

Green Power Partnership Program Update



The EPA Green Power Partnership is a voluntary program encouraging organizations to use green power as a way to reduce the environmental impacts associated with conventional electricity use.

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EPA Concludes the 2016-17 College and University Challenge

On April 24, EPA declared the winners of the **2016-2017 College and University Green Power Challenge**. Out of the 36 competing conferences, the Big Ten is again this year's Conference Champion, using nearly 437 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) of green power annually. Participating schools from the **Big Ten** conference are Northwestern University, The Ohio State University, the University of Maryland, the University of Wisconsin, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and the University of Iowa (listed in order by green power procurement size).

Procuring nearly 246 million kWh of green power annually, the **University of Tennessee, Knoxville** is the top individual green power user in the challenge. The University of Tennessee, Knoxville uses more green power than any of the 97 other competing schools and nudged the incumbent **University at Buffalo, State University of New York** into the second spot.

Learn more about the [2016-2017 College and University Green Power Challenge conference champions, including the Individual Conference Champions for each of the competing conferences](#).

Tweet this fact: The 98 schools in @EPA's #EPAGreenPower 2016-17 College and Univ Challenge used 3.2 billion kWh green power this year! bit.ly/20IUy97

April Top Partner List Updates

Along with the final College and University Green Power Challenge results, GPP released updates to its Top Partner Rankings, which feature the leading organizations using green power. Below are a few highlights:

- **National Top 100 Partners:** Existing Partners Google, Apple, Capital One, the NHL, H&M, AstraZeneca MedImmune, and L'Oreal increased their green power use and rankings with major upsells since the last update. A whopping six new Partners also cracked the list, including 24th-ranked Procter & Gamble and 38th-ranked WhiteWave Foods.
- **Top 30 Local Government:** The City of Houston, TX, which remains in the top spot, furthered its lead over the City of Dallas by increasing its green power use by about 150 million kWh. Additionally, the City of San Diego, CA made its debut on the list in the 13th spot with a 31 million kWh green power upsell.
- **Top 30 College and University:** Four new Partners made their debut on the list including Stanford University, the University of California, the University of South Florida, and the University of Vermont, ranked 5th, 9th, 15th, and 21st, respectively.
- **Top 30 Technology and Telecom:** Digital Realty, Equinix, and Iron Mountain ranked 6th, 7th, and 12th, respectively, and increased their green power use with major upsells since the last update. Netflix, a new Partner, also made the list in the 11th spot.

To see what else changed on the Top Partner Rankings this quarter, visit www.epa.gov/greenpower/green-power-partnership-top-partner-rankings.

GPP also updated its [Green Power Communities list](#), which represents towns, villages, cities, counties, or tribal governments in which the local government, businesses, and residents collectively use green power in amounts that meet or exceed EPA's Green Power Community usage requirements. As of April 2017, there are 63 Green Power Communities partnering with EPA, including newcomers Swampscott, MA and El Lago, TX.

Partner Spotlight: Columbia Association

This month's Spotlight features the [Columbia Association](#). Jeremy Scharfenberg, the organization's Energy Manager, answered some questions about their green power use. The Columbia Association is a nonprofit public service corporation dedicated to providing the highest level of service and amenities to the approximately 100,000 residents of Columbia, MD. The association offers recreational, cultural and community services including a welcome center, an art center, three fitness facilities, an ice rink, an indoor swim center, and more than 20 neighborhood and community centers.



Green Power Partnership: Partner Spotlight Q&A

Q. What motivated your organization to use green power?

Environmental stewardship has been a priority for Columbia Association since the Columbia, Maryland community was founded in 1967. In recent years, the association has focused on energy management and the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to advance the overall sustainability of our operations. In 2015, we engaged with a local solar project developer and a renewable energy certificate (REC) retailer to use renewable solar and wind sources for 100 percent of our electricity. In taking these steps, we are serving as a leader in the community in advancing clean energy.

