

# Research shows Hudson Valley power line expansion not needed

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**By: Dan Bazile**

CHURCHTOWN - High voltage transmission power lines already wind through the back yards of many residents in the rolling hills of the Hudson Valley. Governor Cuomo proposed to expand them in the state two years ago and residents have been fighting that proposal ever since.

The project is still in the regulatory process with the expansion calling for 150 miles of high voltage transmission lines cutting through seven counties and 25 towns, delivering more power downstate.

"It makes no sense at all," says Dr. Gidon Eshel, a physicist from Bard College. "There's simply no need, not between now and 2040."

Dr. Eshel's conclusion is based on what he says was extensive research of the existing infrastructure and usage that he unveiled for the first time at the Churchtown firehouse on Saturday. The research shows the current infrastructure can handle the power peaks downstate well into the future.

"The population rise of recent years in New York is not really continuing at all at the pace that it historically exhibited," says Eshel.

In addition, Eshel says the share of the population that consumes the most energy -- people between the ages of 45 and 70 -- is also declining. And he didn't take energy efficiency and renewable energy into account, which he says are sure to make an impact.

Many residents are concerned about eminent domain and the possibility of a need for more land. They're also worried about tourism.

"The primary driver of our local economy is tourism and then secondary agriculture," says Ian Solomon of the Hudson Valley Smart Energy Coalition. "Something like this would harm both of those things."

**But the first question now -- is the project really necessary?**