



UT Energy Bulletin | January 2025

Energy@UT News



UT Expertise to Reduce Emissions from Oil and Gas and Improve Measurement Accuracy

UT Austin researchers with the Energy Institute, the School of Law, and the Cockrell School of Engineering are collaborating with industry, government and other universities on several major projects funded by DOE to measure and reduce methane emissions across natural gas supply chains.

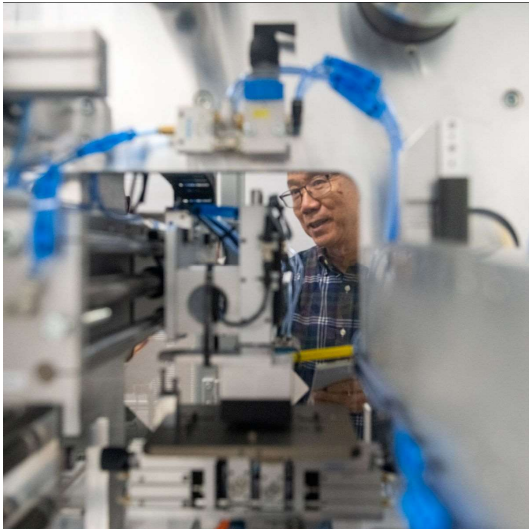
[Learn more](#)



Carbon Reduction Gets a Spark in New Research

Researchers at UT Austin have improved CO₂ reduction efficiency by optimizing electrolyte ions, accelerating its conversion into fuels and chemicals. This breakthrough complements catalyst development and advances climate change mitigation efforts.

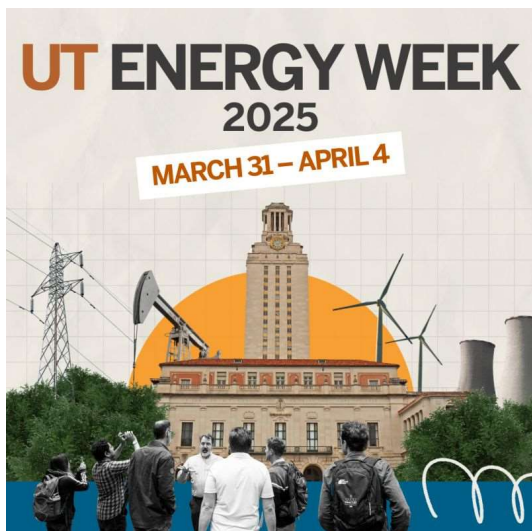
[Read more](#)



Big Texas Energy

The new issue of Texas Engineer magazine features a glimpse into the work of several Cockrell School research teams who are leading on the dual challenge of meeting growing global energy demand while dramatically reducing emissions.

[Learn more](#)



UT Energy Week 2025 – Registration Now Open!

Join us for UT Energy Week, March 31–April 4, 2025, to engage with industry leaders, researchers, and policymakers as they discuss key topics like renewable energy, grid resilience, and the future of the energy transition.

[Register now](#)



Heidari Wins International 2024 Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE) Award for Technical Excellence

UT Austin's [Zoya Heidari](#) won the 2024 Society of Petroleum Engineers' Lester C. Uren Award for Technical Excellence. Heidari leads the [Multi-Scale Rock Physics Research Program](#), advancing methods to characterize complex subsurface rock formations and improve fluid transport, hydrocarbon recovery, and geothermal system characterization.

[Learn more](#)



Texas Engineers Take Home Hill Prizes

UT professors [Joan Brennecke](#), [Benny Freeman](#), and [James Chelikowsky](#) are among the recipients of the high-risk, high-reward awards this year from TAMEST (Texas Academy of Medicine, Engineering, Science and Technology) and Lyda Hill Philanthropies. Their research focuses on energy-efficient chemical processes, sustainable materials, and technologies that aim to reduce global energy consumption, decarbonize industries, and improve energy security.

[Read more](#)



Michael Webber Receives Energy Thought Leader Award

UT Austin's [Michael Webber](#) was named "Energy Thought Leader: Higher Education" for the 2024 American Energy Society's Energy Awards. Webber is a professor of mechanical engineering and leads the [Webber Energy Group](#) in developing innovative energy solutions.

[Read more](#)

News From Around Campus

Energy Institute

[Brian Korgel](#) spoke with [Texas Standard](#) about what an executive order pausing approval of new wind power projects on federal lands could mean for Texas and the rest of the country.

Center for Electromechanics | Energy Institute

[Michael Lewis](#) was quoted on [KXAN](#) on the potential for UT Austin's hydrogen proto-hub to serve as a testing ground for future technologies that also addresses critical needs like clean energy production and hydrogen infrastructure development.

