

ENERGYwise

FOR YOUR BUSINESS



Wellspring® – Your Opportunity to Support Wind Power!

While the electricity delivered to your business includes increasing amounts of renewable energy, our Wellspring Renewable Wind Energy® program gives you the option to help us do even more for the environment. By participating in Wellspring, you not only help support wind energy development in Minnesota, but also help reduce our dependency on non-renewable energy sources, like coal and other fossil fuels.

What does participating in Wellspring mean?

Wellspring wind energy is a voluntary program offered to our members. While the electricity delivered to all homes and businesses includes renewable energy in the mix, including wind, participating in the Wellspring program is an added bonus. In the last few years, additional turbines were built specifically for those who subscribe to Wellspring. As long as there is an additional demand for Wellspring Wind Energy, more turbines will be built.

How does the program work?

- You can purchase Wellspring Wind Energy in 100 kWh blocks
- Each 100 kWh block costs an extra \$0.40 per month*
- You determine how many blocks to purchase
- You can earn incentives for participating:
 - 5-24 blocks: window decal
 - 25-74 blocks: window decal and news release
 - 75+ blocks: window decal, news release and plaque
- Call 651-463-6212 to sign up for Wellspring

* Price subject to change without notice

Where is Wellspring Wind Energy produced?

Wind energy is produced using giant wind turbines located in southwestern and south central Minnesota.

How does wind energy work?

Large blades are attached to a generator on top of a tall tower. As the wind blows, the spinning blades cause the generator to turn. This generates electricity that is transmitted over wires to homes and businesses.

Is the wind power supplied directly to my business?

No. The electricity generated by the wind turbines is fed into the state's electric system, called the grid. It is like pouring a pitcher of water into a pond. You can't get the water from the pitcher back out of the pond. The same holds true for recapturing wind-generated electricity from the grid. It is there; available to use, but to deliver the exact electron generated by the wind turbine is not possible. However, the wind power that you purchase replaces electricity that would have been generated by conventional fuels.

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Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



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Will I still receive traditional power sources?

Yes. You won't be able to distinguish whether the electrons flowing into your home is generated by wind power or not. But, you can be assured the commitment to purchase Wellspring Wind Energy will result in the construction of new wind generators that will help lessen our reliance on coal and other fossil fuels.

Will power in my home or business be dependent on the wind blowing?

No. Your power will continue as usual because additional generation is built to ensure power is supplied when the wind is not blowing. This is typically natural gas powered generation.

Can we generate all our electricity from wind?

No. Wind is a great way to meet some of our electricity needs. However, wind could never generate all of our electricity needs because the wind doesn't blow all the time. Quite often, wind doesn't blow at all during some of the hottest days of summer, when people are using the most electricity. Wind-generated electricity is an important part of the overall mix of generation options.

Is wind energy cheaper to produce than other generation options?

Not yet. Someday wind may be a cheaper alternative. Today, it is still more expensive than traditional generation methods. By providing financial incentives, the government has helped increase the growth of wind energy, and as technology advances and costs come down, wind becomes more and more cost competitive. Another factor is that the windiest areas are often far from the areas that need the power. Therefore, transmission lines need to be built, and this adds to the overall cost of wind energy.

What are the environmental impacts of wind generators?

Wind has minimal environmental impact. There is a risk if a bird flies into the spinning turbine. However, the new large turbine blades rotate at a relatively slow speed and have a much lower risk to birds than earlier turbine designs. Overall, the number of animal deaths from turbines is very small. Many more birds are killed from other human-related impacts such as buildings and vehicles than by wind turbines.

Visual impact and noise are two other environmental factors related to wind generating towers. Proper placement and design can help the visual impact and new turbines are quieter than the older ones.

Contact the Energy Experts®

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Programs subject to terms, conditions and change without notice.



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