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Details:

(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ... PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS

2009-10

(session year)

Senate

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on ... Commerce, Utilities, Energy, & Rail (SC-CUER)

COMMITTEE NOTICES ...

- Committee Reports ... **CR**
- Executive Sessions ... **ES**
- Public Hearings ... **PH**

INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL

- Appointments ... **Appt** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Clearinghouse Rules ... **CRule** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Hearing Records ... bills and resolutions (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
(**ab** = Assembly Bill) (**ar** = Assembly Resolution) (**ajr** = Assembly Joint Resolution)
(**sb** = Senate Bill) (**sr** = Senate Resolution) (**sjr** = Senate Joint Resolution)
- Miscellaneous ... **Misc**



January 13, 2009

\$400,000 given for wind turbine

Members of the Wausau School Board on Monday approved a \$400,000 donation for the Wausau East High School wind turbine project.

Members voted 5-0 in favor of accepting the donation, which came from the Walter Alexander Foundation. It will cover most of the estimated \$575,000 in project costs.

District officials plan to install two wind turbines on the southeast corner of the Wausau East campus.

The turbines will stand more than 150 feet high and could be operational by next summer, East science teacher Lauren Ebbecke said.

The district will continue to seek other sources of funding for the project.



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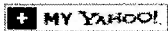
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Wind farm bill would govern state

Paul Snyder,
paul.snyder@dailyreporter.com

Posted February 24, 2009

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State Sen. Jeff Plale says he is weeks away from introducing a new bill establishing statewide guidelines for wind farm development.

But meshing existing municipal ordinances into one that would govern the state has some bracing for a fight.

"When you jump into something really quick, as Wisconsin did with ethanol, you end up seeing some bad results," said Magnolia Town Supervisor David Olsen. "I hope they don't try to just push things through. (Legislators) should be there to represent constituents, not lobbyists."

Although Plale, D-South Milwaukee, conceded his attempt to get a statewide wind farm siting bill passed at the end of the last session was late-developing and criticisms that it was rushed were justified, he said he likes his chances this time around.

"We're trying to build a broad-based coalition with a lot of stakeholders," he said. "I think understanding of wind power is better than last time, and so is the general prognosis."

State law gives the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin the right to approve any wind farm that would produce more than 100 megawatts of energy, while any wind farm producing less than that amount can be decided upon by local municipalities. Plale said the goal is to give the state the final word on any development, regardless of its output.

But Plale declined to give any details about the bill in terms of possible setback distances or whether county or municipal governments that already have ordinances in place would be grandfathered in. He said details are still under negotiation, but suggested local ordinances might not set the best parameters for state law.

"If we're going to make renewables a priority in this state," he said, "we can't have one community dictating policy for everyone else."

Wisconsin instituted a mandate of producing 25 percent of its energy from renewable resources by 2025.

Magnolia, which enacted its own ordinance earlier this year requiring half-mile setbacks for turbines from homes and businesses, would be a good example to follow, Olsen said.

"Just for sound and flicker-flash purposes," he said, "I think it's very fair."

Yet wind farm developers looking to build in locales with such ordinances remain hamstrung by the terms and argue such setbacks leave no viable land on which to build multiple turbines.

Legal battles already surfaced in response to Trempeleau County's one-mile setback ordinance, and last week Hubertus-based Emerging Energies LLP filed a complaint against the Manitowoc County Board of Adjustment's ruling against the company's request for a conditional-use permit to build a seven-turbine wind farm.

Edward Ritger, the attorney representing Emerging Energies, did not return repeated calls for comment.

But County Executive Bob Ziegelbauer said the complaint is just the latest step in a legal battle stretching back to when the county first adopted its ordinance in 2004.

"Frankly, our expectation was that whoever would not have received the favorable judgment would have gone that route," he said.

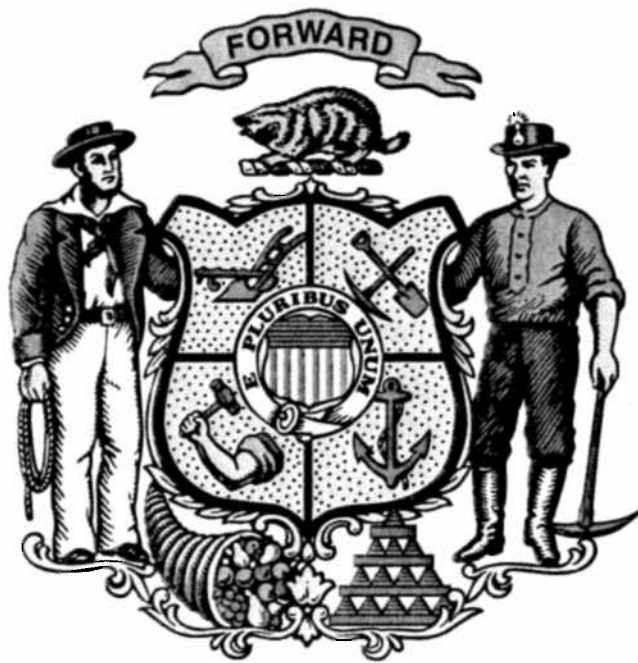
Ziegelbauer, who also serves as a Democratic representative in the state Assembly, added there is still strong local opposition in Manitowoc to a statewide wind farm ordinance.

"We, as a state, pay homage to the concept of local control, so it's kind of insulting to a community that agonizes for years to put an ordinance together to come sweeping in with a state ordinance because you believe you know better," he said. "I say this tongue-in-cheek because of the homage we pay to people in (the capital), but please let us make our own decision, even if we're a little slow sometimes."

Even if the coalition for state wind farm guidelines strengthened in the last year, Olsen said the coalition against the state did too.

"If anything, it's probably the exact opposite of what (Plale) says it is," he said. "I agree there's a lot more information out on wind farms now, but I'd say with that, there's even more of a push for local control."





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Growing excitement, expectations for green jobs corps

- Story Highlights
- Schools are offering green jobs training for displaced or unemployed workers
- Obama stimulus plan puts \$500 million into green jobs training
- The renewable energy industry has been hit by the economic downturn, too
- Still, students going into green industries tell CNN they see it as a safe career plan

By John D. Sutter
CNN

(CNN) – When Rita Bryer sees 300-foot-tall wind turbines sprouting up from the prairie near her home in western Oklahoma, she can't help but wonder about the view from the top, where blades the size of semi-trucks spin.

"Out here, you can see the wind turbines from 10 miles away," she said. "Think about how far you'll be able to see when you're at the top."

So, partly out of curiosity, partly because she wants to be part of something new, the 51-year-old is leaving behind a career of odd jobs and oil-field work.

She's going back to school to become a wind turbine mechanic -- one who'll have to scale the turbines to make repairs.

Across the country, people like Bryer are looking to the renewable energy sector in hopes its "green-collar jobs" will offer them stability in this shaky economy. Some are signing up for community college or apprenticeship programs that train students to be wind turbine mechanics, solar panel installers, fuel-cell engineers or energy efficiency experts.

Government support has rallied excitement for the prospect of a green jobs corps, as President Obama's stimulus package puts about \$20 billion into greening the economy, according to the White House. [Obama says country will double renewable energy in three years »](#)

In his recent speech to Congress, Obama said the U.S. will double its supply of renewable energy in three years. To do so, he's calling on a new class of workers to be trained in environmental fields. Green jobs training programs will get \$500 million from the stimulus.

At a summit in Philadelphia on Friday, Vice President Joe Biden said people who make \$20 per hour before a green jobs training program can make \$50 per hour after. On average, the clean-energy jobs pay 10 to 20 percent more than similar work outside the field, he said.

Adding to the enthusiasm, Biden cited a recent case in Chicago where a maker of energy-efficient windows intends to gradually rehire 250 workers who were laid off when their window company closed late last year.

There is a "very direct" correlation between the stimulus package and Serious Materials' ability to reopen the plant, said Sandra Vaughan, chief marketing officer for the California-based company.

But not all signs for green industries are so positive.

Wind and solar companies have cut staff and stalled new projects as the credit crisis has tied up money, meaning banks are less able to invest in renewable energy.

In the short term, that will make things difficult for the newly trained green work force, said Kathy Werle, dean of applied sciences and technology at San Jose City College, in California, which offers associate degrees in solar panel installation.

"Right now, money is so tight. People can't borrow money to put solar on their homes," she said.

Werle said she expects Obama's stimulus plan to help jump-start the industry. Within a year or so she expects the graduates to be able to find plenty of green jobs.

The uncertainty appears not to be tempering student demand for green education, though. Earlier this semester, 260 people showed up for 44 seats in solar panel installation classes at San Jose City College, Werle said.

"Anything green is very popular," she said.

