

# THE INSIDE STORY



## “Green Power Partner” Recognition

The Western Pennsylvania Energy Consortium (WPEC), founded by Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh in 2007, was recognized in June 2009, as a Green Power Partner by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Green Power Partner status is awarded to organizations that purchase a minimum of 10 percent of their electricity from renewable energy sources and are reducing the risks associated with climate change by supporting sustainable technologies for businesses and communities.

The EPA chose the Western Pennsylvania Energy Consortium as a Green Power Partner because of its success in greenhouse gas reduction. Over the course of five years, the consortium will purchase enough renewable energy electricity to reduce the groups’ carbon emissions by 44,800 tons of carbon dioxide.

In January 2008, WPEC successfully executed a joint purchase of 115 million kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity with a requirement that 10 percent come from renewable sources. The combined purchase is saving taxpayers an estimated \$1.4 million over a two-year period. During the energy market’s weakening in April 2009, the consortium extended its contract with Duquesne Light Energy to provide generation and transmission through May 2013. This contract includes increasing the yearly purchase to 125 million kWh and the green power purchase to 15 percent, or 18.8 million kWh, at a cost of 6.34 cents per kWh. This will result in an additional annual savings of \$665,000 for the group.

The County Executive and Mayor have also expanded the program to include subsequent energy opportunities and are currently meeting with councils of governments and municipal managers for the next round of energy purchasing.

In 2007, Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh established the Western Pennsylvania Energy Consortium, a region-wide energy cost and consumption reduction program consisting of accounts from the City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pittsburgh Water & Sewer Authority, Sports & Exhibition Authority, and Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium. The aggregated accounts are used in a reverse auction energy purchase conducted through Co-exprise, a Wexford-based technology and strategic sourcing company, in order to gain the best possible price of electricity in cents per kWh.

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