

ENERGY WISE

for your Home

RENEWABLE ENERGY FAQ: Power from Wind and Biomass

What is the Renewable Energy program?

The Renewable Energy program supports the development of renewable energy. It's an option requested by East Central Energy (ECE) members.

The voluntary renewable wind and biomass energy program is made available to co-op members through a coordinated effort between ECE, Great River Energy (GRE) and Haubenschild Farms Dairy, Inc.



ECE members may buy blocks of renewable energy for a small additional monthly charge on their electric bill.

How is wind power produced?

The electricity is produced from 314 utility scale (1.5 to 2.5 MW) wind turbines totaling approximately 469 MW at five separate locations in south central and southwestern Minnesota.

What is biomass and how is biomass power produced?

Biomass is any organic substance, such as wood, straw, animal waste, or any other material produced by plants. The biomass, or cow power electricity offered by ECE, is produced from methane gas generated on Haubenschild Farms Dairy, Inc. within ECE's service territory near Princeton, MN. Organic matter is directed to a large domed reservoir where it is broken down by anaerobic bacteria into methane gas. The gas then powers a generator located at the farm. Power generated is then sold to ECE members as biomass energy.



Is the power from renewable energy supplied directly to my home?

No. The electricity generated by the wind turbines and biomass is fed into the electric system, called the grid. The power from renewable energy that is generated will replace electricity that would otherwise have been generated by conventional fossil fuels.

Does power generation from renewable energy cost more?

Yes. Although power from wind and biomass are the most cost-effective "green resource" options available at this time, they are still more expensive than the conventional generating options.

How can I invest in renewable energy?

ECE sells renewable energy in 100-kWh blocks. The additional cost is \$0.20 per energy block above your regular rate and is conveniently added to your monthly electric bill. To learn more and to invest in renewable energy, call ECE, 1-800-254-7944, or visit eastcentralenergy.com. ECE asks for a one-year commitment to participate in this program. Prices may change due to increases in wholesale rates.

How many blocks am I eligible for?

You may purchase as many blocks of renewable energy as you wish, but typically members choose to purchase the number of blocks equal to their average monthly usage (i.e. 540 kWh monthly usage equals five blocks).

How can I get information on requirements, costs, etc., to produce my own renewable electricity?

- Call the MN Department of Commerce Office of Energy Security, 1-800-657-3710, or visit their website and related links at: <http://www.state.mn.us>.
- For ECE Interconnection Requirements/General Information: Call Rob Gehrke, 715-399-6175 or 1-800-254-7944, ext. 6175.

How can I get information on the renewable energy producers ECE works with?

- A full report, or report summary, on Haubenschild Farms Dairy, Inc. is available from "The Minnesota Project." Visit mnproject.org.
- For more information about wind-generated electricity visit greatriverenergy.com.



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