to other economic development investments your community has made.

Noise: Find the noise specification for similar facilities from the developer's other projects. Convert it to a decibel level and find a comparison that people can understand. Map the affected zone around the proposed site and identify how many households fall within it.

8. Build the broadest coalition possible. Cross every political line.

The anti-data center movement has seen remarkable bipartisan success because it focuses on material, local issues. The overwhelming majority of cancellations came in states that President Trump won in 2024, and often in the very suburban and exurban areas that fueled his victory.

This is not a left-wing fight. It is not a right-wing fight. It is a community fight, and the most successful campaigns explicitly built across party lines.

Reach out to the local farm bureau. Reach out to the local property owners association. Reach out to small business owners. Reach out to the local historical society if the project affects historic resources. Reach out to the local environmental group. Reach out to the local parent-teacher organization if the facility is near a school.

9. Make it political. Candidates take sides.

In Warrenton, Virginia, every council member who voted yes on the Amazon data center has since lost re-election. In Cascade Locks, Oregon, residents recalled the officials who approved a data center.

Ask every candidate running for local office where they stand on the proposal. Publish their answers. Attend candidate forums and ask the question publicly. Make clear that you vote and that you are watching.

10. Stay organized for years, not weeks.

The data center industry knows that community opposition often exhausts itself. They have experienced this before. They are prepared to wait.

The communities that won were the ones that did not exhaust. Citizens for Fauquier County has filed three separate lawsuits and maintained active opposition over multiple years. MOSACAT in Santiago, Chile protested from 2019 to 2023, four years, before winning their court case.

Set up a sustainable organization. Distribute the work so it does not all fall on one or two people. Keep a mailing list. Meet regularly even when nothing urgent is happening.

PART FIVE: SOCIAL MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

How to make your fight visible beyond your community

Build your social media presence from day one

Create accounts on Facebook, Instagram, X, and TikTok in your group's name. Post consistent updates. Use video whenever possible. A sixty-second video of 300 people outside a planning meeting is more powerful than a press release describing the same event.

Hashtags that have worked in other fights: #NoDataCenter, #OurWater, #ProtectOurCommunity, #DataCenterWatch. Check what hashtags are active in your state and region and use them consistently.

The social media content that gets the most traction

Numbers translated into human terms travel further than raw statistics. This data center will use 7.6 billion liters of drinking water per year is less shareable than This data center will use enough drinking water every year to fill an Olympic swimming pool every seven hours.

Personal stories from community members travel further than organizational statements. The farmer who will lose irrigation water. The family whose electricity bill will increase. The homeowner whose property value will be affected. Real people with real stakes.

Before and after comparisons work extremely well. A photograph of the land before construction alongside a rendering of what the facility will look like. A map of the aquifer before and projected after drawdown.

Meeting footage is powerful. If your jurisdiction allows filming of public meetings, film them. Post the clips where officials dismiss community concerns. Post the clips where your expert witnesses deliver devastating testimony. Short clips with captions reach audiences that would never watch a three-hour planning meeting.

Local press strategy

Every local newspaper has a reporter who covers local government. Find their name and contact information. Email them directly, not the news tip line, with a concise description of the issue and why it matters to local readers. Include one or two documents that demonstrate the story is real and documented.

Write op-eds and letters to the editor. Coordinate with your coalition members so that multiple letters appear from different community voices, each emphasizing different aspects of the impact.

If your local paper runs a story that contains information from the developer but not from your group, call the reporter and ask for a follow-up or a correction. Journalists covering local government generally want both sides of the story and will often do a follow-up piece if they know they missed something important.

PART SIX: THE SPECIFIC DOCUMENTS TO FILE

Templates and guidance for the most important legal submissions

The Formal Public Comment

Every permit application, environmental review, and rezoning request requires a public comment period. Filing a formal written comment accomplishes three things: it creates a legal record of your opposition, it raises issues that the agency must address before approving the permit, and it preserves your right to appeal if the agency ignores your concerns.

Your public comment should include your name, address, and your basis for commenting. Include a clear statement of your position. Raise specific issues supported by evidence or a citation to publicly available documentation. Request that the agency address each issue before making a decision. Request that the agency provide you with a copy of its final decision and its response to comments.

