

Tallinn green electricity

Utilitas is building Tallinn's largest solar park with a capacity of 9.3 MW in V?o energy complex. It will be named the European Green Capital Solar Park.

„Cities generate ca 70% of the world's carbon footprint, which is why the green transition in the cities is particularly important. Tallinn is the European Green Capital in 2023 and its program is based on the desire to implement projects with a long-term impact. It is important to us that our investments make the environment greener. The new solar park will directly help to reduce Tallinn's carbon footprint, and since the investment decision was made this year, we decided to name it the European Green Capital solar park," said Priit Koit, CEO of the Utilitas group.

The solar park has a capacity of 9.3 MW. It consists of 15,600 panels and covers a total of 11 hectares in the territory of the former V?o limestone quarry. Double-sided solar panels are combined with single axis trackers, and thus the period during which the solar park produces electricity is extended. Utilitas invests 8 million euros in the construction of the new solar park.

In order to make the urban environment greener and to improve the quality of people's working and living milieu, nearly 5,000 trees will be planted in the western, northern and eastern sides of the solar park. Utilitas has already started preparatory construction works and the solar park will be completed in April next year.

The new solar park complements the already existing V?o energy complex of Utilitas, where green energy is produced in two combined heat and power plants, and in one smaller solar park. Next year, both green hydrogen production, fueling station and heat storage solution will be added to the complex. The most efficient and greenest energy system is one, where production and consumption are located as close as possible to each other, and different types of energy such as heat, electricity and fuels are produced together.

Estonia's largest renewable energy producer, Utilitas, produced 2.4 TWh of energy in 2023, 69% of which came from renewable sources. The production of green electricity in the group increased by 11% in a year, while the production of wind electricity increased by 2.5 times, reaching 203,000 MWh.

Utilitas Group companies have wind farms with a total capacity of 122 MW, which are already operating or will reach their full capacity at the beginning of this year. Last autumn, the modern Saarde wind farm, which has the largest production capacity in Estonia, started operating. A wind farm in Aseri, with two wind turbines, is also nearly complete.

„We have added a significant amount of new capacities to the region's electricity network, which contribute to ensuring a reasonable price, security of supply, and a cleaner environment. In district

heating, we were already able to reduce the price of heating all over Estonia last spring thanks to the lower price of our main fuel, i.e. wood chips. To restore their competitiveness, Estonian companies urgently need a larger amount of green energy, primarily in the industry but also other sectors," explained Priit Koit, CEO of the Utilitas Group.

Active accession to Utilitas's efficient district heating system continued last year. A total of 133 buildings were connected across different cities in 2023, including new buildings and those that were converted from another heating method. For example, a bread manufacturer, Leibur, business quarter Arter, and Omniva's head office joined Utilitas district heating last year.

The European climate monitoring service Copernicus announced that globally 2023 was the hottest calendar year on record. In Europe, temperatures were higher than the long-term average for 11 months of the year. Estonia stood out with an exceptionally long summer, which means that May was already hot and sunny, and September broke the historical heat record. However, the annual heat consumption of Utilitas customers remained the same as the previous year because the autumn months and December were colder than average.

Being a vital service provider, Utilitas prioritizes the security of supply, which in addition to ensuring fuel stocks, means modernizing heating networks. In 2023, Utilitas built and reconstructed nearly 26 kilometers of heat pipelines. The most significant works occurred in the city center, the Kristiine district of Tallinn, and the city of Maardu. As of now, Utilitas has replaced approximately 70% of the entire heating pipeline system, with the goal to reach 100% by 2035. In addition, nearly two kilometers of district cooling central networks were installed in the center of Tallinn.

Utilitas, Estonia's largest district heating company and leading producer of renewable energy, expanded the V?o renewable energy complex with new energy production equipment, thanks to which 30,000 t of CO₂ per year will not be emitted.

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