

Press Release

During his participation in the 2026 ASHRAE Winter Conference in the US
Ahmad Bin Shafar reviews the progress of Empower's initiative with ASHRAE on the development of the global district cooling standard and third-generation systems

Dubai, UAE, 4 February 2026: H.E. Ahmad Bin Shafar, CEO of Emirates Central Cooling Systems Corporation PJSC (Empower), the world's largest district cooling services provider, met with the leadership of the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), on the sidelines of Empower's participation in the 2026 ASHRAE Winter Conference, held in Las Vegas, Nevada, United States. The meeting reviewed the developments in the global district cooling sector and discussed its growing role in advancing energy efficiency and supporting the sustainability objectives of modern cities.

The meeting was attended by William McQuade, President of ASHRAE, alongside Jeff Littleton, Executive Vice President; Sarah Maston, President-elect; and Ashish Rakhijja, Treasurer. The discussions focused on reviewing the progress achieved across various joint initiatives based on the collaboration agreements between Empower and ASHRAE, with particular emphasis on the ongoing research to invent the third-generation district cooling systems.

The two sides also discussed progress in developing a globally recognized district cooling standard applicable across various countries, expected to contribute to unifying best practices and improving efficiency in this vital sector.

The meeting explored prospects for research and development in district cooling systems, alongside joint efforts to enhance energy efficiency and deliver innovative, more sustainable solutions that support modern cities' needs, contribute to emissions reduction, and advance long-term sustainability objectives.

"These meetings reflect Empower's commitment to actively shaping the future of district cooling at the global level, driven by our firm belief that this sector is a cornerstone for enhancing energy efficiency and advancing sustainability in modern cities. Our partnership with ASHRAE is particularly significant, as it represents the integration of Empower's accumulated practical expertise as the world's largest district cooling services provider with the Society's research capabilities and leadership in the development of technical standards," said **Bin Shafar**.

"Through joint research initiatives and the development of standardised guidelines, we are working to establish globally applicable scientific and technical foundations that support the advancement of the next generation of district cooling systems, contribute to reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions, and strengthen the resilience and sustainability of urban infrastructure. We believe that knowledge sharing and the development of international partnerships represent the most effective pathway to accelerating the transition towards more efficient and sustainable cooling

solutions, in line with the aspirations of future cities and in support of global climate action agendas,” he added.

Empower has signed two agreements with ASHRAE in 2024. The first agreement focuses on the development and issuance of a unified and globally approved District Cooling Standard, which will be adopted by countries worldwide. The second agreement is for the development of the third generation of district cooling systems through advanced and innovative scientific research studies.

Empower concluded its participation in the 2026 ASHRAE Winter Conference, which formed part of the company’s strategy to strengthen its international presence and contribute effectively to shaping the future of district cooling by broadening the scope of dialogue and joint collaboration with a select group of the world’s leading entities specialising in refrigeration, heating, and air-conditioning systems.

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