Meanwhile, some schools that train the green-collar work force are billing their programs as near-guaranteed ways to find stable jobs.

Sidney Bolfig, chairman of the Texas Renewable Energy Education Consortium, an association of community colleges, said nearly 100 percent of his graduates find jobs in the fuel-cell industry -- many before graduation.

"Typically all of these students all get jobs," he said.

Bolfig is so confident in the idea that he markets green-collar careers to high schools and elementary schools in the area.

He hopes that the standard list of childhood dream jobs -- astronaut, firefighter, police officer -- soon will include things like wind technician and fuel-cell engineer.

Even if there's trouble in the short term, green jobs are needed to fight climate change and spur economic growth, he said.

"We need to develop these new technologies like there's no tomorrow," he said.

Matt Raines, 31, of West, Texas, had a career as an auto mechanic. But that didn't seem to be going anywhere, so now he is enrolled as a community college's hydrogen fuel program.

He said local people look at him funny when he tells them about the decision because they don't understand what he'll be doing.

"I had one lady who actually asked me if I was building hydrogen bombs. I was like, 'No ma'am, it's energy production, green energy,'" he said.

Raines finds the program exciting, and says he's been contacted about jobs by three companies, even though he is yet to finish his two-year degree.

Maria Kingery, co-founder of Southern Energy Management, a North Carolina company that installs solar energy panels, said schools need to catch up with the changing industry.

She applauded money in the stimulus package that will go to green job training programs, but said "training is going to be a real challenge" in the coming months.

Her company has a hiring freeze in place at the moment because of the economic downturn, but expects to grow in 2009, she said.

Some green jobs are low-tech and require little or no specialized training.

A former construction worker could easily take up a career in home weatherization and energy efficiency, said Bob Logston, owner of Home Energy Loss Professionals (HELP) in Baltimore, Maryland.

Some weatherization steps are as simple as shoving newspaper insulation in a home's attic, caulking windows and repairing ductwork.

More than \$11 billion of the economic stimulus package is intended to help people make their homes more energy efficient, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

Because of those efficiency provisions, Logston said he expects his business to quadruple.

He employs six people now and expects to hire at least 12 more, he said. He also plans to offer his employees insurance for the first time.

"Everything's budding, so to speak, everything's in bloom even though it's winter," he said of green jobs in the home weatherization business. "The energy costs are so high people can't afford" not to increase efficiency.

Part of the trouble with estimating the profitability of green jobs is that no one seems to be able to agree on a definition for the term. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics does not separate data on green jobs or jobs in renewable energy, and economists disagree on how many new green jobs the stimulus package will create.

In such a murky situation, community colleges often network with the local business community to gauge their interest in students from green-jobs programs. Many have banded together to dig up regional knowledge.

"The students always ask, 'Can you guarantee job placement?' No, I can't guarantee it, but I can tell you I've spoken with local wind farm managers and everybody I've spoken with says there is a need, (and) there will be a need," said Kimberlee Smithton, director of business and industry services at the High Plains Technology Center in Woodward, Oklahoma.

That school, where Bryer is taking classes, is offering a wind turbine technician program for the first time this year.

Bryer said she doesn't know how much money she'll make in the wind business. She doesn't much care.

"To me, especially, it's going to be a job -- a good job I think I'll like, and I just look forward to doing it," she said. "It's always nice doing something different, not the same old thing."

The woman who's always been seen as a rebel because she was the lone female working tough jobs in the oil fields now feels like she's part of a movement for change.

All About[Economic Stimulus](#) • [Alternative Energy Technology](#) • [Job Searching](#)

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<http://www.cnn.com/2009/LIVING/03/02/green.jobs.training/index.html>

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LEADER-TELEGRAM

Updated: 4/19/2009 11:17:02 PM

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Editorial: State should loosen red tape that restricts wind power

Windmills were once a frequent sight in the Wisconsin countryside, pumping water on countless family farms before the use of electricity became widespread.

Now, windmills could again become common as the state tries to meet its goal of generating 10 percent of its electricity from renewable sources by 2015. In the coming weeks, the state Legislature will have a chance to make it easier for clean-energy creating wind turbines to proliferate in Wisconsin.

These windmills are larger and more powerful than their ancestors. For example, turbines at a wind farm in Fond du Lac County reach nearly 400 feet in the air (counting their blades) and can generate up to 1.65 megawatts of power. (One megawatt is enough for 800 to 1,000 homes.)

Last year's spike in the price of dwindling fossil fuels should be enough reason for our society to begin shifting to cleaner, more renewable sources. Add to that the growing evidence of global climate change caused by excessive amounts of carbon dioxide released by the burning of those fossil fuels, and the need for renewable energy becomes even more critical.

Today, Wisconsin gets just 3 percent of its energy from renewable sources (mostly wind), far below the 10 percent target looming in six years. Ryan Schryver, a clean energy advocate for Clean Wisconsin, a statewide environmental group, says an additional 600 megawatts of wind power are ensnared in red tape. The state isn't to blame, however; instead, some local governments have adopted ordinances that restrict the development of wind power. Among them is the Trempealeau County Board, which voted in 2007 that wind turbines taller than 150 feet must be one mile or more from residences, schools, hospitals or businesses. The ordinance essentially prohibits wind power in the county.

Clean Wisconsin is part of a coalition of dozens of groups - including environmentalists, labor unions, utilities such as Xcel Energy, and business representatives such as Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce - that supports a soon-to-be-introduced bill that would require the state Public Service Commission to create statewide standards for wind projects. Under current law, local governments can block these projects for health or safety reasons - but those reasons aren't well-defined, which has led to blanket restrictions such as the one in Trempealeau County.

Critics likely will charge that the bill is an attack on local control. However, it still lets local governments make wind-siting decisions, and allows those who disagree with them to appeal to the PSC and the courts.

It's understandable that potential neighbors of any large project - including a wind farm - would be concerned about how it might impact their lives. However, the hum of a windmill or the flickering shadows it may create seem greatly preferable to the sulphurous fumes of a coal-fired plant or the potential deadly contamination of a nuclear reactor. Unless we redouble our efforts to pursue clean energy, those may be our only other options to keep the lights on.

- Tom Giffey, editorial page editor



April 17, 2009

Editorial: Have uniform rules for siting wind turbines

Wisconsin should move ahead with uniform rules and regulations for siting power-generating wind turbines that could be applied statewide.

State Sen. Jeff Pile of South Milwaukee is circulating a bill to that effect in hopes of getting bipartisan support before it is introduced in the Legislature. A similar plan was proposed late in the last legislative session and was wisely shelved because there wasn't enough time to fully explore the idea and hold public hearings.

Since this measure will take away some local control that planning and zoning rules would cover, input from local government officials, as well as the public, is critical to coming up with a workable plan.

Current state law gives the Public Service Commission the responsibility for review and approval of large wind power proposals, but smaller projects are left for local governments to decide.

Wind power is not a passing fad. It has to be a part of the solution to weaning the U.S. from fossil fuels. Until the recession hit, wind power generation was among the fastest growing industries in the nation. And, Wisconsin has chosen to be a leader, not a follower in the use of renewable sources of energy. By 2015, the goal is to have 20 percent of the electricity produced in the state come from sources other than coal- or gas-fired power plants.

It would still be best for wind turbine siting decisions to remain solely with local governments.

Neighboring Fond du Lac County is an example where it can work. Leaders in several towns have done a good job of balancing the concerns of neighboring residents with the need for renewable sources of energy in developing regulations on setbacks and noise.

But it is quite apparent that the desire to come up with reasonable rules is not universal. Some towns have written siting rules in such a way to ban wind turbine projects entirely.

There is time to conduct hearings and gather information, and a uniform set of rules on wind turbines will help Wisconsin reach a cleaner energy future sooner, rather than later.



Story originally printed in the Tomah Journal or online at www.tomahjournal.com

Published - Thursday, April 02, 2009

Editorial: Enact statewide standards for wind turbines

One of these days, the world will no longer have access to fossil fuels. Oil and coal are finite resources, and while they might last well into the 22nd, 23rd or 24th centuries, they will be depleted at some time in our history. And long before they run out, they will become more difficult and expensive to extract. Remember the oil that John McCain wants to get from the Atlantic Coast? Drilling there can't be sustained until oil hits \$60 per barrel and stays there, which translates into at least \$2.50 for a gallon of gas.

Renewable energy must replace fossil fuels sometime, and the process may as well start now. Part of the solution is wind energy. Unfortunately, it has proven to be a contentious issue in Wisconsin. It's almost impossible for a private-property owner to put a wind turbine on his or her property without the threat of a lawsuit. Wind projects in the Monroe County townships of Ridgeville and Wilton have been halted by ordinances that, in effect, outlaw wind-generated power.