Q. Tell us about your organization's green power procurement.

Columbia Association's multifaceted green power strategy consists of: 1) a 20-year power purchase agreement (PPA) with a 2 megawatt (MW) solar farm; 2) regularly procuring wind RECs; and 3) developing small scale on-site electricity generation where feasible.

The 2 MW solar farm supplies about 25 percent of the association's annual electricity use; under the PPA, we receive electricity through virtual aggregate net-metering and equivalent solar RECs (SRECs). For the remaining 75 percent of our annual electricity use, wind-based RECs were purchased for a three-year period. The association also operates an on-site 20 kilowatt (kW) roof mount and an on-site 5 kW ground mount single-axis tracking system. The association retains all RECs from the on-site PV systems as part of our GHG emissions management effort.



Columbia Association's 2 megawatt solar farm

Q. Describe any innovative green power strategies your organization has, or is planning to implement.

The foundation of Columbia Association's green power strategy is a 20-year PPA with a 2 MW solar farm that includes the provision of solar RECs. We used an innovative approach for the PPA, in that embedded in the agreement is an SREC swap whereby the developer retains the environmental attributes sourced in Maryland and provides an equivalent amount of SRECs from other solar farms in the United States. This allows the developer to retain the high-value local SRECs to support the economics of the project while allowing the association to obtain an equivalent amount of green power. The provision of SRECs under the PPA is for the full 20-year term and embodies a supply commitment of nearly 50,000 SRECs over the lifetime of the agreement.

Q. What do you see as the benefits of using green power and what role does it currently play in your organization's broader business and environmental strategy?

The benefits of our green power efforts are multifaceted. We have reduced our corporate carbon footprint more than 50 percent – significantly reducing the environmental impact of our operations. And corresponding green power marketing and communications efforts have reinforced progressive work to advance the environmental stewardship aspect of our mission in serving the community.

Q. How do you communicate your green power use to consumers, employees, and other stakeholders?

Columbia Association's Energy Management Plan that was developed in 2012 established the goal of reducing scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions by 10 percent by the end of FY2017 relative to a FY2012 baseline. We greatly surpassed the goal in 2015 due to our green power use.

Q. What advice would you give to other organizations interested in using green power, and is there anything you would do differently?

Organizations considering green power should research the various options available to achieve their specific goals. Numerous green power opportunities besides on-site solar PV exist, and organizations can leverage them to meet individual goals. These opportunities include virtual aggregate net-metering, procuring various REC products, or including a green power component to electricity supply purchases.

Q. How do you communicate your green power use to consumers, employees, and other stakeholders?

Columbia Association has broadly promoted its green power use throughout the community via press releases, signage, news articles, social media, our annual report, and our website. We issued press releases associated with the solar farm agreement and also for achieving 100 percent green power use. The association's three fitness clubs have "Clean Energy Commitment" signage prominently displayed at the front entrances – with exposure to approximately 4,000 people each day. The monthly community newsletter, with a circulation of 40,000, has published articles promoting our green power use. Our green power efforts are also communicated regularly through presentations to the community and staff.

Q. How has being an EPA Green Power Partner benefited your organization? Why do you think GPP is a good program to join?

Columbia Association leverages its position in the community to encourage residents and stakeholders to support green power. We are leading by example with our green power efforts and also actively engaging the community by establishing programs to specifically promote green power. Participating in the EPA Green Power Partnership provides credibility and external recognition for our green power use, which reinforces the value of the accomplishment from the perspective of community members and other organizations.

GPP Webinar: Innovative Financing Options & The University Solar Deployment Process

Date: Wednesday, May 17, 2017

Time: 1:00 – 2:00 PM ET

Register: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7007056044509284353>

Join us for this webinar to explore unique and innovative ways in which higher education institutions can finance their solar deployment. Experts from the EPA and two universities will discuss different financing options such as virtual power purchase agreements, student fees, green revolving funds, endowment funding, stakeholder donations, and unique alumni and community arrangements. Hear institutional perspectives and lessons learned, engage in discussion, and gain an understanding of best practices related to the different financing options.

