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# Renewable Energy Update

an Allen Matkins  
market intelligence  
publication

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attorneys at law

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## [Senate climate bill compromises frighten, infuriate some enviro groups](#)

*Greenwire - Mar 22*

With President Obama in the White House and Democrats in firm control of Capitol Hill, many environmentalists saw a strong lineup focused on taking action to curb global warming, but after the House passed a sweeping climate bill last June, the effort stalled in the Senate. Now environmentalists are being asked to agree to compromises that senators say are needed to get something to pass. Twenty groups recently issued a statement praising the Senate's lead negotiators for their efforts and said the bill's goal for curbing emissions 17% below 2005 levels by 2020 "represents the leadership needed by the U.S. Senate to create jobs, increase energy security, reduce carbon pollution and protect public health."

## Renewable Energy Focus

### [Obama aides meet with Senate Dems to map strategy for climate bill](#)

*ClimateWire - Mar 25*

President Obama's top aides met with Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and Democratic committee leaders to map out a strategy for winning votes on a comprehensive energy and climate change bill once lawmakers return from their spring break. According to a Senate Democratic leadership aide, the Obama officials pledged to work with the committee leaders once Sens. John Kerry (D-Mass.), Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) and Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.) release their bill. Aides to Kerry, Graham and Lieberman plan to write their bill over the recess, with U.S. EPA also soon to start a six-to-eight week analysis. Their bill is expected to set a first-ever price for the industrial releases of greenhouse gas emissions and expand domestic production of oil, gas and nuclear power.

### [U.S. moves to boost federal level hydropower development](#)

*RechargeNews - Mar 25*

The Obama administration is moving to improve coordination and align priorities among federal agencies to support development of environmentally sustainable hydropower, which provided 7% of U.S. electricity supply in 2009. A [memorandum of understanding](#) between the U.S. Energy and Interior Departments and Army Corps of Engineers is being touted as a new approach to hydropower development. Possibilities include placing hydrokinetic turbines that harness the energy of water flow upstream from existing dams or installing more traditional turbines at sites. Another option is to use more energy efficient turbines to replace older ones. There are an estimated 75,000 dams in the U.S. but fewer than 2,300 are believed to generate electricity.

### [House energy panel approves electricity grid security bill](#)

*Dow Jones Newswires - Mar 24*

A U.S. House of Representatives energy committee has approved a bill giving federal regulators greater authority to protect the nation's electricity infrastructure from attacks through the Internet. The bill -- which authorizes the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to order utilities to take certain security measures -- comes a day after the FERC chairman warned that cyber attacks were an "extremely serious threat." According to reports in The Wall Street Journal quoting senior intelligence officials, Chinese, Russian and other cyberspies have hacked into the U.S. electrical

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#### Recent Events

Allen Matkins has attended numerous events addressing developments in the renewable energy field in 2009. A [summary can be found here](#).

Allen Matkins hosted the successful panel discussion on

grid and left behind programs that could be used to disrupt the system. The Department of Homeland Security has also said hackers could use communications networks to physically destroy power plants.

### [Solar scorecard tracks PV's real 'green' nature](#)

*ElectroIQ - Mar 25*

An updated [scorecard](#) tracking more than a dozen top global suppliers finds that German suppliers come out on top among solar module companies in environmental and social rankings. The Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition's 2010 Solar Company Scorecard builds on recommendations from a January 2009 campaign that detailed hazards related to manufacturing and disposal of solar PV panels, and called for actions to move toward creating a sustainable sector, such as take-back policies for solar panels and reduction and eventual elimination of toxic materials. Fourteen self-reporting companies representing 24% of the 2008 module market share (around 6MW) supplied data.

### [Group formed to sell consumers on smart grid](#)

*CNET - Mar 21*

A handful of companies have launched the nonprofit Smart Grid Consumer Coalition, an effort aimed at promoting the benefits to consumers of modernizing the electricity grid. The creation of the group comes at a time when backlashes against the installation of smart meters have flared up in California and, more recently, Texas. After utility Pacific Gas & Electric installed two-way meters at households in Bakersfield, Calif., some customers complained that the meters were malfunctioning and causing higher bills. Although the higher bills corresponded with hotter weather, and thus more energy consumption, the situation is still being studied. The Smart Grid Consumer Coalition will focus on understanding what issues need to be addressed to improve customer education and acceptance.

### [California grid preparing for greener future](#)

*Reuters - Mar 26*

Six or more major new transmission lines will be needed to meet California clean air and clean water standards that affect the changing production and use of electricity, the state's Independent System Operator said in its [five-year outlook](#). The grid agency's strategic plan "addresses the dramatic changes required of the electricity industry in California over the next decade." The report outlines the ISO's strategy to help the state meet its goals to boost use of electricity from sources that cut emissions of carbon dioxide; to adapt to a more intelligent power grid and the use of electric vehicles and electric storage devices. California will need 55,657 gigawatt-hours of new renewable generation to meet the state's 20% standard by 2013 and more than 100,000 GWh to meet the 33% standard by 2020, according to the ISO report.

