

LAS VEGAS SUN

NATIONAL CLEAN ENERGY SUMMIT HIGHLIGHTS

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Google announced today that its philanthropic arm will invest \$10.25 million in what it's calling a breakthrough new energy technology that would use the earth's heat to make electricity.

The technology -- called enhanced geothermal systems -- involves drilling into the ground and then injecting water into the hot rock. The hot water, like in geothermal power plants, is then used to turn a turbine to make electricity.

A recent MIT study showed that just 2 percent of the heat below the US between 3 and 10 kilometers deep could supply 2,500 times the country's total annual energy use, said Dan Reicher, director for climate change and energy initiatives for Google. Reicher spoke at today's National Clean Energy Summit at UNLV.

Edward Mazria, founder of Architecture 2030, told attendees at today's National Clean Energy Summit that the fastest way to solve America's energy crisis would be to improve efficiency of homes and offices around the country.

Buildings in the U.S. account for 48 percent of total energy consumption, and 76 percent of all electric use. An immediate reduction by 50 percent of energy use in all new buildings, part of the 2030 Challenge, would immediately decrease demand for coal-fired power plants necessary to stem global climate change.

And the changes wouldn't cost consumers a dime, said Mazria, but rather would save the average homeowner \$512 a year.

Mazria said the federal government would have to invest \$21.6 billion on energy efficiency every year for 5 years, which would create 1 million new jobs and save consumers \$127 billions - more than the initial investment.

And the result would be dramatically reduced energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, reduced or eliminated U.S. dependence on foreign oil and revitalization of the American economy, he said.

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