Speakers:

Christopher Kent, U.S. EPA's Green Power Partnership

Myron Willson, Deputy Chief Sustainability Officer, University of Utah

Nainan Desai, Assistant Director Facilities Management, University of South Florida

On Twitter? For Your Tweets about Your Green Power Use, Use #EPAGreenPower

You can share with others your green energy achievements and involvement with GPP. Every tweet that includes #EPAGreenPower will show up on the [GPP home page's](#) Twitter feed. Take a look!



UrbanChestnutBrewing @urbanchestnut · Apr 4

.@EPA has recognized us as an #EPAGreenPower Partner for using renewable energy for 100% of our electricity use! epa.gov/greenpower

IKEA USA News @IKEAUSANews · Mar 1



.@EPA named us 11th on the #EPAGreenPower Partnership's National Top 100 list of green power users, 4th for retailer bit.ly/2IMKBFD



Amphi Public Schools @AmphiSchools · Feb 13

We're No. 3 on the #EPAGreenPower Partnership Top 30 K-12 Schools list of the largest green power users! goo.gl/EL9S4Z #solarpower



Want to Share Feedback with EPA?

Please feel free to share feedback with EPA's Green Power Partnership team. We are always interested to hear how we can be of better service and how to improve the program's value to your organization.

- Do you have an idea for how the program can be improved?
- Do you want to tell us how our partnership has provided your organization value?
- Do you think your organization has a great story to tell?
- Do you have a question about green power and your next move?

Submit your feedback by emailing: klein.melissa@epa.gov

Renewable Energy Markets Conference Reminder and Call for Abstracts Deadline

Organized by the nonprofit Center for Resource Solutions (CRS) and co-sponsored by GPP, REM 2017 will be held October 22-24 in Midtown Manhattan. By attending REM, you will join leaders from federal and state governments, large corporate purchasers, leading utilities and electricity generators, and marketers to discuss clean energy. Attend sessions on project development, policy, market development, and a variety of other topics, and mark your calendars for the 2017 Green Power Leadership Awards Ceremony on Monday, October 23. Don't miss out! For more information, visit: www.renewableenergymarkets.com/.

Call for abstracts extended to May 16, 2017! REM is seeking abstracts for panel sessions that are timely, unique, and informative. Sessions should feature new data or ideas, consideration of important issues, and fresh and informed thinking about where renewable energy markets are headed. For more information, visit www.renewableenergymarkets.com/abstracts/.

DOE Webinar: Utility Green Tariff Programs

Date: Thursday, May 4, 2017

Time: 1:30 to 2:30 PM ET

Register: [FEMP Training course website](#)

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP) will present a new First Thursday Update webinar, [Utility Green Tariff Programs](#), which presents a new option for agencies to purchase renewable energy through their utility: green tariffs. Green tariffs allow large utility customers in traditionally regulated states to procure renewable power from their utility through a special tariff for electricity from a specific renewable energy project—typically through a long-term contract. Instructors will explain how green tariffs are structured and what agencies need to consider when examining this purchasing option. This update will also discuss emerging tariffs and how agencies can work with their utility to create new green-tariff options.

Speakers:

Jenny Heeter, National Renewable Energy Laboratory
Tracy Logan Niro, DOE FEMP
Letha Tawney, World Resources Institute.

The 60-minute training is free of charge, but advanced registration is required to obtain an Internet URL for the presentation. Registration for the broadcast will close on May 3, 2017.

NREL Webinar: Financing for Solar Deployment on University Campuses

Date: Thursday, April 27, 2017

Time: 1:00 to 2:00 PM ET

Register: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/607107821865911297>

University campuses have seen a significant rise in solar deployment over the recent past. This webinar will focus on how campuses can finance solar deployment. Eric O'Shaughnessy (National Renewable Energy Laboratory, NREL) will share information on existing trends in solar deployment at universities. Nicole Harman (Intentional Endowments Network, IEN) will present on IEN's recently developed white paper, "Investing in Clean Energy: Campuses and Endowments." Finally, Eric Rehm (Midwest Renewable Energy Association, MREA) will cover four case studies on different financial models used by universities around the country for solar deployment.

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