

UC San Diego Becoming 'Greenest' University

UC San Diego, a world leader in climate change research, is taking steps to become the leading utilizer of renewable energy among U.S. universities within the next few years.

April 2, 2008

Jim Gogek

UC San Diego, a world leader in climate change research, is taking steps to become the leading utilizer of renewable energy among U.S. universities within the next few years. As UC San Diego celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Keeling Curve, the first measurement of greenhouse gas build up, the university will soon generate 10-15 percent of its annual electrical needs with alternative generating capacity. This highlights a wide range of collaborative efforts by faculty, students and administration to create a campus dedicated to environmental sustainability.

UC San Diego signed a contract in March to build 1 megawatt of photovoltaic (PV) solar energy production. The solar arrays will be constructed atop campus buildings and parking structures. UC San Diego expects to install up to another 1 megawatt of PV capacity within the next year.

The university is preparing to purchase up to 3 megawatts of electrical power produced by Southern California wind farms

UC San Diego will produce 2.4 megawatts from fuel cells powered by renewable methane and by using the methane at its cogeneration plant. The methane fuel will be transported to UC San Diego from the Point Loma sewage treatment plant, where it is produced. The fuel is currently lost by flaring at the plant.

Once in place, the approximately 7.4 megawatts of renewable energy capacity will make UC San Diego the leader in renewable energy solutions among U.S. universities.

"These remarkable achievements in renewable energy demonstrate UC San Diego's local impact, national influence and global reach in one of the most important issues of our time - environmental sustainability," said UC San Diego Chancellor Marye Anne Fox. "Universities are among the leaders of innovation in green research and practices, and UC San Diego stands out among academic institutions."

UC San Diego has negotiated agreements with investors that allow them to install PV systems on campus rooftops, and the university will purchase the energy produced at a negotiated price. The fuel cell electricity generators will be built and operated with similar third-party funding arrangement.

Renewable energy creation is one of many campuswide initiatives that comprise UC San Diego's commitment to environmental sustainability: Learn more at:

Environment and Sustainability at UC San Diego <http://blink.ucsd.edu/Blink/External/Topics/Policy/0,1162,19605,00.html>

Green Campus Overview <http://blink.ucsd.edu/Blink/External/Topics/Policy/0,1162,19561,00.html>

UC San Diego Sustainability Initiative http://esi.ucsd.edu/esiportal/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1

Greenest University Blog <http://greenestuniversity.blogspot.com/>

Media Contact: Jim Gogek, 6858-692-5401