

# SU tops Big East in green power purchases

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The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has recognized Syracuse University as the 2009-10 Individual Conference Champion for using more green power than any other school in the Big East Conference. This is the fourth consecutive year SU has been the Big East Individual Conference Champion.

Since April 2006, EPA's Green Power Partnership has tracked and recognized the collegiate athletic conferences with the highest combined green power purchases in the nation. The Individual Conference Champion Award recognizes the school that has made the largest individual purchase of green power within a qualifying conference.

SU topped its conference by purchasing nearly 23 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) of green power, representing 20 percent of the institution's annual electricity usage. In January, the *University was ranked* the nation's 15<sup>th</sup> largest purchaser of green power on the EPA's Top 20 College & University Green Power Partnership list. SU voluntarily purchases low-impact hydro renewable energy certificates (RECs) from Constellation NewEnergy, which helps to reduce the environmental impacts associated with the campus' electricity use.

The EPA estimates that SU's purchase of nearly 23 million kilowatt-hours of green power is equivalent to the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the electricity use of nearly 2,000 average American homes each year or has the equivalent impact of reducing the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of more than 3,000 passenger cars annually.

"This is a college playoff where everyone wins," says Gina McCarthy, EPA assistant administrator for air and radiation. "Renewable energy is a slam dunk not just for Syracuse University but for clean air, our health and our climate."

Twenty-six collegiate conferences and 54 colleges and universities competed in the 2009-10 challenge, collectively purchasing nearly 1.2 billion kWh of green power. The EPA will extend the College & University Green Power Challenge for a fifth year, to conclude in spring 2011. The EPA's Green Power Challenge is open to all U.S. colleges, universities and conferences. In order to qualify, a collegiate athletic conference must include at least one institution that qualifies as a Green Power Partner, and the conference must collectively meet the EPA's minimum conference purchase requirement.

Green power is generated from renewable resources such as solar, wind, geothermal, biogas, biomass and low-impact hydro. Green power is considered cleaner than conventional sources of electricity and has lower emissions of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), a greenhouse gas linked to global

climate change. Purchases of green power help accelerate the development of new renewable energy capacity nationwide.

“I am pleased that Syracuse University has again been recognized a top EPA Green Power Partner,” says Timothy Sweet, director of SU’s Energy and Computing Management Department. “Our commitment to purchasing green power is good for the environment and helps support renewable energy production in New York state. It’s just one element of the University’s continued focus on enhancing campus sustainability and reducing its carbon footprint.”

SU has a long history of energy conservation through efforts such as lighting and equipment upgrades as well as enhancements to its campus-wide energy management system. Most recently, the University’s Sustainability Division partnered with New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) and launched a “*Lights Out*” campaign to curb wasteful campus electricity use.

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 website: <http://greenuniversecity.syr.edu/PCC.html>.

### **About the U.S. EPA’s Green Power Partnership**

The 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 currently has more than 1,200 Partners voluntarily purchasing 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; trade associations; and colleges and universities. For additional information, visit <http://www.epa.gov/greenpower>.

For more information about the EPA’s College and University Green Power Challenge, visit the Challenge website at [http://www.epa.gov/greenpower/initiatives/cu\\_challenge.htm](http://www.epa.gov/greenpower/initiatives/cu_challenge.htm).