### [Climate law won't hurt California economy: report](#)

*L.A. Times - Mar 24*

California's overall economy will not suffer, and many parts of it will prosper under the state's landmark global warming law, according to [an analysis](#) by the California Air Resources Board that rebuts an industry-led ballot effort to suspend the regulations. The report comes after earlier projections were criticized as flimsy. It was vetted by a panel of independent academics and policy experts. A group that includes the California Chamber of Commerce, the California Manufacturers & Technology Association, and various companies issued a report ahead of the report's release saying that implementing the climate law could cost the state 485,000 jobs by 2020, a sharp contrast to the air board's finding that the law would yield a net increase of 10,000 jobs.

### [California lawmakers approve green tax breaks to create jobs](#)

[Renewable Energy Project Finance](#). For a copy of the program materials, [click here](#).

#### Upcoming Events

[AWEA Windpower 2010 Conference and Expo](#)  
Dallas, TX  
**May 23-26, 2010**

[ICSC RetailGreen Conference & Trade Exposition on Sustainability, Energy & Environmental Design](#)  
Scottsdale, AZ  
**October 12-14, 2010**

#### Recent Opportunities

[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](#)

[City of Willows Opportunity](#)

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*Associated Press - Mar 22*

California lawmakers sent Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger two jobs-related bills that would extend a \$10,000 homebuyer's tax credit through the end of the year and give a tax break to the green-technology industry. The Senate and Assembly passed the bills with bipartisan support in hopes of promoting housing construction and making California more inviting to businesses involved in developing alternative energy.

### **[Developer fees to spur California clean energy permitting](#)**

*BrighterEnergy - Mar 24*

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has signed a bill to boost California's permit process for renewable energy projects. The new initiative will see renewable energy developers paying a fee into a fund that will put extra staff resources into assessing permit applications. Called the Renewable Energy Development Fee Trust, the new fund will also pay for mitigation measures, such as the purchase of land to allow for wildlife habitat relocations. Fee levels will be determined by the California Energy Commission and the Department of Fish and Game.

### **[Smart water meters take hold in California](#)**

*GreenInc. - Mar 23*

Smart water meters are taking off in California, according to a report from the California Energy Commission. According to the report, more than half of the state's water utilities have some smart meters in their service areas. California cities are supposed to slash water use by 20% by 2020, under a law passed last year. Nationwide, 28% of water systems have some smart metering installed, according to the report -- a number that seems to bear out a recent study by Oracle that emphasized the reluctance of many water utilities to add smart meters. Smart water meters can record water use data hourly or even more frequently, in contrast to a conventional meter, which is read only every few months.

### **[PG&E proposal could hike rates in Bay Area](#)**

*Mercury News - Mar 24*

Many Silicon Valley residents could see their electricity bills rise by more than \$100 a year under a PG&E proposal that would cut rates for customers who use the most energy. PG&E says the change is needed because people in many parts of the state -- particularly areas where high summer temperatures result in heavy use of air conditioners -- have been hit with excessively high rate increases in recent years. But over the same period, a company spokesman said, rates have failed to keep pace with inflation for other customers, including many in the Bay Area. Advocates for some consumer and environmental groups said the proposal, which must be approved by the California Public Utilities Commission (PUC), would discourage PG&E customers from cutting back on electricity use. The proposed change is expected to be debated by the (PUC) through the rest of this year.

## **[Notable Renewable Energy Projects and Deals](#)**

### **[Terra-Gen raises financing for California wind farm](#)**

*CleanTech - Mar 22*

New York-based [Terra-Gen Power](#) has raised \$394 million in financing to develop the first phase of a wind energy project located in Tehachapi. The financing comprises a seven-year loan, a bridge loan to an investment tax credit cash grant from the US Department of Energy, and ancillary credit facilities. The first phase of the Alta Wind Energy Centre will use 100 of GE Energy's 1.5MW-capacity wind turbines. The completed project will have a 3GW capacity, and Terra-Gen has signed a power purchase agreement to supply 1.55GW of electricity from the wind farm to Southern California Edison (SCE). The project is expected to be the first to interconnect with SCE's \$1.8 billion Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project.

### [Chevron unveils solar panel test site](#)

San Francisco Gate - Mar 23

Chevron Corp. has turned the site of a former Bakersfield oil refinery into a test bed for advanced solar panels, letting the company compare how well different cells perform over time. The facility includes 7,700 solar panels from eight companies. Over the next three years, Chevron will see how well each technology performs, compared to the others. The experiment, dubbed Project Brightfield, will help Chevron decide which kinds of panels to install on its own properties, as well as other businesses. The Brightfield panels, together, can generate up to 740 KW of electricity.

Related News:

[Chevron tests solar power projects](#)

### [Executive shakeup at Nanosolar](#)

GreenInc. - Mar 22

Nanosolar, a solar start-up in Silicon Valley, said it has replaced its co-founder and chief executive, Martin Roscheisen, with Geoff Tate, a veteran of the chip industry. Backed by top venture capital firms and Google's founders, Nanosolar has raised half a billion dollars to commercialize a solar technology that Roscheisen has claimed is more efficient and less expensive than that of the industry leader First Solar. The company declined to give details of Roscheisen's departure as chief executive, but said that he remained a director. Nanosolar is one of several green technology firms that have replaced their leadership recently as top executives at Aurora Biofuels, Clipper Windpower and SolarReserve have stepped down.

Nanosolar manufactures a solar cell made from copper indium gallium (di)selenide.

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