

Syracuse University again recognized as top green power partner

Wednesday, February 24, 2010

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has again recognized Syracuse University for its significant green power purchases. The University was ranked the nation's 15th largest purchaser of green power as of January 2010 on the EPA's latest Top 20 College & University Green Power Partnership list. Over the past four years, the EPA has recognized the University as a leading purchaser of green power among the nation's colleges and universities.

Since July 2005, the University has voluntarily purchased 20 percent of its electricity each year in the form of green power. This currently equates to 22.8 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) of certified low-impact hydro renewable energy certificates (RECs) purchased from Constellation New Energy. The RECs guarantee the specified amount of green power is generated on the University's behalf and added to the grid, thus reducing the environmental impacts associated with the campus' purchased electricity use.

"Purchasing green power reinforces the University's commitment to the environment and supports its proactive efforts to enhance campus sustainability," says Nathan Prior, energy conservation manager for SU's Energy and Computing Management Department. "It also supports the region's energy production since all of the green power the University purchases is produced in New York State."

EPA estimates that the University's annual green power purchased has the equivalent environmental impact of avoiding the carbon dioxide emissions of nearly 3,000 passenger vehicles each year, or is the equivalent amount of electricity needed to power more than 2,100 average American homes annually.

Updated quarterly, the EPA's Top 20 College & University list represents the largest green power purchasers among higher education institutions within the Green Power Partnership. Green power is generated from renewable resources such as solar, wind, geothermal, biogas, biomass and low-impact hydro. Green power sources produce electricity with an environmental profile superior to conventional power technologies and produce no human-caused greenhouse gas emissions. Purchases of green power also help accelerate the development of new renewable energy capacity nationwide. For more information visit <http://www.epa.gov/greenpower/toplists/top20ed.htm>.

In February 2007, SU became a charter signatory of the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), making SU one of the largest private universities committed to zero net greenhouse gas emissions. This commitment will be fulfilled through the University's Climate Action Plan (CAP), an institutional blueprint and timeline for SU to become climate neutral by 2040.

Released in September 2009, the CAP consists of five overlapping sustainable components focused on: energy conservation through existing technologies; energy efficiency through emerging technologies; creation of energy from renewable sources; enhancing sustainability practices among students, faculty and staff; and limited use of energy offsets, as needed, that benefit local residents and businesses. Each component will include one or more flagship projects, selected and designed for maximum public engagement and scholarly research potential while consistently demonstrating the University's commitment to fiscal responsibility. Additional information about the ACUPCC, and a copy of SU's Climate Action Plan, are available at the University's Sustainability Division web site

<http://greenuniversity.syr.edu/PCC.html>.

EPA's Green Power Partnership encourages organizations to purchase green power as a way to reduce the environmental impacts associated with conventional electricity use. The Green Power Partnership works with more than 1,200 partner organizations that voluntarily purchase billions of kilowatt hours of green power annually. Partners include a wide variety of leading organizations such as Fortune 500 companies, small and medium sized businesses, local, state, and federal governments, and colleges and universities.