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## How Can Using Renewable Energy Affect Alloway Township?

Renewable energy is everywhere- the sun is always shining, the wind is always blowing, and water is always flowing. But what makes resources like the wind, sun, and water renewable? The answer is that these resources are continuously and sustainably replaced. When harnessed correctly, these resources safeguard water from being polluted and protect the habitats of beneficial species- including humans. Not to mention that burning fossil fuels, the energy source for about 82% of the United States, contributes to air pollution, causing global warming. Put simply, renewable energy is an environmentally conscious way to generate power.

So what renewable energy resources can be used in Alloway? I suggest solar power. Basically, solar power is using the sun to generate heat or electricity through a series of panels or mirrors. This system can be interpreted multiple ways. Passive solar design uses windows, sunrooms, and skylights to heat and light rooms or warm up water. Solar thermal collectors use heat absorbing panels along with circulation passages to heat water and buildings. Solar concentration systems use mirrors to focus the sun's rays on a heat collecting element. This hotness warms a heat- transferring liquid, such as salt, which then generates steam. This steam is used predictably to spin turbines and generate electricity.

The most common way to harness solar power is through panels that contain photovoltaic cells. (These are the panels that you may see on roofs.) Photovoltaic cells convert sunlight directly into electricity. When sunlight hits one of these silicon cells, the energy removes electrons from their atoms. This allows the electrons to flow through the silicon freely, producing

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electricity. This electricity is sent to an inverter, which converts it to AC power, and makes the energy usable in homes and businesses.

Finally, how will using solar power in Alloway benefit this town's citizens? First of all, putting in solar power would create jobs. Already this industry has produced 100,000 jobs, and with a growing demand for solar services, comes a growing demand for those who can install and service these systems. Furthermore, solar panels are silent, simple to operate, and seldom need maintenance. Not to mention that solar systems run on an infinitely available resource- the sun. Solar energy is the future; Alloway shouldn't be stuck in the past.