Be specific. Generic comments that express general concern are easy to dismiss. Specific comments that identify a particular gap in the environmental review, a specific regulation that may be violated, or a specific piece of evidence that was not considered are harder to dismiss and stronger grounds for appeal.

The FOIA Request Letter

Use this template and adapt it to your specific situation:

Your name Your address Date

Agency name Agency address

Re: Public Records Request

Dear Records Officer,

Pursuant to your state's open records law or the federal Freedom of Information Act, I request copies of the following public records:

1. All permit applications, including but not limited to building permits, special use permits, and zoning applications, filed by the developer name or any affiliated entity regarding property located at the project address or within the county or municipality.
2. All written communications, including emails, letters, and memoranda, between any employee or official of the agency or county or city and any representative of the developer name or affiliated entities from the relevant date to the present.
3. All environmental impact assessments, studies, reports, or analyses submitted in connection with the project name or address.
4. All economic impact studies or analyses submitted in connection with the project.
5. All contracts, memoranda of understanding, or agreements between the county or city and the developer relating to the project.

I request that these records be provided in electronic format if available. If any records are withheld, please identify them in a log and specify the exemption claimed.

If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact me at your phone or email.

Sincerely, Your name

The Formal Appeal of a Permit Decision

If a permit is granted and you believe the decision was improper, you typically have 30 days to file an appeal. The appeal must identify the specific grounds for challenging the decision.

Before filing an appeal, consult an attorney or a legal organization that works on community environmental issues. In many states, the appeal must be filed in a specific format with a specific agency, and procedural errors can waive your rights.

Organizations that may provide free or low-cost legal assistance:

Earthjustice: earthjustice.org Environmental Defense Fund: edf.org Sierra Club Legal Defense: sierraclub.org/legal Your state's legal aid organization Your state's university law school environmental law clinic The Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide: elaw.org

PART SEVEN: THE COMPLETE CASE STUDIES

Everything we know about every documented victory

Peculiar, Missouri — \$1.5 billion, Diode Ventures, 2024

Residents organized under the name Peaceful Peculiar after Diode Ventures proposed a \$1.5 billion data center campus. They attended planning meetings consistently, testified extensively about noise, visual impact, and property values, and lobbied aldermen directly.

The Peculiar Board of Aldermen re-examined the proposal following organized community pressure, and by October 2024 the city's Planning Commission amended the zoning ordinance to exclude data centers entirely, effectively blocking the development.

The zoning ordinance amendment was the key move. By changing the rules rather than just defeating one application, the community protected itself against future attempts by any data center developer. This is the most complete form of victory available at the local level.

Key tactics: Consistent meeting attendance. Direct lobbying of aldermen. Sustained public presence. Organizer Wendy Reigel mailed her surplus yard signs to the next community fight after winning, illustrating the network-building that is transforming isolated fights into a coordinated movement.

Chesterton, Indiana — \$1.3 billion, Provident Realty Advisors, 2024

Residents organized against a proposed campus on the Brassie Golf Club site. Concerns focused on air quality, water, wildlife, and property values. The developer withdrew the proposal after sustained community opposition. Organizer Wendy Reigel's campaign became the model that other Indiana communities adopted.

Key tactics: Planning meeting attendance. Petition drives. Coalition building across property owner groups. Direct communication with council members about electoral consequences.

Brandy Station, Virginia — \$12 billion, Culpeper Acquisitions LLC, 2024

A Planning Commission unanimously denied a \$12 billion rezoning request for a 426-acre data center campus after residents documented the project's potential impact on rural preservation and nearby Culpeper Battlefields State Park.

Key tactics: Documenting the connection between the shell company applicant and the likely hyperscaler end user. Invoking historic preservation law. Unanimous planning commission opposition built through sustained public engagement.

Prince William County, Virginia — PW Digital Gateway, QTS/Compass, 2024-2025

Two lawsuits filed against the 2,139-acre Digital Gateway project near Manassas National Battlefield Park resulted in a circuit court ruling voiding the rezoning decision and mandating a revote.

