



We Energies Solicits 200 MW of Wind Power

Generators could quintuple existing capacity in state

As much as 200 megawatts (MW) of new wind generating capacity could be built and operating in Wisconsin by 2005 in response to a request for proposals (RFP) issued last December by the Milwaukee-based We Energies (formerly Wisconsin Electric Power).

This solicitation marks the first major step taken by We Energies to achieve a renewable energy target of at least 5% of its total electric sales by 2011. Attaining this target would more than double the amount of renewable energy We Energies is required to provide under Wisconsin's Renewable Portfolio Standard.

This commitment to wind energy grew from an ongoing Renewable Energy Collaborative (REC) involving We Energies, RENEW and several other stakeholder organizations, established to guide We Energies

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in pursuing its renewable energy commitments. Recognizing the depth of understanding the non-utility participants bring to the collaborative, We Energies treats its recommendations as though they were developed in-house.

Hailing We Energies' leadership, Michael Vickerman, executive director of RENEW, said, "The wind may blow harder in the Great Plains, but if there is a windpower company looking to establish a U.S. presence, it's difficult to beat the combination of pro-renewable public policies, creative utility-advocate partnerships, green power purchasing programs, and manufacturing prowess that Wisconsin brings to the table."

The REC expects to complete an action plan enabling We Energies to meet or exceed the 5% target in time to present it to the Wisconsin Public Service Commission for review this spring. Subject to PSC approval, We Energies plans to earmark \$60 million between now and

2011 to expand its renewable energy portfolio.

If all of the electricity We Energies purchases through this solicitation were generated from in-state sources, the amount of installed windpower capacity in Wisconsin would rise to about 253 MW, an increase of about 400% over the 53 MW currently operating.

Power purchased through this solicitation should add about 450,000 megawatt-hours of renewable electricity a year, enough to account for 1.5% of We Energies' total retail load.

We Energies owns two 660-kilowatt turbines south of Fond du Lac that supply its **Energy for Tomorrow** premium green power program. The utility also purchases 25 MW of power from the Montfort wind farm in southwest Wisconsin and 40 MW of credits from the Top of Iowa wind farm in north central Iowa.

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QUARTERLY WAKES FROM DEEP SLEEP!

The *Renewable Quarterly* comes to your mailbox again after a two-year absence. It will still give you in-depth analyses of the energy markets and the opportunities for renewable energy.

RENEW welcomes comments and contributions. Send them to Ed Blume, RENEW's Outreach and Communications Director, at elblume@renewwisconsin.org. ®

Petroleum and Natural Gas Watch

Natural Gas: The Incredible Shrinking Energy Source

by Michael Vickerman, RENEW

In its most recent quarterly survey of U.S. natural gas extraction activity, Raymond James & Associates disclosed a disturbing trend: output is declining on a year-over-year basis, and the gap is widening. Company analysts expect 2002 volumes to decline by 4.6% compared with 2001 totals. Based on the survey's results, Raymond James stated that "with drilling activity yet to increase significantly, natural gas production will likely continue to its rapid deterioration for the foreseeable future."

Domestic extraction volumes have been lagging behind demand for years, but this was not considered grounds for worry as long as the gas industry could count on increasing shipments from Canada to make up the difference. Canadian exports have risen substantially in the last 10 years, and now account for 18% of U.S. natural gas consumption. But a recent Lehman Brothers report stated that Canadian gas output slipped by 0.5% in 2002 compared with year-earlier results. With Canadians shivering through a colder winter this year, several energy analysts believe that exports from Canada are now tracking 2% to 3% below last year's volumes.

The convergence of falling domestic output with declining exports from Canada threatens to send natural gas prices, now at \$5.50/MMBtu, up toward levels not seen since the winter of 2000-2001. That brief but memorable price spike led to record drilling activity in 2001, but extraction volumes went up

only slightly in 2002. When spot market prices reached \$10/MMBtu that winter, demand from industrial customers began dropping like a stone, cutting short the rally in the futures market.

However, it is unlikely that 2003 will see a surge in new well completions comparable to the boom of two years ago. A combination of higher costs in the field, a credit crunch plaguing the energy indus-

A resource strategy that starts and ends with new fossil fuel generation presents a financial and resource availability risk to ratepayers that is likely to outweigh whatever short-term benefits it would otherwise provide.

try, and low share prices is deflating expectations that another burst of drilling is in the offing. A Lehman Brothers survey suggests that the gas industry will spend fractionally less money on exploration and production this year than in 2002, a year that saw modest drilling activity following the frenzy of 2001.

Absent a concerted effort to step up well completions this year, the volume of natural gas extracted from U.S. sources can head in only one direction: down. As Robert Morris, oil and gas analyst for Salomon Smith Barney, put it, "we would need 1,200 rigs in the field [in 2003] to keep U.S. production level." As of January 17, there were 712 rigs in operation, down 30% from 2001's peak of 1,068 rigs.