[Brian Korgel](#) was also quoted in the same [KXAN piece](#) on the need for Texas to prioritize diverse energy solutions and invest in clean power and infrastructure to solidify its position as a global leader in hydrogen.


School of Law

[Melinda Taylor](#) spoke with [Bloomberg Law](#) about the legal uncertainty surrounding the future of offshore oil and gas leasing.

Bureau of Economic Geology

[Tip Meckel](#) was quoted by [Texas Standard](#) highlighting that the benefits of carbon sequestration projects far outweigh the risks and play a crucial role in reducing emissions and ensuring long-term climate stability in Texas.

Cockrell School of Engineering

[Ben Cahill](#) spoke to [The Washington Post](#)  about how consumer-facing clean energy programs such as tax credits for electric vehicles, rooftop solar, and heat pumps are particularly vulnerable to potential cuts or changes under the Trump administration.

Cockrell School of Engineering | Chandra Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering


[Surya Santoso](#) spoke with [The Stimson Center](#) about the energy security needs of the U.S. military as the green transition gains momentum.

Cockrell School of Engineering | Hildebrand Department of Petroleum and Geosystems Engineering

[Hugh Daigle](#) authored an op-ed on [RealClearEnergy](#) advocating for a pragmatic approach to climate policy, emphasizing the need to focus on achievable solutions like clean hydrogen and advanced recycling rather than waiting for perfect solutions.

[Arvind Ravikumar](#) was quoted on [RealClearMarkets](#) discussing how methane mitigation has become a key factor for both climate protection and the natural gas industry's long-term success, with technology advancements driving significant reductions in methane emissions.

Cockrell School of Engineering | Webber Energy Group

[Joshua Rhodes](#) authored an op-ed in [The Dallas Morning News](#)  advocating for the U.S. to adopt a diverse energy strategy that includes oil, gas, and renewables to enhance energy security, economic resilience, and maintain a strong position in global energy markets

Rhodes also spoke with [E&E Politico](#) about how the growing demand for power driven by data centers and AI could impact the U.S. energy transition.

[Michael Webber](#) was a guest on WBUR [podcast](#), where he discussed how Texas became America's clean energy leader.

Webber also spoke with [E&E Politico](#) about how President Trump's executive orders could tilt US energy markets.

Upcoming Events



Canary Live Houston

January 30, 2025 – 5 - 9:30 pm

Greentown Labs

4200 San Jacinto Street, Houston, TX 77004

[More Information](#)



Environmental & Energy Economics & Policy Seminar: *Modeling Uncertainty in Climate Policy: An application to the U.S. Inflation Reduction Act*

James Bushnell, Professor of Economics, University of California, Davis

January 31, 2025

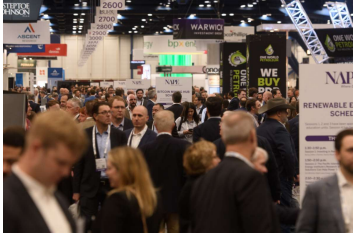
[More Information](#)



Planet Texas 2050 Resilience Roundtable with Dr. Vivek Shandas: *Sweat Equity: An Ecology of Everyday Life on a Warming Planet*

February 5, 2025 – 12 - 1:00 pm

[RSVP to Attend](#)



2025 NAPE Summit

The KBH Energy Center, the Jackson School of Geosciences, and the Hildebrand Department of Petroleum and Geosystems Engineering invite you to an evening reception during the NAPE Summit.

February 5 – 7, 2025

George R. Brown Convention Center

[Booth Location Map](#)

Save \$50 when you sign up with code **HOOKEM**

[Register Here](#)



Texas McCombs Business Outlook: Fueling Conversations Around Today's Energy Challenges

February 6, 2025 – 7:30 - 9:30 am

Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas — Houston Branch

[Register Here](#)



Planet Texas 2050 Symposium

February 24 – 27, 2025

UT Austin Campus, William C. Powers, Jr. Student Activity Center (WCP)

[RSVP to Attend](#)



UT Energy Week 2025

March 31 – April 4, 2025

[More Information](#)



TEXAS McCombs

EXECUTIVE
EDUCATION

Energy Classes at McCombs

Profitability and Sustainability in the Energy Industry

Online | March 13, 2025 | [Enroll](#)

Executive Program for Energy Leaders

Online or Live Online | Starts April 14, 2025 | [Enroll](#)

Managing the Energy Transition

Online | Starts April 24, 2025 | [Enroll](#)



2025 Bard CEC Workshop on Electrochemistry

April 28 – 30, 2025

The University of Texas at Austin

[More Information](#)



Innovation Zero America Congress

June 17–18, 2025
Palmer Events Center
Austin, Texas

[More Information](#)



2025 IEEE PES General Meeting

July 27–31, 2025
J.W. Marriott
Austin, Texas

[More Information](#)

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