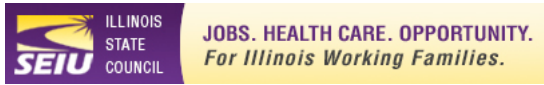


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Growing Alliance Pushes Wind Power

by [Angela Caputo](#) on December 02, 2008 - 2:24pm



Add Hoffman Estates to the list of Illinois municipal leaders throwing their support behind bringing more wind power to the Prairie State, *The Daily Herald* [reports today](http://www.dailyherald.com/story/?id=255039&src=109)(<http://www.dailyherald.com/story/?id=255039&src=109>).

Officials from the northwest suburban town have agreed to join the emerging Wind Turbine Alliance (WTA), a coalition of Illinois school districts, villages, and other government bodies that are pushing for innovation and [legislation](http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=6660&GAID=9&GA=95&DocTyp)(<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=6660&GAID=9&GA=95&DocTyp> (HB6660) designed to put the state's schools on the cutting edge of renewable energy consumption. Hanover Park Village President and WTA organizer Rod Craig [explains](http://www.mayorrodcraig.com/2008/10/wind-turbine-alliance-rally-great.html)(<http://www.mayorrodcraig.com/2008/10/wind-turbine-alliance-rally-great.html>) the group's mission on his blog:

The Wind Turbine Alliance is working to provide clean, sustainable energy to schools by forming a consortium of public entities supporting the use of wind turbines located in Central Illinois.

The goal for school districts is to leave a smaller carbon footprint, and be a positive role model for the students in their charge. A second goal of the Alliance is to reach

out to those School Districts, College Districts, and Municipalities across the state to share the message to their State Senators and Representatives on the subject matter.

The legislation the group supports is bound to face utility company opposition because of a [net metering provision](#)(<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/fulltext.asp?DocName=&SessionId=51&GA=95&DocTypeI>) that would essentially require utility operators to buy back power at an expensive rate. But Gabriela Martin of the [Illinois Clean Energy Foundation](#)(<http://www.illinoiscleanenergy.org/>) (ICEF) tells us the bill is a sign of significant progress.

Meanwhile, some members of the WTA have their sights set on planting a cooperative wind farm in Central Illinois. The idea is to generate a steady stream of alternative power both for schools already on board and others that WTA members are trying to woo. Officials from Hanover Park-based Keeneyville Elementary School District 20 thought up the plan in 2006. Administrators there think wind power could virtually cut the district's electricity costs in half, the *Herald* reports:

Officials say connecting to the turbines would cost \$1 million for its three schools. They estimate that from 2010 to 2039, District 20 would spend \$20 million on electricity. If District 20 built the turbine, it would save \$10.9 million during the same span.

As [we've noted\(/2008/07/10/schools-look-to-wind-power\)](#) before, folks have predicted that it's only a matter of time before more schools begin looking for alternatives to their costly electricity bills. In fact, renewable energy grant requests to ICEF have grown to 150 this past year alone, Martin tells us.

“Schools come to us desperate to control their utility costs,” she said. “They’re trying to figure out ways to stabilize or reduce these costs so they can spend money on education.”