

NEWS



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SUNNYVALE VIES FOR \$5 MILLION ENERGY EFFICIENCY PRIZE *Georgetown University competition seeks innovative, replicable ideas*

SUNNYVALE, Calif. – Today, Sunnyvale officially advances to the Semifinal round of the Georgetown University Energy Prize, a national competition that is challenging communities across the U.S. to rethink their energy use. The announcement, made at a press event in Washington, D.C., acknowledged Sunnyvale as one of 50 communities who are leading the way on energy efficiency.

“Sunnyvale’s success as a sustainable community is built on strategies like promoting energy efficiency,” stated Mayor Jim Griffith. “This contest is a great way to spark new momentum toward our common goal of reducing greenhouse gases and I’m confident Sunnyvale residents are up to the challenge.”

Decreasing energy consumption is a key strategy in Sunnyvale’s Climate Action Plan (CAP) adopted in May 2014. In the CAP, residential energy use (electricity and natural gas) accounts for 16 percent of greenhouse gas emissions for Sunnyvale. The energy savings plan the City developed for the Georgetown University Energy Prize challenge builds on the greenhouse gas reduction actions already identified in the CAP.

“The competition looks truly like America,” said Dr. Francis Slakey, Founder and Executive Director of the Georgetown University Energy Prize. “Not only do these communities come from across the map, they represent the nation’s full political, social and economic diversity. Some are paying the highest prices for energy, some have the ambition to be carbon net-zero, but all communities share the goal of transforming America’s energy future.”

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Many community partners are rallying to support this new initiative and are eager to work with the City to promote energy efficiency, including Sunnyvale Cool, DeAnza Community College and Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E). Sunnyvale Cool and DeAnza student volunteers will be helping to provide local training and community outreach. PG&E will provide technical support and up to \$20,000 in funding for each of the five cities in its territory named as semifinalists, which, in addition to Sunnyvale, includes Berkeley, Davis, Fremont and San Mateo. Palo Alto, served by a municipal utility, was also selected as a semifinalist.

Sunnyvale's advancement to the Semifinal round speaks to the overall quality of its plan and partnerships, as well as the potential for the City to leverage its track record for environmental innovation and leadership. While the plan includes creative ideas like holding a contest for students to develop energy efficiency games or apps, a key emphasis will be placed on the collective efforts of the community taking simple actions to save energy. Some of the steps residents can take to save energy and bring \$5 million back to the community include:

- Change commonly used lighting to compact fluorescent or LED bulbs;
- Use a smart start power strip to power electronic devices and appliances;
- Fix defective plumbing or dripping faucets, or install water efficient fixtures;
- Tune your thermostat setting or install a programmable thermostat to cool and heat your home only when needed; and
- Check out a DIY Home Energy Savings Kit from the Sunnyvale Public Library that is stocked with supplies and measuring devices to help lower utility bills and save resources.

To learn more about Sunnyvale's sustainability programs and initiatives, visit *Green.inSunnyvale.com*. To learn more about the Georgetown University Energy Prize and track the competition's progress, visit www.quep.org or follow the Prize on Twitter (@GUEnergyPrize) or Facebook (www.facebook.com/quenergyprize).

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