



Energy Empowers

your stories...



from a clean energy economy

Energy Empowers is telling the story how America is building a clean energy economy. By working together, Americans are improving efficiency, building sustainable businesses that create new jobs, and learning new skills to generate clean energy.

It's our mission to put names and faces to the people who work on energy efficiency in the residential, commercial, and industrial sectors and renewable projects, including solar, wind and water, biomass, geothermal, and hydrogen and fuel cells, supported by the Department of Energy and beyond.

Visit <http://eereblogs.energy.gov/energypowers/> to read about the businesses and communities that are changing people's lives, stimulating the economy, and moving us closer to a sustainable future.

Multimedia

In our collection of videos, you'll witness the first-hand stories of people like you who have taken the next steps toward a future of renewed prosperity.

By pushing the limits of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies and supporting some of America's most innovative businesses, we are saving American jobs and continuing to build a clean-energy economy that will improve the lives and reward the ingenuity of the American people.



Powering Up for Recovery in Michigan
Elizabeth Rolinski can't wait to reopen the factory she was once forced to shutter. When the Department of Energy awarded Johnson Controls Inc. a \$300 million grant to manufacture high-performance batteries for electric cars, it helped attract the company to reinvest in American workers in this all-American town.

[Watch the Video](#)



Training for Success in Las Cruces
The Community Action Agency of Southern New Mexico (CAASN) is one of many organizations working to weatherize low-income households across the country. Here is the story of how David Sierra is teaching Larry Martinez a trade that will provide a pathway to a long-term career and immediate income to support his family.

[Watch the Slideshow](#)

Initiative guides Hawaii to the path of energy independence

With 95 percent of its energy coming from oil, Hawaii is the most state in the nation. The Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative is an effort. A partnership between the state and the federal departments of a combination of increased energy efficiency and renewable energy, the state's goal of generating 75 percent of its power with clean...



Illinois company implementing:



J.F. Electric will soon install its own solar modules solar panels, saving money and greening a premier sales team. (Photo courtesy: J.F. Electric)

J.F. Family Limited Partnership has been awarded \$191,000 through the toward the use of solar energy at its Lakeland Parkway property in Illinois is the company headquarters for J.F. Electric Inc. The funding will be used for 100 solar photovoltaic system on the building's roof, creating electricity a...

Green academy helps researchers enter the marketplace

Before wading into the green energy sector, there are crucial things every budding entrepreneur should know. Think like an investor, know your customer, and prove your research is going to solve a problem.



To the business-savvy this advice may seem obvious. But for the academics-minded attending the Green Technology Entrepreneurship Academy, these nuggets are priceless.

We give scientists the language of commercialization," says Andrew Hargadon, a founder of the academy and faculty director at the Center for Entrepreneurship at the University of California, Irvine. "We help them translate...

Rebate program helping Alaskan homeowners

The Alaska state legislature's plan to give all homeowners an incentive to weatherize their homes is a hit.

In 2008, the legislature relaunched the once-dormant Home Energy Rebate Program, which reimburses homeowners up to \$10,000 for every dollar spent making energy-efficient upgrades.



Jason Steinhart sits outside his newly weatherized home with his family. (Photo courtesy: State-owned Alaska Housing Finance Corporation manages the rebate program.)

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Share your stories

More than ever before, we want to hear about your great work in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and the Recovery Act. How has your life been touched? Do you have a story to tell?

If so, we want to hear it. Visit <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/pnp/stories/stories.aspx>

Success Stories

Non-profit making a difference in Louisiana

Change is in the air at SMILE Community Action Agency. The non-profit received a \$3 million American Reinvestment and Recovery Act grant for its weatherization program. With the needed boost in funding Louisiana-based SMILE can increase its reach.

SMILE targets five unique communities, helping locals conserve energy and save money. Venice Roberts, who both coordinates and implements SMILE's weatherization program says there's been a surge in interest and applications, "Everything has changed tremendously. There's been an abundance of people calling about weatherization."

SMILE plans to use part of the funding to increase their local outreach. Venice says more frequent town hall forums will help SMILE promote the benefits of weatherization. By increasing awareness SMILE hopes to make experiences like that of client Sheila Sturgis a reality for more residents.



SMILE Weatherization Coordinator Venice Roberts shows client Sheila Sturgis an attic tent, which conserves energy and decreases costs. | Photo by Susannah Malbreaux

"It was a very good experience, they did a good job and were professional" says Sheila of the weatherization work done on her home. Sheila says after the upgrades her energy bill has decreased by 20 percent, "It's really saving us a lot of money." She adds "I would recommend it to others and yes I have passed it along."

San Antonio spurs increase in solar energy production

They might always remember the Alamo, but such tourist attractions aren't the only thing spurring growth in San Antonio — this Texas city is incorporating solar power into its diversified energy portfolio.

In June, CPS Energy signed a 20-year Power Purchase Agreement to develop a solar project using SunCatcher power systems. These large, concave bowls look like large satellite dishes. Not only will these systems help power Texas, but also they are designed to take advantage of tried-and-true automotive supply chains in the U.S. Rust Belt, using stamped sheet metal, which could help bring new life to manufacturers there.



SunCatcher systems harness solar energy | Photo courtesy CPS Energy

"The widespread application of solar energy will create new jobs [and have] a beneficial economic impact," Anita Ledbetter, executive director of Build San Antonio Green, the city's residential green building program, says, adding that there are also benefits to be had in better air quality and reduction on the electrical grid's load.

The SunCatcher announcement was followed by the Blue Wing Solar project, a solar electricity production program. This installation will help CPS Energy toward its ambitious goal of achieving renewable-energy capacity equal to 20 percent of customers' peak demand. CPS Energy estimates Blue Wing will create about 100 full-time jobs during construction and several permanent jobs during the project's operation.

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