

May 11, 2010

[NREL Highlights Utility Green Power Leaders](#)

NREL - May 3

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) released its annual assessment of utility green power programs. Using information provided by utilities, NREL developed Top 10 rankings of utility programs for 2009 in the following categories: total sales of renewable energy to program participants, total number of customer participants, the percentage of customer participation, green power sales as a percentage of total utility retail electricity sales, and the lowest price premium charged for a green power program using new renewable resources. Ranked by renewable energy sales (kWh/year), Austin Energy in Austin, Texas sold the largest amount of renewable energy in the nation through its voluntary green power program. Rounding out the top five are Portland General Electric (Oregon), PacifiCorp (Ore. and five other states), the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (Calif.), and Xcel Energy (Col., Minn., Wis. and New Mexico). Ranked by the percentage of customer participation, the top utilities are City of Palo Alto Utilities (Calif.), Portland General Electric, Madison Gas and Electric Company (Wis.), the Sacramento Municipal Utility District, and the City of Naperville (Ill.).

RENEWABLE ENERGY FOCUS

[Kerry says climate bill unveiling soon](#)

Reuters - May 5

U.S. Senator John Kerry brushed off setbacks to passing climate change legislation, saying he hoped to unveil a compromise bill soon while stressing that consumers would be protected from energy price hikes. Kerry's optimism, which has held through more than seven months of difficult negotiations in the Senate on how to reduce domestic pollution blamed for global warming, came as some in Congress were saying the effort was dead. Kerry has recently faced two possibly insurmountable problems. The only Senate Republican willing to negotiate a climate bill with him, Lindsey Graham, dropped out of the effort, ostensibly over an unrelated tiff on immigration reform. Also, a Gulf of Mexico oil spill has brought serious new questions about the kind of expanded offshore oil drilling the compromise climate bill would foster.

Related News:

[Kerry, Edison and the energy quest](#)
[Climate bill could be harmed by Gulf spill](#)

[U.S. CO2 emissions fell 7% in 2009: report](#)

SustainableBusiness - May 6

U.S. carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions fell a record 7% in 2009, due to economic recession and more efficient fuel use according to [statistics](#) released by the Energy Information Administration. Emissions have declined in three of the last four years, but 2009 was "exceptional," the EIA said, representing the largest absolute and percentage decline (405 million metric tons or 7%) since the agency began collecting annual data in 1949. The reduction reflects a combination of factors, including some particular to the economic downturn, other special circumstances during the year, and some factors that may reflect persistent trends in the economy and energy use. EIA says changes in carbon dioxide emissions can be broken down into four major contributing factors:

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Upcoming Events

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

population, per capita GDP, energy intensity of the economy, and carbon intensity of the energy supply. All but population fell in 2009.

[DOE, USDA announce funding for biomass research](#)

Sustainable Business - May 7

The Departments of Energy (DOE) and Agriculture (USDA) jointly [announced](#) up to \$33 million in funding for research and development of technologies and processes to produce biofuels, bioenergy and high-value biobased products. The funding announcement is for several types of projects aimed at creating a diverse group of economically and environmentally sustainable sources of renewable biomass. Section 9008(e)(3) of the Food Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 provides direction and guidance on the technical areas addressed by the Biomass Research and Development Initiative, (BRDI). The technical areas are feedstocks development, biofuels and biobased products development, and biofuels development analysis. BRDI requires that each proposed project integrate all three of the technical areas.

[U.S. biomass assistance plan drives down biomass costs](#)

Timber Industry Magazine - May 7

The introduction of the [Federal Biomass Crop Assistance Program](#) (BCAP) has led to a drop in biomass costs in two of the major U.S. markets, according to the North American Wood Fibre Review. BCAP, designed to alleviate biomass costs in an effort to bring more raw material to the market, is currently suspended after getting underway in 2009. More than \$500 million had been allocated to BCAP in the initial phase, though only \$170 million to date has been released. The program is expected to be reinstated in the fall. In northern California and northern New England, BCAP has had the effect of bringing out additional volumes of forest residues and reducing delivered costs. In the first quarter of 2010, prices fell almost 30% in northern California from the previous quarter.

["Bladeless" wind turbine firm aims to win over Nimbys](#)

BusinessGreen - May 7

A "bladeless" wind turbine that has been designed to pacify protestors who dislike the visual and noise impact of traditional three-blade turbines could soon be launched. Startup [Solar Aero Research](#) claims its soon-to-be-released Fuller Wind Turbine circumvents many of the objections to the traditional three-bladed wind turbine by reducing noise levels and avoiding any form of radar interference or injuries to wildlife. The completely enclosed device secured a patent last month and, after six years of development, Solar Aero is now looking to start manufacturing next year and is in talks to find licensees to produce the units. California-based [Nordic Windpower](#) is currently working on a twin-blade turbine.