Little wonder, then, that several energy analysts, including Andrew Weissman of Energy Ventures Group, are calling attention to the structural imbalance that now exists

between current demand and industry's ability to supply it. Weissman warns that "as 2003 unfolds and the magnitude of the emerging near to mid-term mismatch between supply and demand in the North American market becomes clearer, we believe that higher natural gas prices are inevitable over the course of the year."

We don't know the price range needed to stabilize output from U.S. and Canadian sources, nor do we know whether it is even possible to maintain supplies at present levels, given the degree of re-

source exploitation that has occurred to date. As one might expect, the largest and most accessible deposits were the first to yield their contents to the gas industry. The prospects that remain tend to be smaller, tighter and deeper, requiring higher expenditures of capital, energy and man-hours per therm extracted. Thus the growing supply-demand imbalance can be likened to an ever-accelerating treadmill which threatens to overtake the gas industry's ability to keep pace unless high prices are sustained over time.

One notable dissenter from this pessimistic perspective is the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), which projects that gas consumption will rise 4.7% this year without a run-up in prices. Long term, EIA forecasts domestic gas consumption to increase 2% annually through 2020. Underpinning EIA's forecast is the assumption

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RENEW Wisconsin is a nonprofit organization advocating the adoption of clean energy strategies to power Wisconsin businesses and households in an environmentally responsible manner. Through a combination of public policy and private sector initiatives, RENEW aims to increase the use of clean, self-renewing energy resources to generate electricity or displace fossil-generated electricity. Creating a vigorous market for clean energy in Wisconsin will improve electric reliability, reduce pollution and redirect energy dollars into local economies.

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Sizing Up RENEW in 2002

In looking back at 2002, RENEW demonstrated its ability to organize collaborative working groups and venture into policy areas that were once monopolized by utilities. The following are the major initiatives.

Offering financial assistance to customer-generators. Launched in March, the statewide Focus on Energy – Renewable Energy program provides financial assistance and facilitation services to electricity customers who wish to install renewable electric systems at their homes and businesses. Administered by a team of organizations and agencies that includes RENEW, this initiative earmarks 50% of its \$2.5 million/year budget in cost-sharing grants for stimulating demand for renewable energy services and generating equipment. Grants are available to assist homeowners, farmers and businesses in purchasing solar electric systems, geothermal heating and cooling systems, small and large wind turbines, and on-farm manure digesters. RENEW provided the impetus and leadership that resulted in Wisconsin's first renewable electricity program.

Expanding Wisconsin's renewable generating portfolio. At RENEW's prodding, We Energies (formerly Wisconsin Electric Power) agreed to target at least 5% of its retail energy sales from renewable energy sources by 2011, double its current requirement. We Energies also committed to set aside \$60 million over a 10 year period, principally to acquire additional renewable power sources and breathe new life into its renewable premium program. RENEW helped create a stakeholder group that meets monthly to study and recommend various approaches that the

utility could adopt to attain the 5% goal. The collaborative's efforts are already paying off: in December We Energies announced that it would purchase, via a competitive bidding process, 200 MW of wind-power by the end of 2004. If the turbines selected by We Energies are all located in Wisconsin, wind-power generating capacity in the state would increase 400%.

Simplifying customer interconnections. To standardize the patchwork set of rules and procedures involved in interconnecting distributed generating systems to the grid, RENEW organized a broad-based collaborative group in 2001 to propose recommendations for revising the PSC's 20-year-old rules. This collaborative investigation evolved into a formal PSC rule-making proceeding, which began in earnest last spring. Under the auspices of the PSC, this body met regularly to narrow differences between the utilities, manufacturers, installers and advocates on such areas as technical standards, insurance requirements, and equipment testing. This effort was largely successful, and the PSC proposed new interconnection rules that were the subject of a March 2003 hearing.

Increasing customer purchases of green power. RENEW has been extensively involved in shaping and certifying utility green power programs since We Energies' **Energy for Tomorrow** pilot program was introduced in 1996. Last year both Wisconsin Public Service and Wisconsin Public Power Inc. joined the ranks of Wisconsin utilities offering green power options to customers. And, thanks to a little push from RENEW, Madison Gas & Electric is now moving to reactivate and expand its popular renewable power program. ®

Bumpy Ride for Renewables in Store for 2003

An interview with RENEW Director Michael Vickerman

Q. *What's happening -- good or bad -- in the energy markets in Wisconsin?*



The renewable electricity picture is filled with opportunities and dangers. On the positive side, the utilities believe they must build new power stations. Each project represents an opportunity to leverage additional renewable generation. The bad news is that, in the aggregate, the amount of new generation proposed by utilities is clearly excessive. If every one of these projects goes through, the result will be excess capacity, which will jack up electric rates. This situation forces RENEW to think strategically and decide which projects merit negotiating with the utility to build in a renewable component. We can't do that with all the projects that are in the permitting pipeline. Some projects should be opposed outright.