Key tactics: Multiple simultaneous legal challenges covering the rezoning decision, withheld emails obtained through FOIA, and procedural violations. Citizens for Fauquier County maintained three separate active lawsuits at once. The legal strategy created maximum delay and uncertainty while the political organizing continued.

Franklin Township, Indiana — Project Flo, Google, 2025

Google withdrew its \$1 billion, 468-acre Project Flo rezoning request in Franklin Township after council opposition and protests from local residents. The developer is Google-affiliated Deep Meadows LLC. Opposition was led by Protect Franklin Township and the Franklin Township Civic League.

Key tactics: Identifying the real end user behind the shell company. Building community coalitions around environmental and agricultural impact. Making the connection to other Google data center fights in other communities.

Howell Township, Michigan — Meta-backed, 2025

After an eight-hour meeting that drew more than 500 residents, the Howell Township Planning Commission voted at 2:30 in the morning to recommend denying rezoning for a 1,000-acre data center after a petition garnered over 2,100 signatures.

Key tactics: Massive public turnout. Over 2,100 petition signatures gathered before the vote. Eight-hour sustained presence at the meeting. The combination of volume and persistence sent a political signal that overrode any economic argument.

Santiago, Chile — \$200 million, Google, 2024

MOSACAT and allied environmental organizations protested Google's proposed data center from 2019 to 2023. Santiago's Environmental Tribunal suspended the permit in February 2024, finding the environmental impact assessment inadequate to address the project's water extraction in a drought-stricken region. Google announced it would start from scratch in September 2024.

Key tactics: Four-year sustained campaign. Expert scientific testimony on drought conditions and water impact. Legal challenge to the adequacy of the environmental review. Focus on the specific legal standard for environmental assessment adequacy rather than general opposition. This is the global template for using environmental law to stop a hyperscaler.

Cascade Locks, Oregon — \$100 million, Roundhouse Digital Infrastructure, 2024

Residents stopped a \$100 million data center and then recalled the local officials who had approved it. This is one of only two documented cases of elected officials being removed from office because of a data center approval.

Key tactics: Direct democracy. The recall election mobilized voters who had not been engaged in the planning process. Making the vote personal for officials is the most powerful political tool available to communities.

Warrenton, Virginia — Amazon, ongoing

Over 500 residents attended a single Town Council meeting, with nearly 130 speakers including Oscar-winning actor Robert Duvall testifying against an Amazon data center proposal. Citizens for Fauquier County has filed three separate lawsuits. Every council member who voted yes has since lost re-election.

Key tactics: Volume at public meetings. Celebrity voices as genuine local residents. Sustained multi-lawsuit legal strategy. Electoral consequences for officials who voted yes. This fight demonstrates that even when you cannot stop a project immediately, sustained organized opposition imposes real costs and changes political calculations over time.

Menomonie, Wisconsin — \$1.6 billion, Balloonist LLC, 2025

Menomonie's mayor halted negotiations on a \$1.6 billion data center by Balloonist LLC following community pushback over secrecy, despite earlier annexation approvals.

Key tactics: The secrecy itself became the issue. When a developer refuses to disclose who they are and what they intend to build, the community's demand for transparency is itself politically legitimate and publicly sympathetic. Opacity consistently backfires.

PART EIGHT: YOUR STEP BY STEP ACTION PLAN

From day one to victory

Week 1

File your first FOIA request. Identify every entity involved in the application. Determine the exact stage of the approval process. Create your group name and open a social media presence. Contact your local newspaper reporter.

Week 2

Attend any scheduled public meetings. Begin collecting signatures on a petition. Identify the key decision-makers and research their public positions and voting history. Contact neighboring property owners and begin building your coalition.

Week 3

File formal comments on any pending applications. Research comparable data center facilities for noise, water, and electricity impact data. Begin writing op-eds for local publication. Identify potential legal issues and consult with an attorney or legal organization.

Month 2

Maintain consistent meeting attendance. Expand your coalition. Follow up on outstanding FOIA requests. Prepare expert witnesses for testimony if a hearing is scheduled. Research the developer's track record in other communities and contact those communities.