Wind power won't reach its full potential until the state establishes uniform standards for siting wind turbines. Obviously, health and safety concerns must be considered in any legislation. Opponents have legitimate concerns over noise, flicker and ice buildup. However, it's an unavoidable reality that that energy generation must occur somewhere. Would wind-turbine opponents like an oil refinery in the township? How about a coal-fired power plant? A nuclear power plant? Even solar power creates controversy. A solar developer in California is stymied because he can't get powerlines built across the desert.

While wind can't come close to filling our energy needs, it certainly has a role to play in a diversified, renewable energy network. Somehow, we must resolve the tension between a public that wants all the conveniences of modern life but doesn't want to live anywhere near a facility that makes those conveniences possible. An honest debate over statewide standards for wind turbines would be a good start.

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Wisconsin captures cash for wind research

by rbenedict

Published: May 11th, 2009

Paul Snyder

paul.snyder@dailyreporter.com

WHAT: hearing on state Sen. Jeff Pile's bill on statewide wind farm siting standards

WHERE: room 411 South, State Capitol, 2 E. Main St., Madison

WHEN: 11 a.m. Tuesday, May 12

INFO: 608-266-7505

BY THE NUMBERS

\$399,931

money UW-Madison will get from federal government for wind research and development

\$330,184

money UW-Milwaukee will get for wind

\$199,236

money Lake Shore Technical College will get for wind

\$119,135

money UW System will get for wind

\$93,348

money Renew Wisconsin Inc. will get for wind

Wisconsin schools and groups will receive more than \$1 million from the federal government to further wind power development and research, but some are skeptical the money will translate into development.

"Microscopically, this is about building wind in Wisconsin," said Giri Venkataramanan, an associate professor in the College of Engineering at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. "Our reach is global, and the hope is people go through our schooling and can take those skills anywhere in the world — off shore, on shore, on lakes, wherever."

But it will take more than school courses to put those skills to use in Wisconsin, said Curt Bjurlin, project manager for Elgin, Ill.-based EcoEnergy Engineering LLC.

"The primary concern that we still have is a lack of certainty in permitting throughout the state,"

he said. "It's an onerous process to go through a variety of rules because when you're working on one project, you might find yourself within six different ordinances."

Although EcoEnergy proposed a wind farm development in the towns of Union and Magnolia in Rock County, both townships subsequently passed ordinances requiring 1,000-foot setbacks from property lines and half-mile setbacks from houses.

Bjurlin said the lack of cohesion frustrated EcoEnergy enough that the company prefers not to work with Wisconsin unless changes are made to the laws.

"Ordinances change while I'm working, or I might be dealing with moratoriums," he said of his experiences in the state. "When you're spending millions just to get to the construction-ready phase, it just leaves you wondering whether it's wise to even do the project in Wisconsin."

Uniformity could be on tap. A bill by state Sen. Jeff Plale, D-South Milwaukee, to let the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin approve or reject wind farm proposals of any size will receive its first public hearing Tuesday.

Meanwhile, another benefactor of the federal money, Renew Wisconsin Inc., Madison, plans to use its money to steer developers back to Wisconsin.

Ed Blume, Renew's director of communications, said the nonprofit organization will use its share of the money to develop a "one-stop shop" Web site for wind farm developers that summarizes state rules on development and contains documents relating to issues such as safe setback distances.

The organization also will help the PSC write statewide siting standards, although Blume conceded that presupposes Plale's bill makes it to the governor's desk.

"We're cautiously optimistic," Blume said. "The PSC has been hesitant to proceed without legislative guidance on the issue, but even if the bill fails again, the PSC could quite likely start working on its own standards."

But PSC spokesman Tim Le Monds said the PSC would not draft its own standards without Legislative support.

Blume said Wisconsin needs more opportunities for wind farm development, and the bill and federal money are important steps in that direction.

But Wisconsin alone should not be the sole benefactor of wind power research, Venkataramanan said.

"Wisconsin is special for us because we're here," he said. "But this curriculum is going to be offered through the World Wide Web. It's providing our expertise to the entire planet."

Complete URL: <http://dailyreporter.com/blog/2009/05/11/wisconsin-captures-cash-for-wind-research/>



This press release is available in printable form.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Conservation Is More Effective Than Wind Energy

Pointing to the very small contribution of wind, National Wind Watch calls for conservation instead of industrialization of rural and wild landscapes

Rowe, Mass., July 30, 2007 -- The International Energy Agency (IEA) projects that if the world's nations pursue carbon-reducing plans they are currently considering, then in 2030 there could be 18 times more electricity generated from the wind than there was in 2004. {1}

But because of continuing growth in demand, that would still represent less than five percent of the world's electricity production. {2}

In the U.S., the Energy Information Administration (EIA) of the U.S. Department of Energy projects that wind's share of electricity production will be less than *one* percent in 2030. {3}

National Wind Watch (NWW), a coalition of groups and individuals providing information about industrial wind energy development, says that conservation could easily make up wind's small potential contribution.

"It is obvious -- even in the IEA's very hopeful scenario -- that wind will never be an important part of electricity production," says NWW president Eric Rosenbloom, author of "A Problem With Wind Power". {4} "Wind does not now nor will it ever replace other sources to any significant degree," Rosenbloom says. He adds, "That is not to endorse any other source as problem free, it is simply facing the fact that wind is not a viable alternative."

Since wind's potential contribution is so small, modest conservation would avoid the adverse impacts of wind energy development, according to National Wind Watch.

Industrial-scale wind turbines are now typically well over 400 feet tall to the tip of their blades. They weigh anywhere from 150 to 350 tons. The blades sweep a vertical air space of 1.5 to 2 acres with tip speeds between 150 and 200 mph. {5} Each turbine requires acres of clearance and is secured in a buried platform of tons of steel-reinforced concrete.

Wind energy companies are targeting vulnerable rural communities and landscapes for their construction. Developers are building roads and wind power plants in wilderness areas, particularly on prominent ridge lines.

In May, the U.S. Congress was told about the increasing threat to birds and bats from unregulated wind energy development in migratory pathways and the degradation and fragmentation of habitat. {6} The results of a 5-month study of the new giant turbines on New York's Tug Hill plateau suggest that the annual toll for the complete facility is more than 16,000 birds and bats. {7}

Reports of health problems caused by noise from the machines are increasing. A team in Portugal investigating heart, lung, and nerve damage from industrial low-frequency noise has found that the conditions for causing "vibroacoustic disease" exist inside houses near large wind turbines. {8} Canadian News has reported families forced to leave their homes because of headaches, dizziness, irritability, and sheer lack of sleep. {9} A couple in England has publicized their experience of intrusive noise from turbines near their farm. {10} An English physician has interviewed residents around wind energy facilities and found serious noise problems to be commonplace. {11} In Maine, neighbors of the Mars Hill facility were shocked by the noise as soon as the first turbine was turned on. {12} Most of these people were initially supportive of the projects and believed the developers' assurances that they would not experience any problems.

"This is not green energy but a destructive boondoggle. It is even more intolerable that we as taxpayers are paying for it -- in so many ways", says NWW member Sue Sliwinski of New York.

Since the IEA shows that large-scale wind energy will not change anything for the better, and increasing evidence shows how much damage it does, National Wind Watch says that conserving even a small amount of electricity every year is obviously a better choice.

A little conservation can replace the perceived need to build giant wind turbines that do so much more harm than good.

Notes

1. "Renewables in global energy supply", International Energy Agency, January 2007. Available at: http://www.iea.org/Textbase/publications/free_new_Desc.asp?PUBS_ID=1596.

2. "Renewables in global energy supply", IEA. In 2004, according to the IEA, wind generated 0.47% of the world's electricity, namely, 82 terawatt-hours (TWh, or 1 million megawatt-hours) out of 17,450 TWh ("Key world energy statistics", 2006). They project that wind generation will grow about 18-fold by 2030, to 1,440 TWh. The total electricity production in 2030 is calculated from their statements about renewables as a whole, which they project growing from 18% of all electricity production in 2004 to 25% in 2030, an absolute increase from 3,179 TWh to 7,775 TWh. Thus, the total electricity in 2030 is about 31,100 TWh, of which wind's projected 1,440 TWh is 4.6%.

Note that this is actual output, not installed capacity, which in 2004 grew from 39,341 to 42,329 MW, according to the American Wind Energy Association (AWEA), for an average installed capacity of 42,329 MW. The output of 82 TWh represents an average production rate of 82,000,000 MWh \div 8,760 hours in the year = 9,361 MW, i.e., only 22% of the average installed capacity.

3. "Annual energy outlook 2007", Energy Information Administration, May 2007. Available at: <http://www.eia.doe.gov/oiaf/aeo/index.html>. The EIA projects that wind's share of electricity production will increase from 0.36% in 2005 to 0.89% in 2030, primarily because of limits to windy land area ("Assumptions to the annual energy outlook 2007", May 2007). The 2005 production was 21% of the average installed capacity (from 6,725 MW at the beginning of 2005 to 9,149 MW at the end, according to the AWEA, an average installed capacity of 7,937 MW).

