



GREENING OF UAB

News By Facilities Energy Management Department

www.fab.uab.edu/energy

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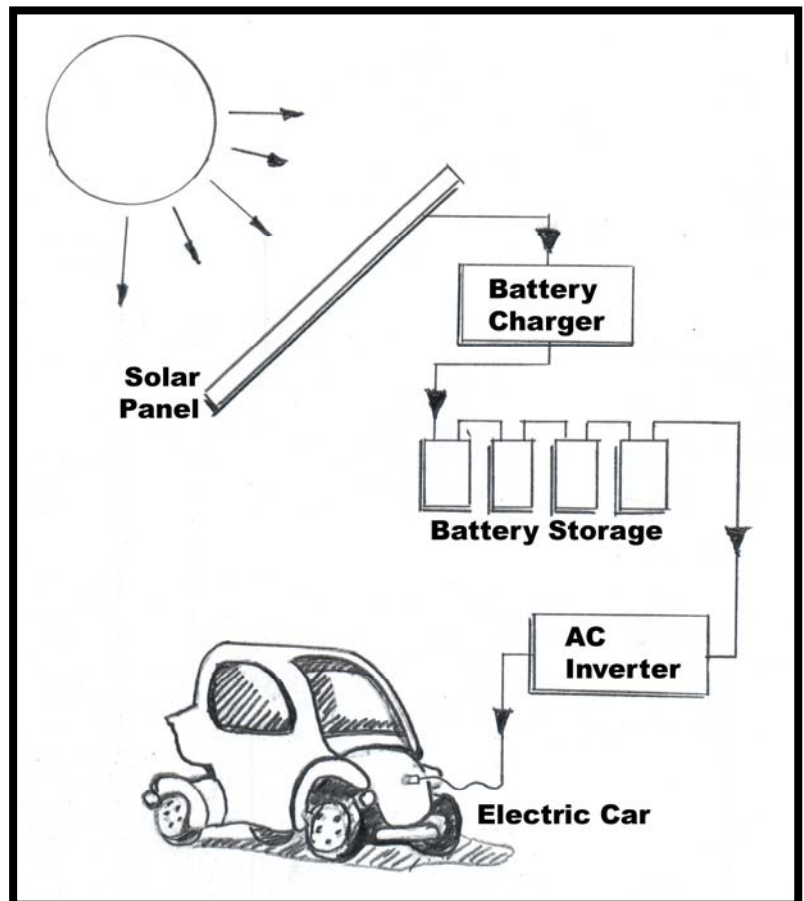
SOLAR PANELS IN FACILITIES

These days, many universities are utilizing plug-in electric vehicles but UAB may be one of the first universities to recharge the vehicles with solar energy, thus making them almost totally “green” with zero emissions. After being recharged during the night with stored “solar energy”, the G.E.M. electric cars have a travel range of 35 miles the next day.

Recently, the Facilities Energy Management Department installed twelve, 200-watt solar photovoltaic panels to recharge two recently acquired electric plug-in cars. The electricity produced by the solar photovoltaic panels is stored during the day in a battery storage bank, and then at night the battery bank recharges the two electric cars.

The G.E.M. electric cars are utilized as pool vehicles by Facilities, and due to their small convenient size, they have become very popular for traveling on the UAB campus. The initial savings on the lower purchase price of the cars covered most of the cost of the solar panels and the payback is very quick with no gasoline or electricity being purchased.

All of the solar panels and control system are standard off-the-shelf components and thus far have been completely trouble free. The solar system was turned on in February 2009 and immediately started producing all of the electricity needed for the electric cars without any initial problems. We have been surprised at the ease with which the system started working as soon as it was turned on.



SOLAR PANELS IN FACILITIES

Two UAB Design Build Services employees are shown in the photo on the right installing the solar panels.



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