



Valley Home Builders Association

GREEN BUILDING

Building
sustainable
quality of life.



Energy Alternatives: Wind

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Get to know a Wind Powered home...

Residential wind turbines are nothing new. Wind power systems have been widely available since the 1970's. These systems, however, had a deserved reputation of being unreliable. Since then technologies have evolved and improved. Today's turbines can be left without maintenance for up to 5 years and have lifespans of decades. Wind is 50-100 times more available than plant energy and will never run out or have to be replaced.

The Cons:

- Significant investment up front —For a 10kW system it will run you about \$40,000 without incentives.
- Can be an eyesore—Larger systems need to be high to be effective, Usually as much as 100 ft off the ground. Smaller systems can be roof mounted, but they will not provide much power. Rotor spans can be as much as 7 meters, although home systems are usually not that large.
- Wind can be unreliable. Usually wind dies down during the times were power is need most, such as heat waves.
- Zoning can be prohibitive. Check with your community before installing a turbine.



The Pros:

- Less expensive than Solar PV at the size needed for a home (4-10kW)
- Low maintenance and generally reliable power production. Most turbines now come with 5 yr warranties and don't need maintenance until that expires.
- Incentives are available, although not as plentiful as solar PV incentives
- Renewable and free energy source
- NE Wisconsin wind production is good with average wind speeds of 13-15 mph.

If you are considering a wind turbine, like solar systems, you should have an energy assessment done to see how much wind your area produces. Focus on Energy offers such services for a small fee. (focusonenergy.org)

Like solar energy, wind can provide your home with a lower electric bill and the peace of mind that you are helping save the environment and reduce energy consumption.

Wind systems can be used in conjunction with solar power and can be connected to the local grid to provide the remaining power need.