



Power Center for Utility Explorations
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TAMPA ELECTRIC, USF AND TAMPA'S LOWRY PARK ZOO TO KICK OFF NEW RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECT

The event marks Earth Week with a project launch that includes a 15-kilowatt solar array.

Tampa, Florida – April 20, 2009 – Tampa Electric today joined the University of South Florida's Power Center for Utility Explorations and Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo to launch a new, two-part renewable energy project at the Zoo that will generate 15 kilowatts (kW) of electricity for the electric grid and serve as an educational tool for students and the community. Tampa Mayor Pam Iorio; USF President Judy Genshaft; Craig Pugh, acting director of Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo; Tampa Electric President Chuck Black; and Alexander Domijan, director of the USF Power Center for Utility Exploration were speakers at the event, held in conjunction with Earth Week 2009.

The project, funded by Tampa Electric and with a grant from the Florida High Tech Corridor, has two elements. One part involves the construction of a 15-kW solar photovoltaic (PV) array that can generate enough electricity to power the Zoo's Treetop Skyfari sky ride and which will produce clean energy for the electric grid that serves the community. The array will also function as an educational and research showcase as part of the Smart Grid – a system of two-way communications and intelligent devices for enhanced electric system reliability.

The second part of the project involves a new Renewable Energy Learning Center to be located in the central Safari Africa plaza at the Zoo. The Learning Center will help educate the Zoo's more than one million annual visitors about renewable resources. Students from the USF College of Architecture submitted designs for the Learning Center, with the final design expected to incorporate elements from multiple submissions. The top student designs will be on display at the April 20 event.

"Both parts of the Lowry Park renewable energy project are great examples of community synergy – partners joining forces on an initiative with tangible, real-world applications that provide long-term educational opportunities and also take an important step toward the technologically advanced, clean-energy future we envision for Florida and the United States overall," said Chuck Black, Tampa Electric president.

The project will enable USF to analyze anticipated technical, economic and environmental impacts of using Smart Grid technologies to connect consumer PV systems, which are examples of distributed generation, to the community's electric grid. It will also serve as a Tampa Electric and USF training tool for a new, high-tech work force in power engineering, the only profession dealing comprehensively with energy issues.

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“Tackling our energy problems is a team effort,” said USF President Judy Genshaft. “We are fortunate in this community to be able to unite the University of South Florida’s groundbreaking work in energy technology development with the community leadership, resources and reach of Tampa Electric and Tampa’s Lowry Park Zoo. We are proud to join with these organizations in taking the lead in the development of creative solutions to our energy challenges. To bring it all together in a setting that speaks to the crucial importance of sustainability is nothing short of brilliant.”

“Tampa’s Lowry Park Zoo takes an active role in conservation and environmental issues affecting animals and their habitats, both at the Zoo and around the world, “ said Craig Pugh, acting director of Tampa’s Lowry Park Zoo. “As a center for conservation, we aim to demonstrate the importance of reducing our impact on the environment by using best practices including recycling, composting and alternate sources of energy. As a center for education, we will, for more than 1.1 million annual visitors, demonstrate with this project the importance of living in balance with the natural world and the significance of renewable energy.”

About Tampa Electric

[Tampa Electric Company](#) is the principal subsidiary of [TECO Energy, Inc.](#) (NYSE: TE), an energy-related holding company with regulated utility operations in Florida, including both [Tampa Electric](#) and [Peoples Gas System](#). Tampa Electric serves almost 667,000 customers in West Central Florida. Other subsidiaries include TECO Coal, which owns and operates coal production facilities in Kentucky and Virginia, and TECO Guatemala, which is engaged in electric power generation and distribution and energy-related businesses in Guatemala.

About USF

The University of South Florida is one of the nation's top 63 public research universities and one of 39 community-engaged four-year public universities as designated by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. USF was awarded more than \$360 million in research contracts and grants in FY 2007/2008. The University offers 219 degree programs at the undergraduate, graduate, specialist and doctoral levels, including the doctor of medicine. The University has a \$1.8 billion annual budget, an annual economic impact of \$3.2 billion, and serves more than 46,000 students on institutions/campuses in Tampa, St. Petersburg, Sarasota-Manatee and Lakeland. USF is a member of the Big East Athletic Conference.

About Tampa’s Lowry Park Zoo

Tampa’s Lowry Park Zoo is operated by the Lowry Park Zoological Society, an independent 501(c)(3) charitable organization committed to excellence in education, conservation and research. Named the No. 1 zoo in America by both *Parents* magazine and *Child* magazine, the Zoo is located at 1101 W. Sligh Avenue in Tampa, one mile west of I-275 (exit 48). The Zoo is open seven days a week, from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Parking is free. Tampa’s Lowry Park Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). Visit [LowryParkZoo.com](#) or call (813) 935-8552 for more information. Find us on [www.Facebook.com](#) and [www.Twitter.com](#).

-30-

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