4. Available at: <http://www.aweo.org/ProblemWithWind.html>.

5. See <http://www.aweo.org/windmodels.html>.

6. "Gone with the wind: impacts of wind turbines on birds and bats", Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans, Committee on Natural Resources, Oversight Hearing, May 1, 2007. <http://resourcescommittee.house.gov/hearings/hearingdetail.aspx?NewsID=61>. Testimony also available at: <http://www.wind-watch.org/documents/gone-with-the-wind-impacts-of-wind-turbines-on-birds-and-bats/>.
7. "Annual report for the Maple Ridge Wind Power Project postconstruction bird and bat fatality study -- 2006", Curry and Kerlinger, LLC, May 31, 2007. Available at: <http://www.wind-watch.org/documents/maple-ridge-wind-power-project-postconstruction-bird-and-bat-fatality-study-2006/>.
8. "Public health and noise exposure", Mariana Alves-Pereira and Nuno Castelo Branco, Inter-noise 2007, August 28-31, Istanbul, Turkey. Available at: <http://www.wind-watch.org/documents/public-health-and-noise-exposure/>. Also see <http://www.ninapierpont.com/?s=wind> for information about "wind turbine syndrome". And see "Noise complaints on rise with new industrial wind power projects", National Wind Watch, April 2, 2007, available at: .
9. See, for example, "Island family abandons home because of wind farm", Amherst (Nova Scotia) Daily News, July 17, 2007 (available at: <http://www.wind-watch.org/news/2007/07/13/island-family-abandons-home-because-of-wind-farm/>), and "Trying to escape the wind", Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, February 27, 2006 (available at: <http://www.wind-watch.org/documents/cbc-series-on-nova-scotia-family-who-fled-wind-turbine-noise/>).
10. See, for example, <http://www.wind-watch.org/documents/statement-from-jane-davis-of-deeping-st-nicholas/>.
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National Wind Watch is a nonprofit corporation established by campaigners from around the U.S. in 2005 to promote knowledge and raise awareness of the negative environmental and social impacts of industrial wind energy development. Information, analysis, and other materials are available on its web site: www.wind-watch.org.

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Business

Windpower 2009

Riding the current of change



Associated Press

Wind turbine replicas help set the stage at Windpower 2009, held this week in Chicago. It is the world's largest trade show for the wind power industry.

Chicago show displays interest in wind energy

By [Thomas Content](#) of the Journal Sentinel

Posted: May. 7, 2009

Chicago - Anyone looking for signs that sectors of the economy have found some shelter from the recession needed only to walk the halls of the McCormick Place convention center Thursday.

With more than 1,200 exhibitors, the world's largest trade show for the wind power industry saw record attendance in its bid to prove that energy from wind has escaped the label "alternative."

"When you look at this show, you wouldn't know there's a slowdown in the economy," Kim Zuhlke, an executive at Alliant Energy Corp., said while standing between massive booths at the conference Thursday.

Organizers of Windpower 2009, sponsored by the American Wind Energy Association, weren't sure how their conference would do, but the show ended up attracting more than 20,000 people. That's 60% more than attended last year in Houston, the association said.

The recession has hit the wind power industry just like every other sector of the economy, as projects stalled for lack of financing. In an industry forecast earlier this year, the association said the wind industry is likely to slow this year after setting records for new projects last year.

"Everyone's been in a holding pattern. It's not just wind energy - the entire country had taken a pause," said Ellen Shafer of Broadwind Energy, based near Chicago.

But the mood at the convention this week has been one of optimism, said Shafer, whose company has two Wisconsin subsidiaries - TowerTech, a Manitowoc maker of wind towers, and Badger Transport of Clintonville, a trucking company specializing in hauling the oversized components that are the ingredients of a wind farm development.

"And a significant amount of business is being done," she said.

Other Wisconsin companies looking to ride the wave of interest in green power came to network and get their products known, including a Milwaukee machine shop that has been around for more than a century.

Busch Precision Inc., 8200 N. Faulkner Road, has served the mining industry, oil industry and food industry and did repair work for old-line Milwaukee manufacturers. Company executives learned of opportunities in wind power at a wind power supply chain workshop last month in Appleton, said Joe Wiemiller of Busch.

"We had to take a look around and see what's the next big thing, and wind power should be one of those," Wiemiller said.

Wiemiller stood in a booth where more than a dozen Wisconsin firms were based. The booth was sponsored by Wind for Wisconsin and the New North, the economic development organization for northeastern Wisconsin.

For industrial companies such as Busch or Wisconsin Oven Corp., being at the show was about making contacts and trying to get the company name visible to established players in the wind industry.

"In manufacturing, this is the big and up and coming thing," said Jim Lucas, senior sales engineer at Wisconsin Oven, based in East Troy. "You want to make sure people have seen you and know who you are."

Expansion plan

Driving expansion of the wind industry: growing interest from consumers in getting energy that's home-grown and doesn't pollute, as well as government rules, including one in effect in Wisconsin, that are pushing utilities to generate more renewable energy.

Congress is debating a national renewable energy mandate as well as a bill that would regulate greenhouse-gas emissions.

In a report Thursday, Christine Tezak, an analyst with Robert W. Baird & Co., said she feels confident that Congress will pass a global warming bill this year. It would make the cost of energy derived from fossil fuels more expensive, creating more interest in wind energy.

More utilities are entering the wind power development business, including Milwaukee-based We Energies and Madison-based Alliant Energy Corp. We Energies opened the largest wind farm in the state last year, while Alliant expects to generate 12% of the power for its Madison utility, Wisconsin Power & Light Co., by 2012.

"Wind has gone from being what I call a boutique - something new, something cool, a neat thing to do, but not the core to the business - to the point where now it is becoming core to the business," Alliant's Zuhlke said. "It's going to be a serious part of the energy mix."



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Brady, Kevin

From: Orlowski, Merith
Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2009 10:44 AM
To: Brady, Kevin
Subject: FW: Wind turbines hurt land values

Merith Orlowski

Office of Senator Jeff Plale

608.266.7505

Merith.Orlowski@legis.wisconsin.gov

From: Steve Snee [mailto:waroverwind@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, September 12, 2009 11:42 AM
To: Sen.Cowles
Subject: Wind turbines hurt land values

Critics say wind turbines hurt land values

By [Thomas Content](#) of the Journal Sentinel

Posted: Sept. 11, 2009

Land values have fallen on properties near wind turbines built as part of the largest wind power projects in the state, a study funded by wind-power critics says.

The study found property values have fallen by at least 19% for sales of land near the We Energies wind farm in Fond du Lac County, and at least 12% for sales of land near Invenergy LLC's Forward Wind project in Fond du Lac and Dodge counties, a report by Appraisal Group One says.

The appraisal firm's study was commissioned by a Calumet County affiliate of the state Coalition for Wisconsin Environmental Stewardship, a group that is opposing We Energies' Glacier Hills wind farm project in Columbia County and seeks to preserve local control over wind-siting decisions.

The study was released days before the Legislature is expected to take up a wind-siting reform bill aimed at providing standardized permitting procedures for wind power projects across the state.

A representative of the American Wind Energy Association declined to comment on the study. We Energies spokesman Brian Manthey said the utility was still reviewing the report, but he said it's hard to judge how much the decline in property values was caused by proximity to turbines, given that the

decline also occurred during the housing market's collapse and the worst economy in generations.

"The times that we are in really make it difficult to say . . . what is affecting home sales or land sales," he said.

Bob Welch, who is lobbying on behalf of the anti-wind group, said he hoped legislators will take a second look at the siting bill in light of the report, saying the bill in Madison would stop local governments from setting restrictions requiring turbines to be located far from homes.

The bill would essentially give the issue to the state Public Service Commission, which would set up a proceeding to determine proper setbacks for wind turbines and other siting issues.

Kurt Kielisch, president of Appraisal Group One, said his study found living near wind turbines has a bigger impact on property values than other studies he's done. His other studies have examined the impact of transmission lines and gas pipelines on property values.

The study found an average price decline of 30% to 40% in land values for property sales that were near turbines.

The main objection, he said, is aesthetics.

"The focus of people who move to the country is kind of to be left alone to enjoy the quiet and the scenery, and when you have things changing the scenery like windmills tend to do, that puts more of an industrial urban feel into the country," he said.

The firm's study's findings run counter to a national study that issued a preliminary finding this year that found "no statistical evidence that homes near wind facilities are stigmatized by those facilities as compared to other homes in the region."

That study, by the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, reviewed wind projects in 10 states including a wind farm in Kewaunee County.

