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Rock Steady: moving toward a steady state economy

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Rob Wilder, cocreator of the exchange-traded WilderHill Clean Energy Index, points to waste-heat recapture as an interesting concept—in theory. Wilder notes that investors today may be hard pressed to find shares in companies that are pure plays in recapturing waste heat, and that no large companies currently focus specifically on that area. But the future may be a different story, and the WilderHill Index does already hold two companies—Amerigon and Ormat—that develop advanced waste heat recapture technologies with funds from their currently profitable business arms.

Amerigon is developing thermoelectric modules to capture waste heat from cars and convert it to electricity. Ormat is finding ways to recover energy from the exhaust and midstream gases that are a byproduct of cement production, for conversion into new sources of generation. “There is going to be so much growth in businesses like these that can capture the waste streams and turn them into goods”, says Wilder. “The profits and going to flow to them.”

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