

4 US firms honored for making it easier to buy green energy | Energy

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Four US companies have been recognized by the Department of Energy (DOE) for their work in helping individuals and businesses to get more of their electricity from green, renewable sources.

Now in their 11th year, the DOE's 2011 Green Power Leadership Awards went to:

- 3Degrees, a San Francisco-based company that partners with utilities, businesses and other organizations to increase the demand for Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) and carbon offsets.
- Virginia-based Washington Gas Energy Services, one of the Mid-Atlantic's largest green energy suppliers and a provider of wind, solar and carbon offsets.
- DTE Energy, a utility in southeast Michigan whose voluntary GreenCurrents program gives customers the option of buying energy produced by wind or biomass.
- The Clean Energy Collective, a Colorado-based firm that teams up with local utilities to enable energy customers to buy individual panels in community-owned solar farms. In return, customers are credited monthly for the renewable energy generated by their solar panels.

"These organizations have made a strong commitment to offer families and businesses more options to purchase electricity from clean energy sources," said Energy Secretary Steven Chu. "Their efforts support increased deployment of renewable energy technologies, create jobs, and transform business practices into sustainable solutions that help diversify our nation's energy supply and protect the environment."

Green Power Leadership Award winners are selected based on how much renewable energy purchasing they enable, how many customers they serve, how much impact they have on the market and the overall value they offer to participating customers.