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ECO HOME HEATING FROM FOOD WASTE AND UNDERGROUND TRAINS

  TELECOMMUNICATIONS

The Department of Sanitation New York and Islington Council in the UK are respectively introducing systems that turn residents' organic food waste and excess heat from the London Underground tube network into energy to warm households.

Cities need to look away from the ever-dwindling supplies of non-renewable resources to provide the power their citizens demand. Two new initiatives on both sides of the Atlantic are now harnessing power from previously overlooked sources to heat homes. The [Department of Sanitation New York](#) and [Islington Council](#) in the UK are respectively introducing systems that turn residents' organic food waste and excess heat from the London Underground tube network into energy to warm households.

New York authorities already offer collection of organic waste from residents and schools, but Deputy Mayor Cas Holloway has begun a new system that sees the waste travel to Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant in Greenpoint, where it is combined with wastewater and processed to form biogas. The city produces around 1.3 billion gallons of wastewater and so far two tonnes of food waste has been used to produce enough gas to heat 5,000 homes. According to the department, it's one of the first such systems to be implemented in the US and the program is set to expand in the next year.

At the same time, Islington Council is teaming up with the Mayor of London Boris Johnson, UK Power Networks and Transport for London in order to harness some of the excess heat given off by the underground metro system. By capturing the heat from ventilation shafts that typically release the energy into the atmosphere, it can be piped into the local heating network to warm properties nearby. As well as cutting carbon emissions, the scheme is set to make heating homes cheaper for residents.

It's certainly not the first time the UK has looked into harnessing hidden underground energy for homes — we recently wrote about plans by [2OC and Thames Water](#) to turn large balls of fat discovered in London's sewer system into electricity to power residents' homes. Are there other large scale sources of waste energy that could be turned into useful power?

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Website: www.nyc.gov/dsny, www.islington.gov.uk

Contact: www.nyc.gov/html/dsny/html/contact/contact.shtml, www.islington.gov.uk/about/contact-complaints/Pages/default.aspx