Ben Hoen, a co-author of the Berkeley study, said Friday that he could not comment on the Wisconsin case. The Berkeley study was funded by the U.S. Department of Energy, he said in an e-mail.

Supporters of the wind-permitting legislation said Friday that they don't expect the study to delay the state's action on the wind-siting reform bill.

"This is sort of the classic tactic of the wind opponents," wind industry lobbyist Curt Pawlisch said. "Come up with something and throw it in and see what happens. This is one more reason why you need to have a calm setting, through a deliberative rulemaking process at the PSC."



Brady, Kevin

From: Orłowski, Merith
Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2009 10:51 AM
To: Brady, Kevin
Subject: FW: The War Over Wind

Merith Orłowski

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From: Steve Snee [mailto:waroverwind@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, September 11, 2009 2:01 PM
To: Sen.Plale
Subject: The War Over Wind

Critics say green groups are too tight with industry

Brian McCombie on Thursday 09/10/2009



It was the strangest sensation Lynda Barry ever felt: a near-constant vibration within her body.

"You know how sometimes, around your eye, you'll get this little tic that kind of wiggles?" says Barry, of Footville, Wis., south of Janesville. "It was like having that in your ear and your chest. A pulsing. It's the weirdest feeling!"

Barry was standing in a house in Fond du Lac County, near a wind farm. The vibration she felt was created by wind-power turbines, one just 1,100 feet away. These were part of the Blue Sky Green Fields wind project, 88 wind towers owned and operated by We Energies. The owners of the house complained of ringing in their ears anytime the wind turbines and their 100-foot blades were spinning.

In all, Barry has visited more than 20 Wisconsin households located near wind-power projects, and spent many nights at various houses.

"A couple nights, it sounded like there was a washing machine or dishwasher running in the basement," she recalls. "A few times, it was like a jet coming through the house."

Barry became involved in wind-power issues a couple years back when a wind facility was proposed near her Rock County home. An author, playwright and cartoonist for alternative newspapers (her comic appeared in *Isthmus* from 1983 to 1995), Barry felt too little attention was being given to people actually living near Wisconsin wind farms. So she began visiting.

Admittedly, some people don't have any problems with the spinning turbines. Many others, though, think the noise, vibrations and flickering shadows created by the spinning turbine blades cause headaches, disorientation and sleep deprivation.

"What was really bothersome was just how distressed people were," says Barry. "You just see it over and over again."

What also troubles Barry is that various Wisconsin "green" groups have, in her opinion, downplayed environmental and human health concerns in their quest for renewable wind energy. They also seem far too willing to ride roughshod over the concerns of local communities.

"I don't doubt that their hearts are in it," says Barry of these groups, especially Clean Wisconsin and RENEW, which are supporting a wind-energy bill making its way through the Wisconsin Legislature. "They're paid lobbyists rather than environmental groups, though they don't go out of their way to let people know this," she says. "I'm so hoping that real environmental groups look more deeply into wind power."

Glenn Stoddard agrees. An environmental lawyer now operating from Eau Claire, Stoddard worked with Madison attorney Ed Garvey a decade ago. While in Madison, Stoddard represented a group of people who felt a wind farm near their homes greatly diminished their quality of life. Since then, Stoddard has helped a number of local governments create wind-power ordinances.

From that work, Stoddard has come to the same conclusions as Barry about "green" groups either not recognizing or choosing to ignore wind power's toll on people and the environment. He believes Clean Wisconsin and RENEW are, at the very least, fudging reality in the claims they make in support of wind power. He also thinks they've been too influenced by membership dues derived from wind developers

and the energy industry, and by private foundation grants seeking to promote renewable energy.

"The utilities don't really reduce their use of fossil fuels, because when the wind isn't blowing or the turbines aren't functioning, they have to have backup power — it's always up and running," says Stoddard. "I didn't want to come to this conclusion, but it's almost, in my opinion, just a huge environmental Ponzi scheme."

Stoddard insists he's not opposed to alternative energy or even wind power. "Unfortunately," he says, "I think some environmental groups are not able or willing to look critically at these issues and, instead, have thrown in with the developers of these types of projects and technologies, who are really just in it for the money."

Representatives of Clean Wisconsin and RENEW vehemently deny any collusion, financial or otherwise, between themselves and the wind-power industry.

"We represent ourselves," says Michael Vickerman, RENEW's executive director. "It's true we have some wind companies as members. But a pretty small fraction of our revenue base comes from the wind developers — less than 5% of our annual revenues. I haven't received a dime from any wind company to lobby."

Ryan Schryver, an energy advocate with Clean Wisconsin, takes a similar stand.

"We certainly do receive a lot of [foundation] funding to promote renewable energy," he says. "It's what environmental advocacy organizations do. As far as I know, we've never received any funding specifically to promote wind power."

Clean Wisconsin and RENEW both have employees registered with the state as paid lobbyists — five and three, respectively, as of July 2009.

Schryver and Vickerman argue that wind power, whatever its problems, represents a much better alternative to Wisconsin's energy needs than electric generation power plants burning fossil fuels. As Schryver puts it, "Right now, wind power is the most cost-competitive form of renewable energy out there and the best way to wean ourselves off fossil fuels."

Wind power is rapidly becoming a big business in Wisconsin, with millions upon millions of dollars at stake. Developers are very eager to expand wind operations here.

That yen for expansion has taken a political form with Senate Bill 185, which would set certain standards for wind developers. The bill, in its current form, removes nearly all local regulatory power over wind-power development, putting it in the hands of the Wisconsin Public Service Commission (PSC).

If SB-185 passes, the PSC will be charged with considering human health and safety, as well as environmental issues, when setting development standards. The bill will make it much harder to actually stop a proposed project, by putting the onus on local communities to prove that a new wind facility will be a problem.

A few years back, a wind developer called EcoEnergy came to the town of Union, in Rock County just northwest of Janesville, and began signing landowners to wind-tower leases. Union had no wind regulations on the books, and, faced with untold numbers of the towers going up, it placed a moratorium

on new construction. It then set out to draft a wind-power ordinance, at a cost of nearly \$45,000.

"We had a lot of health and safety concerns," says Kendall Schneider, Union's town chairman.

Research done by a local law firm discovered that multi-tower operations generated not only electricity but also low-frequency sounds that move through the ground. Many reports, anecdotal and scientific, suggested that wind towers gave people headaches and disturbed their sleep patterns. Birds may be killed, while other wildlife are scared away. Placing towers in the town of Union would require blasting into the bedrock, which could fracture the rock and divert pollutants into the groundwater.

Wind towers have collapsed in the past, Schneider notes, in one case killing two wind-power workers in the state of Oregon. The turbines may also throw off the thick layers of ice that can form on the blades, sometimes hundreds of feet. And then there is the question of what happens to 400-foot towers when they reach the end of their useful lives.

"We might have these things standing around in disrepair in 20 years," says Schneider, making them a safety threat and eyesore that would hurt property values.

The town of Union's "Large Turbine" ordinance requires setbacks of a half-mile from existing property lines — much farther than the 1,000-foot setback in a model ordinance for towns and municipalities on the PSC's website. And it lays out developer/owner responsibilities for removing the towers at the end of their useful lives.

The ordinance passed last November. Schneider says EcoEnergy never put in an application to build its towers, but he doesn't think it's lost interest. "Basically, they started lobbying at the Capitol and tried to get their foot in that way."

"That way" is SB-185 (its companion in the Assembly is AB-256), which has drawn opposition from local governments throughout Wisconsin.

"We've opposed the bill," says Rick Stadelman, executive director of the Wisconsin Towns Association. "We feel it takes away local control and turns it over to the PSC — which has not demonstrated a history of being impartial on this issue." He thinks that's clear from the PSC's support for the model ordinance, which he says was essentially drafted by the wind-power industry.

SB-185, says Stadelman, makes the PSC the final arbiter on any future conflicts between wind-power developers and local communities.

"PSC has a charge to come up with 25% alternative energy [use], according to the Governor's Task Force [on Global Warming], by 2025," says Stadelman. "Yet they're going to decide if a particular wind-power ordinance is reasonable or not? We think there's a basic conflict there."

Clean Wisconsin and RENEW also promote wind power as an economic boon for the state. For example, landowners receive leases of \$5,000 to \$8,000 per year for having wind towers on their lands. Local units of government receive money, too. Vickerman says the Blue Skies Green Field project pays out \$580,000 annually, split between Fond du Lac County and the townships of Calumet and Marshfield. The project is also home to an operations center, employing 13 people full-time.

Local ordinances, like those in the town of Union, are such a stumbling block for wind development, says Vickerman, that Wisconsin utilities are loath to build here. He points to two wind projects the PSC

recently green-lighted for Wisconsin utilities — in Iowa and Minnesota. The lost economic effects go far beyond the combined construction cost of \$750 million.

