Renewable Energy
Reducing reliance on fossil fuels has social, economic, and environmental benefits

HIGHLIGHTS

- Emory aims to self-generate 10% of energy used on campus to replace fossil fuel sources by 2025.
- Sustainable technologies for producing energy are employed across Emory's campus, including solar photovoltaic power, co-generation from Emory's steam plant, biofuel used in Emory’s Cliff shuttles, and upcoming geothermal technologies for the new Campus Life Center.
- With the enactment of HB 57, The Solar Power Free-Market Financing Act of 2015, Georgia became the first state in the Southeastern U.S. to legislatively approve private, third party sales of electricity from onsite solar systems as a means of financing solar energy for Georgia businesses, institutions, schools and homes. With third party financing now legal in Georgia, Emory hopes to install more cost effective solar energy systems in the future.

BENEFITS

- Renewable energy installations can provide important teaching and research opportunities on campus and serve as nationally-important demonstration sites.
- Rooftop solar installations can “leapfrog the need for large-scale, centralized power grids and accelerate access to affordable, clean electricity – becoming a powerful tool for eliminating poverty.” (Project Drawdown)
- Renewable energy sources exist over wide geographical areas, as opposed to fossil fuel sources, which are concentrated in relatively few global locales.
- Renewable energy generation can result in increased energy security, climate change mitigation, and the creation of jobs.

HOW IT WORKS

- **Cogeneration**: A 1mW combined heat and power system operates in Emory’s steam plant. This system recovers mechanical heat produced by Emory’s natural gas generators. This heat is added to a steam system, spins a turbine, and generates even more electricity from the same amount of fuel. 1 Mw is roughly enough to power 1,000 average homes.
- **Solar Power**: Emory has installed rooftop solar on 1762 Clifton Road and the North Decatur Building. Together these panels generate 265 kWh of energy preventing the emission equivalent of burning 196 pounds of fossil fuels.
- Six 70-watt solar panels outside of the Few and Evans Residence Halls pump water from an underground cistern into the waste water system for toilet flushing.

Emory faces local challenges for installing renewable energy systems:

- state and federal tax incentives do not benefit nonprofits such as Emory;
- the utility’s interpretation of current state law creates hurdles for power purchase agreements;
- and offsite generation of renewable energy while retaining the Renewable Energy Credits currently violates Georgia state law.
A small solar installation provides solar power for a portion of the energy needed at the Water Hub.

Biofuel: Cliff Shuttle fleet is 100 percent alternatively fueled by biodiesel, made from recycled cooking oil from our cafeterias.

LEARN MORE

For more information on Emory’s renewable energy portfolio and efforts, visit the Energy and Utilities department website.

QUESTIONS?

For questions about renewable energy at Emory, email emorysustainability@emory.edu.