



Sustainability is a calling card for this forward-thinking community college interested in attracting students and training a whole new generation of citizens with the skills necessary to compete and win in the new energy economy.

## The Challenge

In 1805 when explorers Lewis and Clark traveled to the mouth of a small river flowing into the Columbia River, the Native Americans they met called the small waterway “Wallah Wallah,” which means “many waters.” By 1856, the U.S. Cavalry had established a fort about 20 miles north in an area now known as the city of Walla Walla, Washington.

Walla Walla Community College (WWCC) was founded in 1967 with an enrollment of 850 students. Today, it offers a variety of educational programs and services to more than 10,500 students from four southeastern Washington counties, as well as across the country.

Both the city and community college continue to grow and champion sustainability efforts. For instance, the city formed a committee in 2010 to define and explore sustainability options during its decision-making process.

About the same time, WWCC began advocating for — and demonstrating — practices to promote economic and environmental sustainability. Today, WWCC’s sustainability practices range from using solar energy and tracking carbon emissions to reducing paper consumption, conserving water, and integrating alternative-fuel vehicles into the college’s fleet.

To enhance its award-winning Renewable Energy Technology program, WWCC considered several potential sustainability projects for harnessing wind, solar, and water resources. Ultimately, WWCC chose Schneider Electric over two other firms to bring the sustainability vision to reality via an energy savings performance contract. A performance contract guarantees energy savings and other specific project outcomes, and Schneider Electric agrees to pay the difference if WWCC does not realize that amount or the project falls short.

As part of an Innovative Partnership Zone (IPZ) program — a unique economic development effort that partners research, workforce training and private sector participation to boost the local economy — the college had already secured a grant from the state Department of Commerce to fund a variety of sustainability projects to enhance skilled workforce programs.

By the time the college decided on the final project, the grant deadline was fast approaching, giving Schneider Electric an aggressive schedule to meet. Thanks to the highly collaborative relationships that Schneider Electric enjoys with contracting partners, work began almost immediately.



## Customer Benefits

- Cutting-edge sustainability learning for students
- Renewable energy resources (solar, wind, water)
- 10% energy savings campuswide
- Automated metering and reporting for better visibility
- Compliance with state energy mandates

## The Solution

Dedicated to protecting and restoring its resources while delivering innovative educational opportunities, WWCC teamed with Schneider Electric for the installation of several new solar photovoltaic (PV) arrays and a sophisticated energy metering system. The college plans to use this equipment primarily to provide hands-on education as part of its new Renewable Energy Technology program, but the equipment will benefit every member of the WWCC community.

Adjacent to the college's operational agricultural field, which is used by several academic programs, Schneider Electric also installed some automated, mechanized tracking PV arrays that follow the sun across the sky. These arrays maximize the amount of energy collected while showcasing the ability to utilize the corners of agricultural fields to create solar energy without interfering with farming activities.

Schneider Electric also erected a carport with integrated PV panels and eight stalls to accommodate electric vehicle charging and a few covered covered parking stalls. The project also included the installation of new solar arrays on two other buildings.

In addition, Schneider Electric installed electric and natural gas meters with Web-based reporting capabilities in every building with 2,000+ square feet. All renewable energy systems on campus are now integrated into the metering system.

Automated reporting allows WWCC to comply with state requirements regarding energy use and carbon emissions, as well as monitoring requirements for greenhouse gas reduction and energy performance. That information is shared in real time on the college's website and on screens inside the Water and Environmental Center, the epicenter of the college's sustainability endeavors.

## The Bottom Line

Recognizing that water and the sustainable management of natural resources are linked to the area's economic growth, WWCC has made water, environmental, and related cultural studies a high academic priority. One clear sign of this focus is the new Water and Environmental Center, a facility embodying the outreach effort encouraging collaboration on water management and environmental restoration issues for the good of the region.

WWCC now has physical proof of its commitment to sustainability through the integral role of renewable energy on the main campus, which is naturally attractive to potential students, professors, and visitors alike. And that makes these systems an even more valuable asset to WWCC.

The projects will generate 18,805 kWh in renewable energy. In addition to the PV-related savings, the college expects to save 10 percent of its overall campus energy use with the new WWCC-owned metering system because facility operators can now "tune" the buildings in real time to optimize their performance.



## Project at a Glance

Location	Walla Walla, WA
Project type	Energy Savings Performance Contract
Property	Main campus – 8 buildings (total of 567,000 sq. ft.)
Funding	Grant from State Department of Commerce
ECMs	89.6 kW ballasted roof-mounted PV system 48 kW single-axis trackers 37 kW solar carport Schneider Electric energy metering system
Guaranteed savings	\$18,000 annually
Installation	June 2015

*"We have made water, environmental, and related cultural studies a high academic priority on campus. We're also fully committed to our efforts for sustainability."*

Dr. Steven L. VanAusdle  
President  
Walla Walla Community College

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