Schryver, of Clean Wisconsin, sees wind power as a nice addition to Wisconsin's energy mix: "Especially when you look at it from a regional perspective, wind-power installations across the region are providing a lot of steady, predictable power for the grid."

Yet wind power is often misleadingly characterized as displacing the need for fossil fuels. Reading RENEW and Clean Wisconsin press releases and documents, for example, one can easily get the sense that energy-grid operators check to see how much wind power is forthcoming, and *then* call upon fossil-fuel-generating power plants to make up the difference. Yet, even as described by Schryver and Vickerman, that's not what happens at all.

Power companies have to provide enough electricity to meet their customers' daily needs and peak demands. That means coal and natural gas power plants are up and running at all times. Natural gas plants can run at reduced levels, as they can be jump-started rather quickly to make up for electricity shortfalls. But coal plants can't get going fast enough to contribute should wind energy fail on any given day. So power companies keep those plants churning, whether wind turbine blades are spinning or not.

Another sign that green groups may be going the extra mile in their support for wind power is Vickerman's dismissive response to the concerns about noise raised by those who live nearby.

"There's lots of things you can hear," he says. "This is the time of the year when you can hear crickets, all day and all night. Has there been an allegation stemming from that sound, that, you know, [we] can't live near crickets?"

Vickerman is equally dismissive of human health problems attributed to wind turbines.

"The opposition websites are brimming with these allegations," he says. "But no causal relationship has been established. We don't think any health impacts have been established that are directly attributable to wind generation." He adds, "It's up to those who allege there are health impacts to document them. The burden of proof is on them."

A white paper published by the Minnesota Department of Health in May 2009 found that wind power indeed comes with human health consequences. The paper is a survey of other work and research, much of it done in Europe, which has a longer history with wind power. It concluded that the closer people live to wind towers, the more likely they are to have health problems.

The town of Union examined much of the same evidence. Its ordinance states: "Large wind turbines create a noise annoyance that can hinder physical and mental healing and can cause adverse health effects associated with sleep disturbance and deprivation, psychological distress, stress, anxiety, depression, headaches, fatigue, tinnitus and hypertension." And it refers to testimony from residents from communities with newly constructed turbines regarding "sleep deprivation and disturbance, headaches, nausea and dizziness."

Whether it comes from RENEW, Clean Wisconsin or wind developers, there's a clear assumption that wind power is good and green and very needed. So we must have more! Negative effects? Highly unlikely. And if there *are* problems...we'll deal with that later.

For instance, Alliant Energy sited some wind towers very close to Horicon Marsh, a major habitat for

waterfowl, songbirds and raptors, plus a migratory stopover for millions of birds every year. Wind turbines do kill birds, though it's unclear how many. So when groups like Wisconsin Audubon voiced concerns, the Department of Natural Resources and Alliant agreed to a bird mortality research project — *after* the towers were up and spinning.

Senate Bill 185 takes the same "done deal" approach. As the bill clearly states, as long as a developer meets future guidelines, a community will have to accept said project whether it wants to or not.

"It's basically a preemption of local ordinances," says Stoddard. "The state knows best, the state knows what people need, and everything's going to be standardized."

Senate Bill 185 passed out of both the Assembly and Senate utility committees this summer, 10 to 2 in the Assembly, 6 to 1 in the Senate, and will likely see votes in both houses when the Legislature reconvenes Sept. 15-24. If the bill becomes law, Schryver expects several hundred new wind towers in the near future, with hundreds more to follow.

Lynda Barry has the same expectation — and dreads it.

"To meet the Governor's Task Force on Global Warming goals, they're going to have to site 14,000 new wind towers by 2024," says Barry. "That means all of rural Wisconsin, as far as I can tell."



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Don't blow chance for wind power

A Wisconsin State Journal editorial
March 18, 2009

Wisconsin Power & Light's plans to look more toward the wind as a power source should underscore for lawmakers the need to support wind farm development.

Wisconsin cannot afford to let the statewide interest in harnessing clean, renewable power from the wind be frustrated by local "not in my backyard" campaigns against wind farms.

The goal should be to adopt statewide standards for siting wind farms that limit local government regulation and provide developers with an opportunity to appeal. The standards should also preserve local authority to restrict or reject wind farms when warranted.

Interest in wind power is growing following state regulators' rejection last year of a new coal-fired power plant proposed by WPL. As an alternative to coal, the utility planning to develop more wind, biomass and natural gas power sources.

Other power companies are following a similar strategy.

Wind is the key element, projected to meet 90 percent of Wisconsin's goal to more than double the renewable energy contribution to electric needs over the next six years.

But wind power confronts a barrier.

Developers of small wind farms, unlike developers of large wind farms, fall outside the regulation of the state Public Service Commission. They left to local regulation.

Too often, local governments are cowed by "not in my backyard" worries about the impact of wind turbines -- worries that may be based on misinformation but that local governments lack the expertise to evaluate.

The result is impossible-to-meet restrictions that draw small wind farm development to halt.

For example, in 2007 Trempealeau County adopted a wind power ordinance so restrictive that it effectively banned wind farms.

A solution emerged with a proposal to require the PSC to issue model rules specifying what restrictions local governments could impose on wind farms. The bill also granted developers a right to appeal.

Lawmakers failed to pass the proposal last year. This year should make that legislation a top priority.

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Give wind farms a fair chance

A Wisconsin State Journal editorial
December 11, 2008

Wisconsin cannot afford to let the statewide interest in developing wind farms be frustrated by communities that adopt a "not in my backyard" attitude.

That's why the state should develop reasonable wind farm siting standards to guide and limit local government regulation of wind farms and to provide an avenue of appeal for developers.

The goal should be to prohibit the "not in my backyard" disease known as NIMBYism while preserving local authority to restrict or reject wind farms when warranted.

Recent proposals to erect wind turbines on and near the Great Lakes demonstrate that it's in the public interest to take advantage of wind power. Wind power is expected to meet 90 percent of Wisconsin's goal to more than double the renewable energy contribution to electric needs over the next six years.

When developers propose wind farms of more than 100 megawatts in size they face a rigorous review from the state Public Service Commission, which protects both the public interest in regulation and the interest in wind power.

However, small wind farm developers fall outside the PSC's jurisdiction and are left to local regulation. Too often, they are blocked by unreasonable restrictions.

Local governments are frequently cowed into imposing impossible-to-meet requirements, or even moratoriums, after opponents raise alarming concerns, commonly based on misinformation.

Trempeleau County, for example, in 2007 adopted a wind power ordinance requiring turbines to be set back at least a mile from any neighboring residence, school, hospital or business. The ordinance effectively banned turbines.

The Legislature should step in. The Sensible Wind Siting Bill, which failed to pass earlier this year, offered a sound solution.

The bill -- proposed by Sen. Jeff Plale, D-South Milwaukee, and Rep. Phil Montgomery, R-Green Bay -- required the PSC to issue model rules specifying what restrictions local governments can impose on wind farms. Furthermore, the bill granted developers a right to appeal a local decision to the PSC.

The adoption of similar legislation should be a top priority for lawmakers in 2009.

Wisconsin should not let NIMBYism harm the public interest in a clean, renewable source of electricity.

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Renewable energy: Blowin' in the wind

Editorial: Blowin' in the wind

The state needs similar standards for wind turbine farms throughout Wisconsin and to encourage more wind farms to help it meet its renewable energy goal.

Posted: Feb. 26, 2008

"The way things stand now, it's easier to build a 100-megawatt wind farm in this state than it is to put up two or three turbines." So says Roy Thilly, chairman of the state's Task Force on Global Warming and president of Wisconsin Public Power Inc., a consortium of municipally owned utilities, on local ordinances that tend to restrict the development of small wind farms in Wisconsin and hurt the state's ability to meet its goal of generating 10% of its power from renewable energy by 2015 (www.jsonline.com/721206).

That's not the way it should be.

An ordinance enacted in Trempealeau County in December, for example, bars wind turbines from being built within a mile of a habitable building. That's effectively a countywide ban, according to Michael Vickerman, executive director of the environmental group Renew Wisconsin.

Right now, state law requires state regulators to approve large wind farms but leaves the decision-making on smaller projects to local units of government. While local governments should have a say in siting wind farms - or anything else - in their jurisdiction, giving them the ability to outright ban small projects goes too far. And standards for wind farms should not vary widely from community to community.

The Global Warming Task Force has recommended changing state law by setting similar standards for wind turbines across Wisconsin, and a bill to that effect is expected to be introduced by state Sen. Jeff Plale (D-South Milwaukee). Legislators should get behind a reasonable bill that would enhance Wisconsin's ability to provide more renewable sources of energy.

