

Gundersen expands clean energy efforts with more solar panels

In 2014, Gundersen Health System became the first known healthcare system to offset 100 percent of its fossil fuel use with locally produced energy. The organization now is building upon its success as a leader in clean healthcare by improving the energy independence of its individual sites. On Gundersen's campus in Onalaska, Wis., this includes the addition of solar panels on the roof of its Support Services Building.

The 416 solar panels produce 178,464 kilowatts of electricity per year. This energy directly feeds the building, satisfying up to 10 percent of the building's electrical needs and helping improve the health of the environment and communities Gundersen serves.

Equipping the Support Services Building with solar panels is just the latest in Gundersen's clean-energy efforts in Onalaska. Other initiatives include:

- 912 solar photovoltaic panels on the Gundersen Onalaska Clinic that produce more than 300,000 kilowatts of electricity, enough to fully power the Clinic at times
- A landfill gas generator that helps heat the campus and produces electricity for the grid

- An absorption chiller that harnesses waste heat from the landfill gas generator to cool the Support Services Building during summer months
- Solar hot water energy on the Onalaska Renal Dialysis Center

Solar panels are one piece of Gundersen's extensive plan to lead the healthcare industry in environmental stewardship through a program called Envision®.

Along with solar power, Gundersen has developed biogas and other renewable power opportunities available through partnerships with municipalities, utility companies and businesses to meet its current and future energy needs.

Gundersen Health System is headquartered in La Crosse, Wis., with hospitals and clinics in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa. For more information, call (855) 669-1653 (toll free), email envision@gundersenhealth.org or visit gundersenenvision.org.

