

Wind Provides Electricity For Homes, Schools



For many years, windmills dotted the landscape of the United States and other countries. Many people in rural communities used windmills to generate needed electricity. But windmills began to disappear as power lines connected small communities to electric power plants far away.

Now windmills are making a comeback. They are becoming popular again with people who live in communities large and small. The new windmills often are called *wind turbines*. People in at least 47 states have put wind turbines in their yards to generate electricity for their homes. Wind blows the blades of a turbine that sits atop a tall tower. The turbine spins a shaft, which connects to a generator that makes electricity.

Homeowners with turbines can't rely on wind power all the time, though. They still need to use some electricity from a power company when the wind is not blowing. But when it is very windy, the turbine can generate more power than a home needs. Sometimes a family can sell the extra electricity to the power company.

NEWS WORD BOX

generate popular
electricity landscape
rural wind turbine

Many people like turbines because wind power does not cause pollution. Power from a turbine also can lower a home's electricity bill by 50 to 90 percent.

But not everyone thinks turbines belong in people's yards. Some people whose neighbors have turbines say they are noisy and spoil their view. Others say the turbines harm birds that fly in their paths.

MORE ABOUT WIND TURBINES

- Schools in Spirit Lake, Iowa, get their electricity from windmills. The schools even make money by selling back extra electricity to the power company.

THINK ABOUT THE NEWS

Suppose you wanted to install a wind turbine in your yard to save money and reduce pollution. But your neighbors say it will be noisy and unattractive. List arguments for and against the wind turbine.