

## **Renewable Energy Primer (PART 2 - WIND) – courtesy of Power Scorecard**

Next to using less electricity, (see the Green Tips Page at [http://www.bedfordny.info/html/green\\_tips.htm](http://www.bedfordny.info/html/green_tips.htm)) purchasing renewable energy or energy that comes from non-fossil based sources is a great choice if you want to reduce your contribution to Climate Change. This week we will talk about **Wind** sourced electricity.

Wind power is the world's fastest growing electricity generation technology. Daily and seasonal changes in temperature consistently generate wind producing a fuel source that can never be depleted. State-of-the-art wind power plants use large spinning blades to capture the kinetic energy in moving air that then is transferred to turbines that produce electricity. Regions where average wind speeds exceed 12 miles per hour are currently the best wind power plant sites. Wind power is the lowest-cost renewable energy technology available on the market today and (a new wind farm) approaches the costs of a new coal-fired power generation (plant). According to the US Department of Energy, the costs of wind power are projected to continue to fall and may rank the cheapest electricity source of all options by 2020.

### ***What are the environmental impacts?***

Wind plants produce no air pollution. They use no water, and there is no need to tear up the land to extract the resource that produces power. Nonetheless, there may be environmental problems associated with some wind farms. Wind power generates three categories of environmental impacts: view-scape, noise pollution, and wildlife endangerment. These impacts can vary immensely from site to site. If wind power plants are sited in regions screened for sensitive local bird populations, with the noise issue considered and acceptable to view shed enthusiasts, the environmental footprint of wind-generated electricity is very small when compared to the wildlife and ecosystem impacts of fossil fuel mining and fuel combustion pollutants.

Find out more about wind-derived energy and where to buy it at <http://powerscorecard.org>

Next Week's Column: SOLAR