

Dominion Energy partners with Virginia State University on cutting-edge battery storage project

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• Proposed pilot would provide backup power to 6,000-seat venue

RICHMOND, Nov. 16, 2023 - Dominion Energy Virginia is partnering with Virginia State University to develop an innovative battery storage project that would provide backup power to the VSU Multi-Purpose Center (MPC). The MPC, located on the VSU campus, hosts athletic events, conferences, concerts and other community events.

The initiative is one of several proposed to the Virginia State Corporation Commission in September. The projects will test three alternatives to lithium-ion batteries that could discharge power for significantly longer durations.

Dominion Energy has enlisted California-based EnerVenue to manufacture the 1.5-megawatt battery that will be installed on the university's Ettrick campus, located in southern Chesterfield County. EnerVenue's Energy Storage Vessels use metal-hydrogen technology, a variation of what's used in the aerospace industry, that can discharge energy for up to 10 hours.

At another location in Henrico County, Dominion Energy plans to test two other pioneering battery storage technologies, including one that can discharge power for up to 100 hours. Most battery storage in the U.S. is currently limited to four hours or less.

"These projects could be game changers for how we store energy and deliver it to our customers," said Ed Baine, President of Dominion Energy Virginia. "With longer-duration batteries, we can store energy from renewables for longer periods of time so it's available when our customers need it the most. We're thrilled to partner with Virginia State University on this cutting-edge project."

Batteries play an increasingly critical role in electric reliability as Dominion Energy builds the largest offshore wind project in the U.S. and continues expanding the second-largest solar fleet in the nation. Batteries store energy from renewables so it can be discharged to the grid during periods of high demand.

The VSU pilot is the latest in a series of advances in battery storage, including the August groundbreaking of what will be Dominion Energy's largest battery storage facility at Dulles International Airport. The company operates four other battery storage sites, in Powhatan, Hanover, New Kent and Chesterfield counties, and has a sixth installation under development in Sussex County.

Virginia State plans to use the backup battery as a hands-on teaching tool for students pursuing in careers in the energy sector. The university will develop curriculum for students in VSU's College of Engineering and Technology, incorporating real-world scenarios about the inner workings of battery storage technology.

"Our collaboration with Dominion Energy marks a significant step in advancing sustainable energy solutions," said Dr. Dawit Haile, Dean of the College of Engineering and Technology. "This partnership offers invaluable hands-on experiences for students and workforce development while reinforcing our commitment to innovative research in clean energy technologies. We're thrilled to offer transformative learning experiences and inspire the next generation of STEM leaders."

If approved by the SCC, the project is expected to be in operation by the end of 2027.

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