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FEBRUARY 13, 2009

## Scientist, Heal Thyself

Whether working on new biofuels, catalysts, solar cells, batteries, or smart grids, scientists are seen as key players in bringing about an affordable renewable energy economy. But scientists and scientific buildings are among the biggest energy hogs—and CO<sub>2</sub> polluters—around.

According to [a new article](#) by Evan Mills, a staff scientist at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory in California, scientific buildings can be more than 100 times more energy intensive than conventional buildings, and collectively release as much CO<sub>2</sub> as 7 million U.S. homes. (Scientific meetings [are wasteful](#), too.) The good news, Mills says, is that there is plenty of room for improvement. Up to only 3% of U.S. labs are engineered to be "green." And examples abound where reengineered high-tech facilities have trimmed their energy use by 50%. So, in addition to reinventing energy technology, scientists can help out by taking full advantage of what's around already.

—Robert F. Service

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