

# Wind energy not worth the cost!

The Texas Public Policy Foundation in Austin, founded in 1989 by a group of concerned citizens, reports that the recent increase by the Texas legislature in the required use of “renewable” wind energy will be expensive. Texas consumers will pay an additional \$536 million annually, more than half a billion dollars, for the increase to 5,880 megawatts.



According to policy briefing papers and reports prepared by Bill Peacock, a Foundation Director, proponents of wind power claim it is less expensive than traditional

sources of power, but ignore three facts:

1. Because wind energy is variable and unreliable, expensive coal or gas plants must be built and operated to provide backup energy when the wind isn't blowing, or rolling blackouts would occur. The lights would go out whenever the wind died down.
2. Renewable energy credits, to subsidize wind power, cost consumers millions of dollars every year – wind power is not cheap and would not be built without massive subsidies. At the state and federal level, renewable energy is heavily subsidized, including \$2.7 billion in federal production tax credits, and the expenditure of \$4,700 in federal research and promotion per thousand kilowatt-hours of wind energy produced vs. only 5 cents for nuclear and coal.
3. Wind is most abundant in West Texas, but electricity is most needed along the Dallas to San Antonio corridor and in the Houston area. Building the transmission capacity to reach these markets is going to cost some \$2.2 billion, which will be paid for by every consumer in Texas, and will take at least two years. While waiting, wind developers are moving into Cooke and Montague Counties, where there is existing transmission capacity to exploit, but less wind and massive destruction to scenic property and the quality of life.

But costs aren't the only concern when it comes to wind energy, according to the Foundation. Reliability is a primary factor. The wind isn't always blowing when we need electricity. Wind power is inherently unpredictable and uncontrollable and often has a negative impact on the reliable operation of the electric grid.

The main electricity supply challenges we face are at times of peak demand. Peak demand occurs generally in the hot days of July and August, precisely when wind energy is least available. Our grid operator, ERCOT, states that wind turbines in Texas only produce at 16.8 % of rated capacity during times of peak demand. They add that this is an average, many were producing nothing. They feel only 2% can be counted as capacity.

There are efficient, sustainable, and environmentally friendly alternatives to wind energy. We can clean-up our existing coal plants with new scrubbers and filters to remove pollution and greenhouse gases. The U.S. has 750 years of coal reserves and is developing the technology to scrub out pollution. We can also build clean nuclear power plants, using new and safer technology. Nuclear plants supply 85% of the power in France, are currently targeted for 40% in Japan, operate at 90% of capacity (vs. the 16% mentioned above for wind), and, like coal, have a lower cost per kilowatt-hour. Wind energy provides no real answers to our electrical generation problems.

**Please help, before it's too late. We know you love this area as much as we do.**



**The North Texas Wind Resistance Alliance**

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