

## CASE STUDY:

***Moorhead's Capture the Wind Success Story***

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Moorhead is home to two 750-kW wind turbines, Zephyr and Freedom. Moorhead Public Service's

*Capture the Wind* program has garnered national attention for its energy program innovation, high levels of participation, and low premium rates. Moorhead customers



pay an extra ½ penny/kWh for green electricity, which is made up of 1/3 wind and 2/3 hydropower. Customers may choose to purchase renewables in 1000 kWh blocks or may choose to purchase all of their electricity from renewables. The average cost to customers is \$5.00 per month. Subscribers to the wind program directly replace coal-generated electricity with electricity from wind. The utility estimates that turbines reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 8,800 pounds per year.

The *Capture the Wind* program was initiated in 1998 and began with numerous preparatory activities including establishing a monitoring site to measure and analyze site wind speeds and directions, detailing wind turbine specifications, and arranging financing. The city was able to locate the turbines within the city limits, and charter subscribers' names are listed on a plaque

on the turbines. The first green offering was fully subscribed in two and a half weeks, and a waiting list was quickly established. The second offering was fully subscribed with 490 members in four weeks. The first turbine, Zephyr, began generating electricity in May 1999 and the second, Freedom, came online in August 2001. Combined, the two turbines generate 3,600,000 kWh of wind energy a year.

In 2001 the *Capture the Wind* program received the American Public Power Association's Energy Innovator Award. It has been recognized by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory for having the highest customer participation rate in the nation with 7.4% of its customers participating in the green pricing program and for charging the second lowest premium rate for a customer driven wind energy program. This award-winning program is already serving as a model for other municipal utilities working to develop wind energy for their customers.



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CERTs Partners: Minnesota Department of Commerce, The Minnesota Project, University of Minnesota Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships, The Rural Minnesota Energy Board, Metropolitan counties Energy Task Force, Resource Conservation and Development Council.

