



Energy independence seoul

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Every day, people and the cities in which they live consume large quantities of energy. In the city, since many people live and work together in the same area, it is no surprise that energy consumption levels are high. This is particularly true in the hot summer and cold winter months when people crank up their air conditioners and heaters.

Seongdaegol Village stands out from other energy-independent villages (Seoul currently has 55) due to its superior eco-friendly methods of energy production, such as its village solar plant. Residents of Seongdaegol Village actively pursue methods of saving energy in their daily lives. This environmentally conscious mindset and the changes it has brought have begun to create a ripple effect outside the neighborhood as well.

In this energy-conscious village, each household engages in a variety of energy conservation efforts, such as using LED lights (which have high energy efficiency levels), taking part in the Lights-out Movement (a movement in which all lights are turned off for a certain period of time on a specific day), and using multi-tabs to conserve the standby electricity supply.

In order to increase awareness of environmental/energy issues and change public perception of them, the neighborhood often hosts special lectures and workshops on environmental issues. The village also hosts other activities like energy festivals, performances and concerts, and environmental movie screenings powered by bicycle generators, and creates environmental methods that can be applied to everyday life.

The village's colloquial name of "Saejaemi" is derived from its original Korean name and is used instead of the village's administrative district (Siheung 4-dong). The village was jointly established with the purpose of achieving energy self-sufficiency by the Environment Justice, an organization that aims to realize a society that is just and sustainable both socially and ecologically, and the Saejaemi Village Residents' Council.

When the village was initially designated as an energy-independent neighborhood, the village community did not participate much in conservation efforts. However, the program gradually gained momentum and support over the next 18 months through the conducting of diverse neighborhood events, the village's Environment School, and projects such as Sarangbang, which sought to raise community awareness. Supporters also operated projects to improve the household energy efficiency of low-income families and engaged in urban farming for the purpose of carbon reduction.

As of 2015, Seoul has 35 energy-independent neighborhoods that voluntarily save energy and increase their production of new and renewable energy, establishing the foundations for long-term energy independence. So



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far through their efforts, these 35 neighborhoods have been able to reduce their electricity consumption by an average of 4.2% compared to the previous year and have installed 41 3kW-home solar power generators and 284 mini-solar generators (for apartment balconies).

In addition to minimizing their villages' demands for external energy sources through conservation efforts, residents (including teenaged students) of energy-independent neighborhoods have created clean living environments by turning areas in apartment complexes previously used for garbage disposal into flower beds. These newly transformed areas are regularly cleaned and maintained and posted with signs that explain energy conservation.

Community efforts for energy self-sufficiency also include energy-related welfare activities. Organizations of housewives regularly visit single-senior households to check for energy leaks and deliver banchan (side dishes). The profits from "energy supermarkets", which sell energy-saving products at affordable prices, are used to help members of the community in need.

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