A final version of the measure should include at least uniform standards for wind turbines and a provision that would give wind power developers or those opposed to a particular development the option of appealing a local government's decision to the state Public Service Commission.

Wisconsin needs all the tools it can get to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming. Wind farms - large and small - are among those tools. The state and local governments should be doing all they can to encourage more of them where they are appropriate.

What more should the state and local governments be doing to encourage wind farms? Send a letter to: [Journal Sentinel, editorial department](#)



Updated: 1/28/2009 9:44:01 AM

Opinions

Not-in-my-backyard attitude a continuing problem

We hear it all the time in rural Wisconsin communities: "We don't want that wind farm, large dairy operation or anaerobic digester in our neighborhood."

The not-in-my-backyard mentality hasn't gone away and it isn't likely to anytime soon.

The NIMBY attitude really isn't so hard to understand. If someone lived in a peaceful rural neighborhood and that person had a choice, he or she probably would opt not to have that tranquility disrupted by a large business being built next door, whether it be an ethanol plant, a hog confinement operation or a widget factory.

It would be quite unusual to hear, "Please don't build that in my backyard, build it in my front yard!"

Within the past week, stories have crossed our desks about a large dairy project near Rosendale, a Manitowoc County wind farm and a community animal-manure digester project in Dane County.

In all three cases, millions of dollars would be invested - during the toughest economic times in about 60 years - to help stimulate the economy. Each of the projects would provide good rural jobs.

The \$70 million Rosendale project - a 4,000-cow dairy that could eventually become an 8,000-cow facility - would create 70 permanent jobs and buy \$32 million per year from local contractors and vendors.

About 500 people showed up at a hearing last week to consider whether to issue the farm its permits. Farmers from other parts of the state spoke in favor of the project, while some local residents opposed the idea of a large farm being built in their community.

The Manitowoc County Board of Adjustment last week rejected a developer's proposal to build a seven-turbine wind project west of Two Rivers. The decision was the latest setback in the project developer's four-year quest to erect a community-scale wind project in the town of Mishicot.

Renew Wisconsin Executive Director Michael Vickerman said the board's rejection of the wind farm "is certain to send a chill through every Wisconsin developer seeking to construct a community-scale wind farm here."

In Dane County, the latest talk is about a community-scale manure digester that would collect manure from several farms and turn it into electricity. Farmers heard the latest details about the project at a meeting in DeForest last week.

Dane County Executive Kathleen Falk is hoping federal officials will allocate funds for the "shovel-ready" project that she said could be replicated in agricultural communities across the country.

Madison-area hog producer Bob Uphoff said he was concerned that if the idea catches on and several of the digesters are proposed in Dane County, the projects would be met with a "not in my backyard" attitude by many residents.

So herein lies the dilemma. The economy desperately needs stimulation, and agricultural and rural projects stand ready to meet the challenge. But many of the projects face opposition.

This problem could become even more widespread in the months ahead if, as expected, President Obama and Congress designate money to accelerate renewable-energy projects. The projects that could provide immediate economic stimulation could become bogged down by a plethora of opposition and regulations.

There is no easy solution to this dilemma. It's certainly not a new problem.

But some people might have to reconsider their opposition to reasonable projects that help the country climb out of its economic doldrums. The old economic structure in this country is broken and must be replaced by a new paradigm. That new paradigm will likely include new ways to generate energy and economic wealth that we might not be used to or familiar with. But they're not necessarily bad just because they're different.

We can't always have our cake and eat it too, as the old saying goes. We can't ask for projects that stimulate the economy but then always expect them to be built somewhere else.

If we want to put people back to work and get this country's economy back in gear, some people might have to change their mind-sets.



WisBusiness: Wind energy can be engine for job creation, Doyle says

5/6/2009

By WisBusiness Staff

In Chicago for a national wind energy conference, Gov. Jim Doyle pointed to the experience of Wisconsin Rapids as an example of how wind energy is creating jobs in this recession.

He said Wisconsin Rapids is transforming from a paper-making manufacturing town to one that will soon be home to a large wind turbine blade factory with more than 400 workers.

"We really appreciate wind power," Doyle said during a national news conference at the American Wind Energy Association's WINDPOWER 2009 conference and exhibition in Chicago. "The Midwest, I believe, can serve, can be much of the answer to America's energy problems."

Doyle joined the governors of Iowa, Michigan and Ohio, along with Jon Wellinghoff, chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, in talking Tuesday about how wind energy is helping communities that have lost manufacturing jobs.

American Wind Energy Association CEO Denise Bode also announced results of a new poll showing that 75 percent of U.S. voters support a national Renewable Electricity Standard requiring utilities to generate at least 25 percent of their electricity from renewable energy sources by 2025.

The poll shows support is bipartisan with 86 percent of Democrats, 71 percent of independents and 62 percent of Republicans supporting the national standard, which has been introduced in Congress.

Doyle said Wisconsin already has a good renewable portfolio standard with a statewide renewable energy goal of 10 percent by Dec. 31, 2015. Wisconsin is looking at extending the standard to 25 percent by 2025 -- not only for electricity, but for motor vehicle fuel from renewables.

[See the AWEA press release](#)

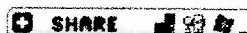
[See a state-by-state look at renewable portfolio standards](#)



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Wisconsin Ag News Headlines

Legislators Introduce 'Wind Siting' Bill

Wisconsin Ag Connection - 05/01/2009

A coalition of Wisconsin lawmakers are introducing legislation that calls for the creation of uniform siting standards for wind energy projects. Senate Bill 185, and its Assembly companion, directs the Public Service Commission to establish permitting standards to be applied by local or state government to wind energy installations, regardless of size and location.

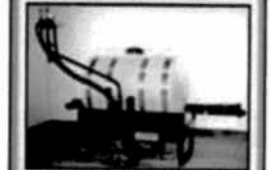
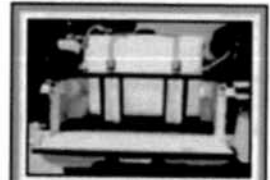
"Too many wind projects are victims of delay tactics and other obstructions," said Senator Jeff Plale, who chairs the Senate Committee on Commerce, Utilities, Energy, and Rail. "SB 185 will enhance Wisconsin's economy by protecting and creating green-collar jobs; it will attract new investment to our state and support state energy policy."

Representative Jim Soletski, Chair of the Assembly Energy and Utilities Committee, says the effort makes a lot of sense.

"A sensible wind energy policy will help Wisconsin harness the jobs and growth opportunities that green power provides," Soletski said. "I am excited to be working with a bipartisan group of legislators from diverse regions of the state to remove the obstacles to more development of wind power in Wisconsin."

Senator Randy Hopper and Rep. Phil Montgomery are also backing the bill.

Currently, over 600 megawatts of proposed wind projects are stalled in Wisconsin due to the absence of clear, predictable regulations.

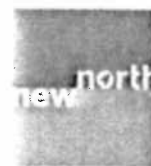


Many Models Available



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news release



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For Immediate Release

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New Report Shows Economic Growth Potential for Wind Energy Industry in Northeast Wisconsin

Wisconsin ranked 5th in the country in growth; new wind projects all in the New North

NEW NORTH, April 13, 2009 – The American Wind Energy Association's Annual Wind Industry Report shows Wisconsin as the fifth fastest-growing state in terms of percentage growth in the wind energy industry over the past year, thanks to three new wind energy developments in the New North.

Wisconsin now ranks 15th overall in wind energy production capacity, up from 23rd overall in 2007. The state has six times the capacity in 2008 that it had the previous year.

"This report illustrates the economic growth opportunities that exist in the wind energy industry for the New North," said Jerry Murphy, Executive Director of the New North, Inc. "With three new large-scale projects in Fond du Lac County, and hundreds nationwide, this emerging industry is developing rapidly, and we're well-positioned as a region to take advantage of it."

The Cedar Ridge, Blue Sky Green Field, and Forward Energy Wisconsin wind farms all went online in 2008, and added approximately 300 MW of wind power capacity for Wisconsin. Nationwide, over 8500 MW of capacity was added, an increase of 50% over 2007.

"Wind energy is a targeted industry cluster for the New North, and it's easy to see why," Murphy said. "Our region has some of the best, most innovative component manufacturers in the country, great secondary schools, an ideal location, and great infrastructure. These assets have helped grow the wind energy industry in the New North, and as the industry continues to develop throughout the country, New North suppliers will see even more of the economic benefits."

The New North co-sponsored the Wisconsin Wind Energy Supply Chain Seminar late last month in Appleton, which brought more than 600 attendees to the region to learn about opportunities in the wind industry.

