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Ohio University and its Quest for Green Energy

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ATHENS- In 2012 Ohio University joined the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (Ohio University Office of Sustainability, *Sustainability and Climate Action Plans and Reports*) and has been working on improving the campus' harmony with the natural world. In particular, the campus has focused on converting to renewable energy, a prospect that would greatly reduce the school's carbon footprint, however the conversion has been losing momentum as time has passed.

Presently, Ohio University purchases Green-e certified renewable energy certificates, that is energy that is 50% renewable. (Ohio University Office of Sustainability, *Energy*). This is a step in the right direction however Ohio University has not done anything to advance beyond the 50% mark. The energy Ohio University purchases is 50% renewable, it comes from wind energy, but the remaining 50% is polluting and damaging to the world. The energy that is not renewable is 33% coal energy, a leading pollutant of the world, 37% nuclear, the most dangerous form of energy, 25% natural gas, an emitter of greenhouse gases, and the remaining 5% comes from biomass, wind, solar and hydroelectric energy that supports the previously listed plants. The school should strive to switch to purchasing more renewable energy each year, rather than stagnating at 50%. In a school that strives to foster global leaders and dreamers, it should work to set an example for the next generation of Climate Activists and Politicians.

The school has invested in solar panels on campus, which is a second step in the right direction, but this investment must continue, and expand as to enable the school to become a 100% renewable campus. By blending solar panels on building roofs, with rooftop gardens for food, and green roofs to pull carbon and nitrogen out of the air, the school will be able to reduce its overall ecological footprint. Why should the students care though? They should care for it is their future, and their legacy at stake. Do they want to be remembered as the generation that failed the world, or the university that rose up as a model for the rest? When the university stands as one, they can achieve greatness.

Ohio University Office of Sustainability "Energy" *Ohio.edu*, Ohio University,
<https://www.ohio.edu/sustainability/operations/energy>

Ohio University Office of Sustainability "Sustainability and Climate Action Plans and Reports"
Ohio.edu, Ohio University,
<https://www.ohio.edu/sustainability/services/sustainability-climate-action-plans-reports>