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What minerals are needed for solar and energy storage



Overview

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Clean energy technologies – from wind turbines and solar panels, to electric vehicles and battery storage – require a wide range of minerals and metals. The type and volume of mineral needs vary widely across the spectrum of clean energy technologies, and even within a certain technology (e.g. EV).

While much of solar panels are made up of minerals you can easily call to mind – like aluminum, copper, and silicon – others you won't come across in your daily life. And, not all solar panels are the same. Your home solar panels might not have the exact same makeup as those on your local box.

From aluminum to zinc, these are the building blocks of our clean energy future. Copper granules to be processed into copper sulphate at the Uralektromed copper refinery plant in Russia. (Donat Sorokin/TASS via Getty Images) In a previous article, I offered a broad overview of the problems.

These minerals are essential across various components of solar systems, from photovoltaic coatings to battery storage and grid infrastructure. The demand for critical minerals in solar technologies is expected to rise significantly as nations accelerate their deployment of renewable energy.

However, procuring the critical minerals and materials needed to create solar panels, wind turbines, electric vehicle (EV) batteries, and other renewable technologies at scale presents its own set of environmental and social concerns. Clean energy technologies generally require more critical.

Critical minerals are key components in a range of products and equipment, from consumer electronics and military technology to solar panels and electric

vehicle batteries. Their unique chemical properties make them particularly suitable for energy technologies and irreplaceable for certain.

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