

Liz Pursell, Director of Communications,
(619) 691-5296

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CHULA VISTA SELECTED AS SITE FOR NATIONAL ENERGY RESEARCH CENTER
U.S. Department of Energy Supports Effort

The City of Chula Vista today announced that it has signed an agreement to establish a national energy research center that will transform the city into a living laboratory for energy research and demonstration projects. Working with several high profile partners, including the U.S. Department of Energy, the city will become a showcase for new technologies and “energy smart” urban planning.

“This partnership will play a key role in securing our energy future,” said Chula Vista Mayor Stephen C. Padilla. “This research has the potential to substantially reduce our community’s energy consumption and that means cleaner air and better use of our natural resources. What we learn here will be applied not only locally, but throughout California, across the U.S. and around the world.”

In creating the new National Energy Center for Sustainable Communities, Chula Vista will partner with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE); the Illinois-based Gas Technology Institute (GTI), which is the nation's leading natural gas research and development organization; and the Center for Energy Studies at San Diego State University, a leader in studying energy and its impact on society.

Sustainable communities focus on finding innovative ways to improve the quality of life for today’s population without compromising the needs of future generations.

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The partners will launch a capital campaign to construct a 40,000 square foot headquarters building for the National Energy Center at the site of Chula Vista's new University Park and Research Center in Otay Ranch. The building itself will be a demonstration of advanced design and energy technologies. Until it is constructed, the National Energy Center's operations will be housed within San Diego State's Center for Energy Studies.

"With this new center, Chula Vista will make a significant contribution to the international community's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions," said Doug Newman, Executive Director of sustainable community energy research at GTI. "The models and tools we create will help all cities, from Chula Vista to Beijing, meet the needs of their citizens with climate-friendly energy technologies."

Alan Sweedler, the director of San Diego State's Center for Energy Studies, noted that urban energy use is an increasingly critical issue in global climate change and the growing competition for energy and other national resources.

"Eighty percent of the U.S. population lives in cities, and they account for 80% of the nation's energy consumption," Sweedler said. "By some estimates, half of the world's people will live in cities by next year, many of them with inadequate housing, undrinkable water and polluted air. The world urgently needs new approaches—new models—to design, build and manage our communities."

GTI and DOE are also working together to create a global network of energy research and demonstration centers that will collaborate with the U.S. National Energy Center in Chula Vista. The first of these centers are now emerging in China, Israel, Japan, Argentina and the United Kingdom.

"These centers will be an important part of the administration's Clean Energy Initiative and its strategy for energy-efficient sustainable development, nationally and globally," said Larisa Dobriansky, DOE's Deputy Assistant Secretary for National Energy Policy. "The Chula Vista center is a superb example of diverse partners working together to introduce cleaner and more advanced technologies in the marketplace through integrated community energy systems."

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