The New North also has helped compile a Wind Energy Supply Chain Directory, which provides a list of dozens of companies in Wisconsin that provide services to the wind energy industry, as well as a report on the potential of the wind industry in Northeast Wisconsin. Both reports are available on the New North website at www.thenewnorth.com.

To view the complete AWEA report, please visit www.awea.org.

-more-



New North, Inc. is a regional collaboration effort focused on promoting regional cooperation and economic development in an 18-county region in Northeast Wisconsin. The 18 counties included in the New North are Outagamie, Winnebago, Calumet, Waupaca, Brown, Shawano, Oconto, Marinette, Door, Kewaunee, Sheboygan, Manitowoc, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Marquette, Florence, Menominee, and Waushara. To find out more information about New North, Inc., please visit our website.

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The Business Journal of Milwaukee - April 2, 2009
/milwaukee/stories/2009/03/30/daily51.html

THE Business Journal

SERVING GREATER MILWAUKEE

Thursday, April 2, 2009, 10:02am CDT

Large turbine blade factory slated for Wisconsin Rapids

The Business Journal of Milwaukee

Energy Composites Corp., a Wisconsin Rapids manufacturer serving the wind power industry, plans to build a factory to produce wind power turbine blades in a project that's expected to create more than 400 jobs.

The Wisconsin Rapids company has signed a letter of intent with the city of Wisconsin Rapids to buy 54 acres for a 350,000-square-foot composites fabrication plant for manufacturing wind turbine blades. The project is part of a \$15 million expansion project at Energy Composites, according to a March 31 report by the Wisconsin Rapids Tribune.

The city and the company expect to reach a final definitive agreement before June 1, after which Energy Composites will commence construction, according to a company press release Thursday. The city's Common Council must approve the deal in a meeting April 21.

"We contemplate that the blade factory will add more than 400 new jobs to the Wisconsin Rapids economy," Energy Composites CEO Sam Fairchild said. "We are currently working with our local college, (Mid-State Technical College), to establish a training program now specializing in blade fabrication techniques as well as basic composites fabrication."

Fairchild projects the plant could produce up to 1,500 blades annually, a rate the company hopes to achieve by the end of 2010.

Energy Composites Corp. (OTCBB: ENCC) operates the 73,000-square-foot Advanced Fiberglass Technologies plant in Wisconsin Rapids, which produces fiberglass reinforced plastic equipment.

Energy Composites was formerly a "shell" company established under a different name in 1992 that acquired Advanced Fiberglass Technologies -- its first operations -- in October 2008. The company's CEO, Sam Fairchild, is the former CEO of **Tower Tech Holdings** of Manitowoc, a supplier of turbine towers and components to the wind power industry and predecessor firm to **Broadwind Energy Inc.** of Naperville, Ill.

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LA CROSSE Tribune

Iowa governor says wind can boost economy

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Gov. Chet Culver joined other Midwestern governors Tuesday to promote wind energy as a way to boost the region's sagging industrial economy.

Culver and the other governors noted, however, that the nation must first launch a coordinated effort to revamp its electrical grid.

"We have great opportunities, but we need a coordinated game plan to tap this country's potential," said Culver, speaking with reporters on a conference call from the American Wind Energy Association's annual conference in Chicago.

Also participating in the call were Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm, Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland and Wisconsin Gov. Jim Doyle. All four governors are Democrats.

"We are very excited about the unlimited opportunity that renewable energy and wind energy in particular offer this country and our respective states," Culver said. "The number one opportunity is to create really good-paying jobs at a time when we desperately need to create jobs." Last month, President Barack Obama toured a wind turbine component factory in Newton, Iowa. Obama used the Earth Day visit to note the potential of the expanding industry.

The Midwestern governors stuck to a similar theme Tuesday, pointing to the possibility that wind energy could revive the region's struggling industrial base.

"Michigan is the poster child of a state that has lost manufacturing jobs," Granholm said. "We want to replace manufacturing jobs with manufacturing jobs in wind. We want to go from the rust belt to the green belt."

Culver claimed the future of the industry is unlimited.

"We believe it is our responsibility to create jobs, and arguably the best industry to do that is wind energy," Culver said.

He said there are nine manufacturers of wind energy components in Iowa employing about 2,300 people, and there is growth on the horizon. The industry has created jobs for college graduates that pay up to \$60,000 a year, Culver said.

Doyle said more than 200 companies in his state supply components for the wind energy industry, but he argued for a coordinated national policy.

"It cannot be repeated if there is not a strong national policy," Doyle said.

Strickland said the nation was on the verge of a breakthrough in how it produces power.

"Renewable energy means jobs," Strickland said. "This is the movement of our time."

Strickland also urged that a national renewable energy standard be established, but he cautioned that it shouldn't pre-empt state standards that may be more ambitious.

"It's a national security issue. It's an economic issue. It's a jobs issue," Strickland said.

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From: "Wind Alert! (IWA)" <info@windaction.org>
Subject: **RELEASE: Environmental and Wildlife Groups Call on Salazar to Immediately Suspend Work on High-Level Wind Turbine/Wildlife Advisory Committee**
Date: May 11, 2009 1:31:30 PM CDT
To: cjcongdon@att.net
Reply-To: "Wind Alert! (IWA)" <info@windaction.org>

PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
<http://www.windaction.org/releases/21154>

Environmental and Wildlife Groups Call on Salazar to Immediately Suspend Work on High-Level Wind Turbine/Wildlife Advisory Committee

Department of the Interior urged to remove the corrosive influence of industry; restore science in its decision-making

WASHINGTON D.C. (May 11, 2009) - In a letter submitted today, environmental and wildlife groups[1] called on Interior Secretary Kenneth Salazar to immediately suspend work on the Wind Turbine Guidelines Advisory Committee of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service[2] citing excessive industry influence in preparing the Committee's draft recommendations. The letter follows up on a January 2008 correspondence sent to the Secretary's predecessor, Dirk Kempthorne, where the groups raised concern with the unlawful imbalance in the Committee's membership in favor of wind power proponents and paid representatives. The imbalance is in violation of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), governing the establishment of federal advisory committees.

In the letter, the groups assert that after more than one and one-half years since the Committee's formation, the draft recommendations read more as an unabashed endorsement of wind power than a rigorous effort to address the harmful - and ever growing - effects on wildlife of poorly sited and constructed wind power projects. Despite its charter to "provide advice and recommendations to the Secretary of the Interior" regarding "effective measures to avoid or minimize impacts to wildlife and their habitats related to land-based wind energy facilities," the Committee's draft recommendations do little more than offer justifications for not developing rigorous, enforceable criteria to address the escalating wildlife impacts.

"The Committee's makeup continues to be dominated by wind power proponents,

advocates, and industry representatives," said Eric R. Glitzenstein of Meyer Glitzenstein & Crystal, the public interest law firm representing the groups. "Unfortunately, our concerns of a year ago have now been validated with the Committee's draft recommendations, which do not even begin to acknowledge the parameters of the problem - let alone prescribe meaningful solutions." For example, Glitzenstein added, "wind power projects in the Eastern U.S. have already killed thousands of bats, and yet the draft recommendations are silent regarding the effects on species that are also being decimated by a deadly disease, known as *white-nose syndrome*."

The groups urge Secretary Salazar to take immediate action and suspend the work of the Committee in order to reevaluate its composition and operation. They also recommend the Secretary make all necessary changes to ensure the committee has the genuine scientific expertise and independence required to develop recommendations that are truly protective of migratory birds, bats, and other wildlife resources. This essential action, if taken, will show that the Secretary is serious in his promise to restore sound science in the Interior Department's decision-making, rather than the usual rhetoric that places our wildlife resources at high risk and erodes public confidence in government. The letter was also sent to the Inspector General for the Interior and members of Congress in order to encourage appropriate oversight measures.

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Eric Glitzenstein, Meyer Glitzenstein & Crystal, (202) 588-5206

Lisa Linowes, Industrial Wind Action Group, (603) 838-6588 llinowes@windaction.org

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[1] Groups represented:

Industrial Wind Action Group

Center for Biological Diversity

The Humane Society of the United States

D. Daniel Boone

Maryland Conservation Council

Save Our Allegheny Ridges

Friends of Blackwater Canyon

Protect the Flint Hills

Chautauqua County Citizens for Responsible Wind Power

Green Berkshires, Inc.

Juniata Valley Audubon Society

Ripley Hawk Watch

Alliance to Protect Nantucket Sound
Wildlife Advocacy Project
Union Neighbors United
Laurel Mountain Preservation Association

[2] The Wind Turbine Guidelines Advisory Committee was formed to provide advice and recommendations to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in developing effective measures to avoid or minimize impacts to wildlife and their habitats related to land-based wind energy facilities (see Fed. Reg. 72:11373 (March 13, 2007)). Former Interior Secretary Kempthorne announced the appointment of 22 people to the committee on October 24, 2007.

