

EPA recognizes Syracuse University as largest green power purchaser among Big East Conference institutions

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Syracuse University announced today that it has been recognized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as the 2006-2007 Individual Conference Champion for purchasing more green power than any other institution in the Big East Conference. EPA has been tracking green power purchasing among collegiate athletic conferences through its College & University Green Power Challenge, which concluded recently with 16 conferences participating nationwide.

SU was recognized during a ceremony at the Second Annual Campus Sustainability Conference in College Park, Md. The University beat out its conference rivals by purchasing 22 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) of green power annually, representing 20 percent of the school's annual purchased electricity use. The University is purchasing low-impact hydro- and wind-generated electricity from SUEZ Energy Resources NA, which helps to reduce the environmental impacts associated with the campus's purchased electricity use.

EPA estimates that SU's purchase of 22 million kilowatt-hours of green power is the equivalent amount of electricity needed to power nearly 1,800 average American homes each year. This purchase will have the impact of reducing the equivalent amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from more than 3,000 passenger cars annually.

"EPA applauds Syracuse University's purchase of green power and for its leadership among the Big East Conference," says Bill Wehrum, EPA's acting assistant administrator for Air and Radiation. "Colleges and universities around the nation are setting great examples by taking steps to protect the environment. Syracuse's commitment demonstrates that what's good for the environment is also good for higher education."

EPA will also extend the College & University Green Power Challenge for a second year, to conclude in spring 2008. 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 EPA's minimum conference purchase requirement. For more information, visit:

http://www.epa.gov/greenpower/partners/hi_ed_challenge.htm.

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 CO₂, a greenhouse gas linked to global climate change. Purchases of green power help accelerate the development of new renewable energy capacity nationwide.

“Syracuse University is proud to earn this Big East honor and the recognition from the EPA that our efforts and innovation in sustainable practices are indeed pioneering in higher education,” says SU Chancellor and President Nancy Cantor. “By committing to the use of renewable energy, the University is showing we are serious in taking a leadership role in the area of sustainability and energy conservation.”

Through past energy conservation initiatives, SU has reduced its energy consumption by more than 30 million kWh per year. Among these initiatives are expansion of SU’s energy management system, including advanced space temperature and occupancy controls; an extensive preventative maintenance program; the establishment of an energy council with student, faculty and staff representation; lighting retrofits; and the installation of heat recovery systems, LED exit signs, fumehood controls and a real-time campus metering system. In February 2005, a building sustainability committee was launched that, among its responsibilities, reviews the University’s current sustainable design practices, documents SU’s use of green products, and develops building sustainability protocols.

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 hundreds of 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; and trade associations; and colleges and universities. For additional information visit <http://www.epa.gov/greenpower>.