Florida microgrids brasilia

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A peek into the AIR Microgrid and the stories that made this collaborative research possible, featuring Principal Investigator and Professor Arif Sarwat, students of EPSi and Dean of the College of Engineering and Computing John L. Volakis.

“This transformative research can help pave the road for providing local and global communities with increased resiliency for riding through extreme weather and power grid events,” Dr. Sarwat said.You can find more information from the project lead, Eminent Scholar Chaired Professor Arif Sarwat, at eps u .

The word "unique" gets attached to so many energy projects, it hardly has meaning anymore. But a new microgrid now operating near Tampa, Florida, lives up to the billing because of the technology it uses, the customers it serves, and the cost recovery structure it employs.

Located in the Southshore Bay housing development in Hillsborough County, the project serves 37 homes, itself unusual given microgrids are typically installed for businesses, institutions or government services. While home or neighborhood microgrids are beginning to crop up, they remain rare.

Join Emera Technologies for a special session at Microgrid 2022: "Microgrids for Homes and Neighborhoods" on June 2 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Hurry! Tickets to the two-day event are selling briskly!

Developed by Emera Technologies using what it calls BlockEnergy, the project makes each home into a nanogrid with its own solar, batteries and control technology. An inverter converts the microgrid"s direct current (DC) power to alternating current for use inside the home.

The homes are then connected together via a cable network system -- a DC bus -- that loops through the neighborhood. This allows the homes to share their energy resources.

If the solar panels on the homes don"t generate enough power at any given time, the homes have a fallback system -- a central energy park run on solar and natural gas that is located near the neighborhood"s entrance and connects to the homes" network.

Emera Technologies is a subsidiary of Canadian utility Emera, which explains why the company is keenly interested in the utility market for microgrids. In this case, Emera Technologies partnered with Tampa Electric (TECO), a utility that serves 800,000 customers in west central Florida. TECO bought the BlockEnergy system from Emera Technologies and owns and operates the microgrid. That leads to the third aspect of the

project that is unique -- its utility cost recovery mechanism.

The counterargument is that microgrids can serve the broader grid by providing demand response and ancillary services -- which benefits all. A microgrid can also provide help beyond its immediate footprint by acting as a refuge during a power outage -- creating a place where people from throughout the utility service territory can seek shelter from severe heat or cold, charge phones, fuel vehicles and get food and supplies.

The Florida Public Service Commission said it would let TECO recover costs for the $1.99 million for the Southshore Bay pilot project.

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Web: https://www.kary.com.pl/contact-us/
Email: energystorage2000@gmail.com
WhatsApp: 8613816583346