Wind farms powering Renewables Direct customers

Program avails wind energy to schools, businesses and draws new customers

Kansas City, Mo.– Nov. 16, 2020 – More than 50 businesses and organizations served by Evergy begin receiving energy from two area wind farms this month as part of an innovative program that makes affordable, dedicated wind energy available to commercial customers.

“Kansas is a leader in wind energy. The expansion of wind energy in our area brings economic investment and jobs to communities near wind farms and affordable, clean energy to our customers,” said Terry Bassham, Evergy president and chief executive officer.

Evergy meets the electricity needs of about half the homes and businesses it serves with emission-free sources, including wind energy. Renewables Direct provides long-term price stability and competitive pricing for local renewable energy to qualifying businesses, agencies and commercial customers. As new customers enroll in the program, Evergy expands its renewable energy sources to serve them and help them meet their sustainability goals.

“Renewables Direct is a great tool to attract new businesses to our area and to meet the needs of current customers using our area’s abundant wind energy. It helps customers realize their sustainability goals while providing long term price stability,” said Jeff Martin, Evergy vice president of community and customer operations. “Direct association with wind farms is more accessible to a variety of customers through Renewables Direct and partnerships with Evergy.”

Secretary of Commerce David Toland said: “This is an exciting development in wind energy, and it’s especially exciting to see this program in Kansas. Not only is wind energy production good for the environment, it’s a major investment for future businesses in our state. Wind energy employs thousands of Kansans and fuels our state’s economy. I look forward to the important benefits Renewables Direct will bring for the businesses and people of our state.”

“Renewable energy is good for the environment and the Kansas economy – particularly as we work to overcome COVID-19-related economic challenges,” Governor Kelly said. “I commend Evergy for helping to solidify Kansas’ position as a regional and national leader in the development and expansion of wind power.”

Soldier Creek Wind Energy Center, a 300 megawatt wind farm in north central Kansas, and Ponderosa Wind Energy Center, a 200 megawatt wind farm in the Oklahoma panhandle are beginning service in November and will provide energy for customers of Evergy’s Renewable Direct program and to McPherson Board of Public Utilities. Soldier Creek Wind Energy Center and Ponderosa Wind Energy Center are subsidiaries of NextEra Energy Resources, LLC.

“We are pleased to partner with Evergy to help bring low-cost, renewable energy to their customers,” said John Ketchum, president and chief executive officer of NextEra Energy Resources, the world’s largest generator of renewable energy from the wind and the sun. “The Soldier Creek and Ponderosa Wind projects are expected to provide millions of dollars in additional revenue for landowners and local communities while generating clean, homegrown energy for years to come.”

The wind projects created approximately 450 jobs during the construction phase. The projects will provide approximately $74 million in guaranteed payments to the county governments over their projected 30-year operational life, and approximately $86 million in payments to local landowners.

In 2019, wind fueled 41 percent of electricity production in Kansas, making it No. 2 nationally for wind energy as a share of total electricity generation. According to the American Wind Energy Association, development of wind farms in Kansas has brought more than $11 billion in capital investment and created more than 5,000 jobs in the state. Each year, project-related payments exceeding $60 million are paid to state and local governments and in lease payments.

About Evergy, Inc.
Evergy, Inc. (NYSE: EVRG) serves approximately 1.6 million customers in Kansas and Missouri. We were formed in 2018 when long-term local energy providers KCP&L and Westar Energy merged. We generate nearly half the power we provide to homes and businesses with emission-free sources. We support our local communities where we live and work, and strive to meet the needs of customers through energy savings and innovative solutions.

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Multimedia assets for this news release are available atnewsroom.evergy.com. They include:

- Video and still images from both wind farms.
- Interview clips with Jeff Martin, Evergy vice president of community and customer operations
- Interview clips with Kevin Gildea, NextEra Energy Resources vice president of development

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Additional assets available online: Photos (1)

https://newsroom.evergy.com/2020-11-16-Wind-farms-powering-Renewables-Direct-customers