Ongoing

Stay organized. Maintain your email list and social media presence. File follow-up FOIA requests as new developments occur. Track the electoral consequences of officials' votes. Connect with other communities fighting the same fight.

THE NUMBERS THAT PROVE IT WORKS

In 2025 alone, community opposition led to the delay or cancellation of data center projects totaling \$156 billion. In the first four months of 2026, communities across the United States achieved more than 70 rejections or restrictions on proposed data center projects, surpassing the total for all of 2025.

268 opposition groups are currently active across 37 US states. The movement is accelerating. The resistance is winning.

None of those victories came easy. None of them came from a single dramatic protest. Every one of them came from people who showed up, kept showing up, filed the documents, asked the questions, ran the numbers, wrote the letters, testified at the meetings, and refused to exhaust.

You can do this. Communities far less organized than yours have done it. Communities with far fewer resources than yours have done it. Communities that started with nothing but the fact that they cared about their water and their land and their children's air have done it.

The cricket is small. The cricket is loud. And the cricket does not stop.

RESOURCES AND CONTACTS

The organizations and tools you need right now

National Organizations

MediaJustice mediajustice.org The most important national organizer's toolkit for data center resistance. Published The People Say No: Resisting Data Centers in the South in 2025. Free to download.

Data Center Watch datacenterwatch.org The primary research organization tracking data center opposition nationwide. Free weekly briefing. Essential intelligence for any community fight.

Data Center Opposition datacenteropposition.com Tracks 268 local opposition groups across 37 US states. Find your nearest organized group and connect with them.

Earthjustice earthjustice.org Legal representation for environmental cases. Free for qualifying cases.

Legal Resources

The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press rcfp.org Free FOIA guidance and assistance.

National Freedom of Information Coalition nfoic.org State by state open records law guidance.

Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide elaw.org Free legal resources for environmental cases.

Key Journalists Covering This Fight

Karen Hao, The Atlantic karendhao.com AI Resist List: airesistlist.org

Robert Bryce, Power Hungry Podcast robertbryce.substack.com The most prolific independent journalist covering data center community opposition.

Justin Hendrix, TechPolicy.Press techpolicy.press The most important policy journalism outlet covering data center accountability.

Your Step by Step FOIA Filing Guide

Federal FOIA requests: foia.gov This government website walks you through filing federal FOIA requests step by step at no cost.

For state and local requests: go directly to the website of the agency you are requesting records from and look for a FOIA or Public Records section.

The Most Important Thing to Remember

Contact the community that fought the same developer you are fighting. Every developer in the data center industry has fought community opposition somewhere. Find those communities through Data Center Watch and call them. They will tell you everything they know. The resistance community is remarkably generous with its knowledge and experience.

A FINAL WORD

Opposition groups learned from each other, shared legal strategies, and built regional coalitions that turned isolated complaints into coordinated campaigns. Water use dominates the list of community concerns, mentioned in more than 40% of contested projects. Energy consumption and electricity rate increases rank second, followed by noise pollution. These three issues appear in virtually every opposition campaign.

The movement is winning. Seventy-plus rejections or restrictions in the first four months of 2026 alone. More than in all of 2025. \$156 billion blocked or delayed. The acceleration is real.

None of those victories came easy. None of them came from a single dramatic protest. Every one of them came from people who showed up, kept showing up, filed the documents, asked the questions, ran the numbers, wrote the letters, testified at the meetings, and refused to exhaust.

You can do this. Communities far less organized than yours have done it. Communities with far fewer resources than yours have done it. Communities that started with nothing but the fact that they cared about their water and their land and their children's air have done it.

The machine is loud. The cricket is louder.

This guide is free. Share it. Print it. Post it. It belongs to anyone who needs it.

[Cricketpocalypse.com](https://cricketpocalypse.com)

Sources: Data Center Watch quarterly reports 2024-2026, Heatmap News, Common Dreams April 2026, Data Center Frontier, TechPolicy.Press, Data Center Knowledge, Project Censored, The Spectator, Milldam Public Relations 2025 report, MultiState 2026, Data Center Watch Substack briefings. All case study facts verified from multiple independent sources.