

ELDER LAW REVIEW

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Wind Turbines: How Much Do You Know?

Wind power has been utilized for thousands of years. Between 1981 and 1986, California piloted the advancement of the wind power industry. During the 1990s, the total power produced by wind power increased to 2,200 MW, representing half of the world's wind power. How much do you actually know about these turbines?

- ⤴ Blade tips travel around 120 mph.
- ⤴ Each tower costs about \$2 million.
- ⤴ Each of the newer towers, installed after 2005, generate enough electricity for around 600 homes. Each newer tower would need a 2,700 horsepower engine on them to generate the power that comes for free from the wind.
- ⤴ The top head portions of the towers weight approximately the same as two semi tractors and fully loaded trailers.
- ⤴ The electricity stays in the area—it does not go to California or Minneapolis.
- ⤴ In 2016, the average height of the head portion was 272 feet, and the average blade length was 177 feet.
- ⤴ The wind industry employs approximately 3,500 people in Minnesota and 1,500 people in South Dakota.
- ⤴ Each tower has its own computer system that tells the tower what to do to protect itself.
- ⤴ With the right computer system security and internet access, each tower can be started or stopped from anywhere in the nation and, likely, the world.
- ⤴ Since 2005, wind towers have grown 10-fold.
- ⤴ A wind tower is running nearly all the time at 43 percent capacity around the clock (which is the norm on sites since 2010). The wind turbine sees the equivalent of one million miles every 3.25 years.
- ⤴ Turbines can withstand 119 mph tornado wind speeds.
- ⤴ To function properly, wind turbines have to be spaced about three times the rotor diameter downwind direction and crosswind direction.

Today wind energy is booming, due to rising energy costs and imported technology. The next area turbines will be in is the Ivanhoe, MN area.

Article from the *Tyler Tribute*

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