

A CITY POWERED BY RENEWABLE ENERGY



Burlington, Vermont, located in the American Northeast, became the first city in the country to be completely powered by renewables at the start of 2015. This is a small revolution in a country where carbon levels remain particularly high.

This is the culmination of a project that was initiated by the City in the 1990s. Notably, the City was given the objective to produce a more local form of energy, in the cleanest possible way. The City invested \$11.3 million to finance an initial program for the development of sustainable energy sources.

The City notably made the decision to close a coal powered plant in order to replace it with a biomass unit. This plant works thanks to the numerous fallen trees, which come from all over the state of Vermont. This state, which is also nicknamed The Green Mountain State, has at its disposal an extremely significant forestry resource.

Thirty percent of Burlington's energy is generated by the biomass plant, plus 50 percent from hydro generators, and an additional 20 percent from wind turbines and solar panels. As Le Vif emphasizes, in parallel, the city is set up to significantly reduce the energy consumption of its inhabitants, who can notably check their usage online. And so, Burlington will consume less electricity in 2015 than in 1989.



While in principle green energy costs more to produce, Burlington seems to have found a good model. This policy saves the city around \$1 million a year as compared to classic energy solutions. It's especially thanks to the resale of a part of its surplus renewable energy to neighboring states, like Massachusetts, where the law requires cities reach certain goals in renewable energy use.

Burlington houses 42,000 residents, which is a lot less than most American metropolises. But by following this strategy of diversifying the sources of clean energy, big cities could liberate themselves, little by little, from fossil fuel energy sources. We must point out that in the United States, the consumption of total energy is at its lowest level since the mid 1970s.

Source: <http://www.globalsiteplans.com/environmental-design/burlington-vermont-a-city-powered-by-renewable-energy/>