

West Virginia School Goes Solar

A West Virginia elementary school is the first school in the state to participate in the U.S. Department of Energy's EnergySmart Schools and Million Solar Roofs Schools initiatives.

Washington Lands Elementary School, West Virginia's first school to install a solar electricity system, dedicated the system on May 15 amid a colorful fanfare of songs and skits about the sun and speeches about the system's educational value.

The school, which has 365 students, installed the system through the Learning from Light! program, a cooperative effort of energy suppliers, federal and state governments, local communities and other partners to help schools worldwide install solar energy systems and teach their students about energy resources.

The AstroPower system installed at Washington Lands Elementary School is a 1,000-watt system consisting of two panels measuring 84-by-96 inches each. The ground-mounted system is electrically connected to the school building. Internet-based software developed by American Electric Power (AEP) allows students, teachers and others to click on to www.aep.com/environment/solar to track the school's energy demand and the amount of energy supplied by the solar panels.

Students break into solar song at the dedication of a PV panel array at Washington Lands Elementary School



Enhanced math and science comprehension among students is a desired outcome of the installation and the network created on AEP's web site.

The solar electricity system was funded by AEP's Kammer-Mitchell power plant. Washington Lands Elementary School will be highlighted in a 30-minute television documentary produced by the Foundation for Environmental Education, which is spearheaded by Glen Kizer, leader of the 1500 Days Central Ohio Partnership. The documentary will be featured on public television later this year and will be distributed to schools nationwide. *For more information, contact Glen Kizer at GKizer@centurysurety.com.*