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About HNEI

The Hawaii Natural Energy Institute, located on the campus of the University of Hawaii, was established by the Legislature in 1974, in the aftermath of the world's first oil crisis, to seek new forms of energy that would supplant the nation's tremendous dependence on fossil fuels.

The Legislature, recognizing the promise of indigenous resources, established HNEI as a research unit of the University of Hawaii, with a mandate of undertaking and coordinating research and development of the island's renewable energy resources.

HNEI has become an acknowledged international leader in the energy field, and has broadened its expertise to encompass the development of technologies that will enable us to tap our oceans for energy, food, minerals, and other resources.

The institute's responsibilities include conducting and supporting basic research, managing research facilities and laboratories, demonstrating the applications of its work, and investigating the social, environmental, and financial impact of energy- and marine-related activities. HNEI cooperates in these endeavors with faculty from the University of Hawaii; federal, state, and local governments; private industry; public utilities; foreign governments; community groups; and universities and research institutes throughout the world.

The Hawaii Natural Energy Institute has an exceptional record of achievement in achieving its mission, including spearheading the discovery and use of geothermal power in Hawaii ? coordinating the first comprehensive wind surveys of the Hawaiian archipelago that furnished the data needed for the location of wind turbines ? conducting surveys of solar insolation and testing a variety of electricity-generating solar devices and systems ? conducting major studies on ocean thermal energy conversion ? developing the technology to use biomass for energy, charcoal, and high-value chemicals ? testing biomass-derived fuels as a replacement for conventional transportation fuels ... establishing the most comprehensive hydrogen program of any university in the nation, a standing attributable to pioneering research on the production of this gas through solar electrochemical advancements using thin semiconductor films, gasification of biomass, and genetic engineering of hydrogen-producing marine organisms ? and supporting marine-related research on deep-sea minerals mining, open-ocean fish farming, very large floating platforms, artificial upwelling of deep ocean water, and the disposal of greenhouse gases in the ocean.

Read about the History of HNEI [1].

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[1] http://www.hnei.hawaii.edu/about-HNEI/history