[MIT researchers print solar cell on paper](#)

CNET - May 5

Scientists at MIT have successfully coated paper with a solar cell, part of a suite of research projects aimed at energy breakthroughs. The printed solar cells are still in the research phase and are years from being commercialized, but the technique, in which paper is coated with organic semiconductor material using a process similar to an inkjet printer, is a promising way to lower the weight of solar panels. The materials MIT researchers used are carbon-based dyes, and the cells are about 1.5% to 2% efficient at converting sunlight to electricity. MIT professor Karen Gleason headed the research and has submitted a paper for scientific review, but it has not yet been published. Officials said this is the first time a solar cell has been printed on paper.

[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

[*NEW* Solar Energy Projects at Various Kern County Waste Management Properties](#)

[UC Regents' University of Irvine Solar Photovoltaic Renewable Energy Project Request For Proposals](#)

[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](#)

[Clean energy M&A: six trends to watch](#)

GreentechMedia - May 6

According to Jamie Boyd, senior vice-president at Cascadia Capital, clean energy M&A activity is going to be one of the big stories of 2010. Boyd [notes](#) there are three main reasons that the size of the average clean energy M&A transaction will grow. First, upstream solar players from around the world will continue purchasing downstream players. Second, the wind power segment will continue on its vertical and global path and third, the solid and steady consolidation in the smart grid space will continue. Boyd describes six major opportunities in clean energy M&A to watch through 2010: wind, solar, smart grid, energy storage, energy efficiency, and water.

[Energy storage ancillary services market set for big growth: analysis](#)

Renew Grid Magazine - May 4

According to a new report from [Pike Research](#), global investment in ancillary services systems for electric power will grow from \$227 million in 2010 to \$6.6 billion by 2019. Ancillary services, which include applications such as frequency regulation, spinning reserve, voltage control and other fast-response storage services, are designed to support power generation, transmission and distribution systems. Analysts say lithium ion batteries and flywheels have emerged as strong choices for ancillary services. Other technologies, such as pumped hydro, compressed air and flow batteries, will also have a role in this segment of the electricity sector.

[Tehachapi renewable transmission project completes phase one](#)

Greentech Media - May 5

California's first transmission project built specifically for moving renewable power has completed its [first phase](#). The initial segment of Southern California Edison's Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project will provide 700 megawatts of clean energy to its customers. Ultimately, the infrastructure will move 4,500 megawatts of electricity from wind, solar and other alternative sources from the Tehachapi Valley to approximately 3 million homes across Los Angeles County. The final price tag for the 173 miles of updated grid is slated to approach \$2 billion.

Related News:

[California high-voltage line celebrated as path to the future](#)

[PUC shifts position, blocks rule on renewable energy](#)

Capitol Weekly - May 6

The state Public Utilities Commission, in an abrupt and dramatic shift of position, voted to block its rule limiting to 25% the level of out-of-state renewable power that utilities can use to count toward their California-imposed renewable energy goals. The decision was viewed as a defeat for environmentalists and labor, who argued that a greater level of in-state credits would be more beneficial to the environment and provide jobs within the state. The state's major investor-owned utilities and out-of-state energy providers had sought the move, contending the ability to count out-of-state renewable power would spark economic development and lead to competitively priced energy. The PUC's action halts a March 11 decision in which the commission voted unanimously to limit the out-of-state level to 25%.

[PG&E told to stop campaign against energy program](#)

Associated Press - May 4

State energy regulators are telling Pacific Gas and Electric Co. to put an end to a component of its campaign against Marin County's new public power program. In a letter to PG&E, the California Public Utilities Commission said the utility's phone calls and newspaper ads encouraging Marin residents to drop the program violate state regulations. The commission says PG&E is supposed to cooperate with the new Marin Energy Authority, not try to undermine it, under a 2002 state law. The authority is expected to begin buying power and supplying it to local residents over PG&E transmission lines, with a supply to include more renewable energy.

[Measure to suspend greenhouse gas law appears headed for November ballot](#)

L.A. Times - May 3

Backers of a measure to suspend implementation of the state's greenhouse gas law until unemployment drops to 5.5% have submitted more than 800,000 signed petitions to qualify the measure for the November ballot. A coalition of anti-tax and small business groups, with funding from out-of-state oil companies, held a news conference in Sacramento before handing in the petitions. Jon Coupal, president of the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Assn., said the measure is an effort to "return California's economy to some semblance of sanity." Coupal said the measure would cost the state more than 1 million jobs, far outpacing any potential job gains from new, "green-tech" jobs.

Related News:

[California may vote to freeze landmark climate law](#)

NOTABLE RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS AND DEALS

[San Diego-based Envision Solar goes public](#)

San Diego Union-Tribune - May 4

San Diego's [Envision Solar](#), which designs carports to turn parking lots and garages into sources of electricity, said Monday it has gone public through a reverse merger. The seven-employee company sells pole-mounted solar panels, which it calls Solar Trees, that convert sunlight into electricity and at the same time shade cars. In the deal, Envision stockholders purchased a publicly traded corporation, Casita Enterprises, based in El Cajon, then merged it with Envision, gaining the ability to have its stock traded over the counter. The company has designed installations for the University of California San Diego, Kyocera and a McDonald's restaurant in Pacific Beach. In addition to the carports, Envision says it is working on charging stations for plug-in vehicles, solar systems for homes, and prefabricated buildings with integrated solar arrays for use in the developing world and in places where power is not readily available.