

Indiana advancing in alternative energy

The convergence of technology, coupled with advances in renewable and bio-energy, is creating a profound impact on the national and global energy agenda.

One can easily identify over 100 prominent national organizations that are working diligently on these efforts; the list ranges from research at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, funded by our Department of Energy, to policy debate at the Energy Center Research Council, chaired by Federal Express Chairman Fred Smith. Even local resident Sara Snow, host of CNN.com's "Living Green with Sara Snow," is receiving national attention.

What is desirable for Indiana is to become a recognized resource in contributing to the national agenda. Hoosiers who want to see the work being done can visit several northern Indiana sites. These include the Fowler Ridge Wind Farm in Benton County, BioTown USA in Reynolds, Central Indiana Ethanol in Marion and the K-fuel project in Kokomo. In southwestern Indiana, we have the construction of a 630-megawatt Clean Coal Gasification Plant in Edwardsport by Duke Energy with a goal of making one of the nation's first demonstrations of carbon capture and sequestration.

At Purdue University, the Energy Center at Discovery Park is working diligently to establish a research presence that will entail applied science for an array of national emerging issues. Recently, Indiana

University has established the Center for Research in Energy and the Environment, as well as the Richard G. Lugar Center for Renewable Energy at IUPUI. A collaborative effort has been established between IU, Purdue and IUPUI campuses known as the Indiana Consortium for Research in Energy Systems and Policy.

These academic endeavors share a vision to become national contributors to our growing need for solutions and innovative methods of addressing the increasing demand for energy, while managing our finite natural resources and reducing greenhouse gases.

I encourage all Hoosiers to take notice of the wonderful work being done here in our back yards, and become involved in contributing to our challenging national agenda. Helping children to better understand sustainable environments, participating in grass-roots efforts or making a modest financial contribution to any of the wonderful organizations engaged in future energy efforts are a few ways individuals and families can become involved.

Our energy future is a global imperative, and presents significant regional opportunity. Indiana must continue demonstrating the ability to contribute toward solving the converging and complex energy needs of tomorrow—and we must do that today.

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