

June 29, 2010

[Net benefits of biomass power under scrutiny](#)

New York Times - Jun 18

Biomass proponents see themselves as a positive force in the effort against fossil fuels, the New York Times reports. But power generated by burning wood, plants and other organic material, which makes up 50% of all renewable energy produced in the U.S., according to federal statistics, is facing increased scrutiny and opposition. Critics say that's because it is not as climate-friendly as once thought, and the pollution it causes in the short run may outweigh its long-term benefits. The opposition to biomass power threatens its viability as a renewable energy source when the country is looking to diversify its energy portfolio.

RENEWABLE ENERGY FOCUS

[California alternative energy legislation gets broad backing](#)

L.A. Times - Jun 24

A compromise bill in the California Legislature would require privately and publicly owned electric utilities to generate a third of their power from wind, solar and other clean sources by 2020. The Gulf of Mexico oil spill is spurring California legislators and conflicting interest groups to settle past differences and adopt the nation's toughest renewable energy law to reduce the state's dependence on oil and serve as a model for other states. The effort is supported by Gov. Schwarzenegger, who is eager to solidify his environmental legacy before leaving office in January, even though he vetoed a similar bill last fall.

Related News:

[California renewable power bill passes first test](#)

[PG&E dedicates new solar generation station](#)

PG&E - Jun 23

PG&E celebrated the completion of its Vaca-Dixon Solar Station, the flagship project of a major new solar energy program launched by the utility. The two-megawatt (MW) Vaca-Dixon Solar Station, named after the electrical substation it neighbors, is the pilot project under a five-year plan for the utility to develop up to 250 MW of new solar photovoltaic (PV) power in the state. PG&E's program also calls for independent developers to build up to 250 MW of additional solar PV facilities.

[Solarmer Energy partners with NREL](#)

SocalTech - Jun 22

L.A.-based [Solarmer Energy](#), the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) spinoff that is developing flexible plastic solar panels, and the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), [said](#) that they have signed a research and development deal to work on improving the lifetime of plastic solar cells. According to the firms, they will explore the lifetime and stability of the organic photovoltaic (OPV) devices that make up the energy-harvesting layers of plastic solar cells, with NREL evaluating the lifetime of Solarmer's technology.

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Upcoming Events

[LABC Sustainability Series Solar Forum](#)
Los Angeles, CA
July 8, 2010

[SunPower achieves record 24.2% efficiency for silicon cell](#)

Brighter Energy - Jun 24

SunPower Corp. has achieved a world record efficiency for a full-scale silicon solar cell. The cell was verified as 24.2% efficient at converting sunlight into electricity, a rate confirmed by the Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory. The company produced the cell at its manufacturing plant in the Philippines. SunPower said improving the efficiency of solar power generation could reduce the effective costs of the technology by boosting the amount of energy generation that can be sold from solar equipment.

[Privacy concerns challenge smart grid rollout](#)

Reuters - Jun 25

Wary homeowners could impede the rollout of smart technologies without secure controls over data and access to appliances, executives said. Supporters stress consumer benefits, but the data-gathering power of meters has prompted comparisons with spies in people's homes. Martin Pollock of Siemens Energy says the technology to record energy consumption can allow outsiders to infer "how many people are in the house, what they do, whether they're upstairs, downstairs, do you have a dog, when do you habitually get up, when did you get up this morning, when do you have a shower: masses of private data." Pollock says "the regulator needs to send a strong signal to say that the data belongs to consumers and consumers alone. We believe that's a blocker to people adopting the technology."

[Another U.S. clean energy generator finds a home abroad](#)

ClimateWire - Jun 24

The technology for high-efficiency fuel cell power plants could be here now, if the right policies were in place to bring it to the mainstream. That was part of the message at a technology workshop hosted by the U.S. Energy Association (USEA). USEA is a collection of interested groups ranging from oil companies and power utilities to universities and federal agencies. The challenge for fuel cell researchers over the years has been to find the most efficient way to achieve the current. For decades, the Department of Energy has encouraged the commercialization of fuel cell technology for power plants. In partnership with Connecticut-based FuelCell Energy Inc., it has developed a molten carbonate fuel cell, which the company has incorporated into its so-called Direct FuelCell, or DFC. But despite some interest in California and many parts of the world, FuelCell Energy's biggest orders have come from South Korea.

NOTABLE RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS AND DEALS

[PG&E partners with SunRun in \\$100M solar financing deal](#)

PG&E - Jun 21

Pacific Energy Capital and [SunRun](#) will partner to provide \$100 million for residential solar installation financing. The utility says this is the largest such deal to date, providing the financing for over 3,500 new home solar installations. SunRun, based in San Francisco, provides solar power through leases and power purchase agreements (PPAs). The company installs the solar panels, often for free, and then charges monthly fees to pay back the costs of the installation and maintenance. The new fund will focus on markets in Arizona, California, Colorado, Massachusetts and New Jersey, markets where SunRun says it already has more than 4,000 customers.

Related News:

[A \\$100M pool for solar financing](#)

[Renewable Energy Finance Forum \(REFF\) West](#)

San Francisco, CA

September 29-30, 2010

[ICSC RetailGreen Conference & Trade Exposition on](#)

[Sustainability, Energy &](#)

[Environmental Design](#)

Scottsdale, AZ

October 12-14, 2010

[Solar Power International 2010](#)

Los Angeles, CA

October 12-14, 2010

Recent Opportunities

[Pacific Gas and Electric's 2010 Solar Photovoltaic Program Power Purchase Agreement Request for Offers](#)

[County of Nevada's Request for Proposals for Solar Energy Generating Systems](#)

[Los Angeles World Airport's Request for Concepts and Qualifications For the Potential Lease for Development of Renewable Energy Project at Palmdale](#)

[Southern California Edison 2010 Solar Photovoltaic Program's Request For Proposals From Independent Power Producers](#)

[San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Request for Qualifications for Design-Build Solar Photovoltaic Projects](#)

[ArcLight sells U.S. solar development projects to NRG Energy](#)

Electric Light & Power - Jun 21

Investment firm [ArcLight Capital Partners](#) is selling nine solar power projects to New Jersey firm [NRG Energy](#) for an undisclosed sum. The projects, comprising 450 megawatts of capacity in California and Arizona, are being developed by U.S. Solar Ventures Holdings (U.S. Solar), which is owned by the investment firm and U.S. Solar's own management. NRG Solar said the projects ranged in size from 20MW to 99MW, with the potential to be operational between 2011 and 2013.

[SECP, KISCO collaborate to build solar farms in Southern California](#)

A to Z of Building - Jun 22

[Sustainable Energy Capital Partners](#) (SECP), a California-based developer of renewable energy projects, announced a joint venture partnership with KISCO Corporation to build large-scale solar farms in Southern California. The partnership allows for both companies to develop up to five solar projects and to incorporate KISCO, with their GETWATT thin-film PV modules, as one of the module suppliers. The first of five solar projects has already received a 20-year power purchase agreement from Southern California Edison (SCE) for the development of a 20-megawatt solar farm.

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