

# The beginning(s) of public power

More than 900 public power utilities have been operating for a century or more, but cities and communities continue to create community-owned electricity when the opportunity arises.

This timeline shows key industry events and when today's public power utilities started operating.

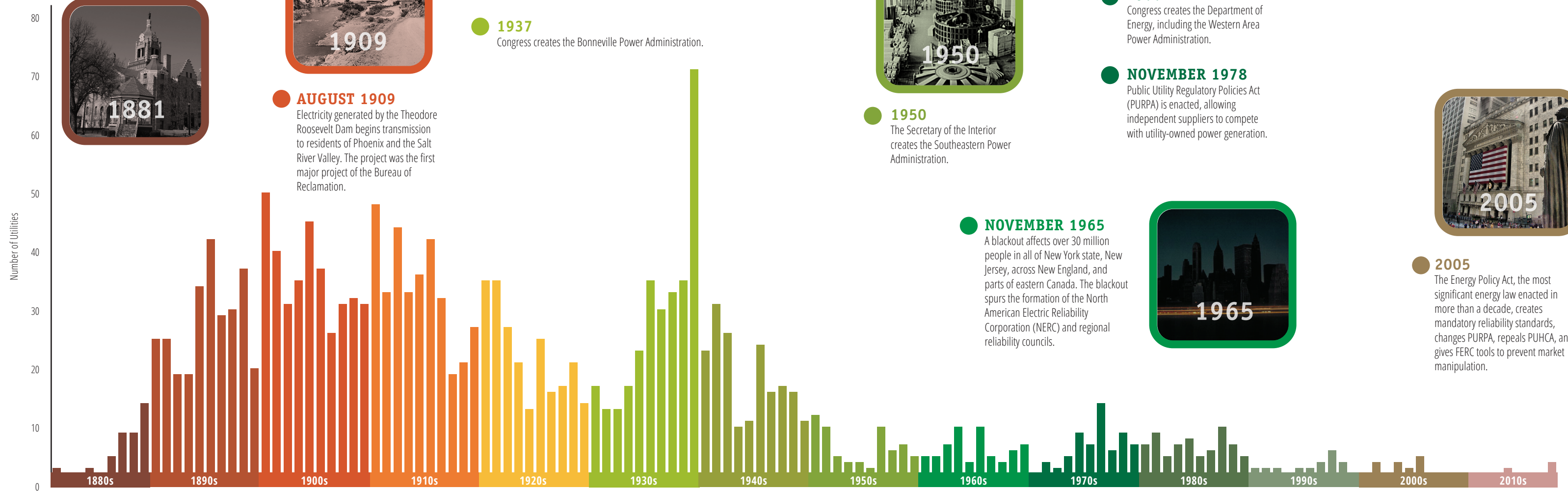
DECEMBER 6, 1881

Butler, Missouri first turns the lights on in its courthouse and for residents – a full nine months before Edison's Pearl Street Station opens.



AUGUST 1909

Electricity generated by the Theodore Roosevelt Dam begins transmission to residents of Phoenix and the Salt River Valley. The project was the first major project of the Bureau of Reclamation.



1932

1932

Franklin Roosevelt gives a campaign speech in Portland, Oregon, in which he promotes public power as a right of communities, and a 'yardstick' for holding all electric utilities accountable for good service and low rates.

1933

Tennessee Valley Authority established. Nearly a quarter of the 320 utilities that began between 1933-1944, and more than half of those established in 1939, were within the Tennessee Valley.

1935

The Federal Power Act gives the Federal Power Commission (now FERC) authority to regulate sales of electricity. The Public Utility Holding Company Act (PUHCA) is also enacted, breaking up giant electric utility holding companies.

1937

Congress creates the Bonneville Power Administration.

1941

1940

Development of diesel technology allows for more efficient small-scale municipal generation.

JANUARY 1941

the first generator of the Grand Coulee Dam begins operation.

1950

1950

The Secretary of the Interior creates the Southeastern Power Administration.

NOVEMBER 1965

A blackout affects over 30 million people in all of New York state, New Jersey, across New England, and parts of eastern Canada. The blackout spurs the formation of the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) and regional reliability councils.

# 1965

● 1996

FERC Order 888 requires open access transmission service; shortly after, many of the wholesale electric markets begin operation.

1999

FERC Order 2000 encourages the formation of Regional Transmission Organizations.

# 1999

2005

2005

The Energy Policy Act, the most significant energy law enacted in more than a decade, creates mandatory reliability standards, changes PURPA, repeals PUHCA, and gives FERC tools to prevent market manipulation.