The Public Service Commission (PSC) will have a devil of a time saying no to any of these proposed capacity additions. That is because it is operating in a vacuum caused by the elimination of integrated resource planning five years ago. The state used to be able to forecast load growth, and determine what combination of new generation, capacity upgrades, new transmission lines, energy efficiency and renewable projects would best serve the public interest. Now we have a piecemeal approval process that leaves no room for alternative scenarios that may be cheaper and less harmful to

the environment.

In the old days, the utilities were responsible for all projects related to generation and transmission. Now, these responsibilities have been separated, and there is a new entity—the American Transmission Company—that oversees the transmission side of utility service. There is no mechanism right now for reviewing long-range transmission and generation needs in an integrated fashion. This invites overbuilding.

Q. *What do you mean plants need to be integrated with transmission projects? You mean we may have too many plants and too few lines or too many lines and not enough plants?*

We could easily wind up with surplus generating capacity and redundant transmission lines. When considering whether to approve a new generator, the PSC compares the proposal with other power sources and decides whether the project is “least cost.” When considering whether to approve a new transmission line, the PSC compares it against other transmission investments and decides whether the project is “least cost.” But a transmission project could eliminate the need for one or more generators, and vice versa. And other options, like more efficiency and distributed generation, are not considered at all! There is an element of blind man's buff to all this.

Failure to rectify this planning vacuum puts us on the road to excess capacity, higher electricity costs, and unnecessary environmental damage. And we will be much the poorer if we allow this

nonexistent planning to foreclose opportunities for energy conservation, renewable projects and distributed generation.

Q. *Wouldn't higher electricity prices make renewable electricity more attractive?*

Only if there's a market for renewable electricity, and utilities define and control that market. If utilities are groaning under the weight of new generating capacity, then they'll see little need or incentive to pursue renewables. That is why RENEW has to confront utility proposals early on and shape them to include renewable acquisitions as well.

There are other reasons besides customer demand for building renewable generation. Economic development is a critically important benefit of renewable energy. The potential to add renewable capacity from windpower, low-impact farm crops and livestock manure has barely been tapped in Wisconsin. This kind of development is very attractive to the farm sector right now, which has been struggling to remain afloat during this prolonged stretch of low commodity prices. But we have to find purchasers for that power, which costs more than the standard power from utilities. Utility green power programs like We Energies' **Energy for Tomorrow** and Wisconsin Public Service's **Naturewise** are good starts, but to date they have only scratched the surface of this market. Prodding utilities to expand the supply and demand for renewable power has been and will continue to be a high priority for us. ®

Shrinking energy resource

(continued from page 2)

that the current slump in the economy will end soon, and that construction of gas-fired power plants will continue apace. But EIA's seemingly incurable optimism serves another purpose, mainly to prevent concerns over future gas availability from spilling over into the mainstream media.

Can the U.S. economy rebound while the going rate for natural gas escalates in search of a new price floor? Probably not, but that's only a guess. However that dynamic plays out, we Americans are not in a position to control or even influence the outcome. But we may still be able to reduce our increasing dependency on natural gas. For that reason, we should examine whether it is a wise idea to keep building more gas-fired power plants.

From a utility perspective natural gas comes close to being the ideal electricity generating source.

Unlike coal, it is devoid of sulfur and mercury. Unlike diesel, it is free of particulates. Unlike uranium, it does not, once used, stay radioactive for thousands of years. Unlike wind, it is a dispatchable power source. It is possible to build a power station that can convert up to 85% of the raw Btu value of gas into usable energy: steam, processed heat, and chilled water as well

RENEW adds new staff

Ed Blume joins RENEW to strengthen outreach and communications with our members, renewable energy businesses, and other interested in renewables.

Ed has more than 13 years of experience as a lobbyist and executive director for professional and trade associations. He recently held a position with the Wisconsin Association of Lakes. ®

as electricity. Indeed, natural gas generators are uniquely valuable in that they provide firm capacity yet can be ramped up or throttled down at a moment's notice to match load fluctuations.

Because supplies are limited, natural gas should be priced at a premium to stretch out its availability and penalize wasteful uses of this high quality resource. This would be a significant departure from what we're used to. Gas has been for many years the cheapest energy source for both bulk generation and home heating uses, and while its prices sagged, its popularity soared. But its attractiveness encouraged a mindset that took its future availability for granted, and now we are beginning to feel the pinch that comes from putting all of our energy eggs in one basket.

So far, market mechanisms haven't provided the premium pricing that would bring about a more rational and less unthinking use of natural gas. But there is the opportunity, at least in states that haven't deregulated electric service, to develop broader strategies for meeting future energy needs that don't rely exclusively on natural gas. Utility commissions ought to insist that new gas-fired projects include specific measures to minimize fuel use. Reducing load growth through such efficiency measures as higher building energy performance standards, and expanding power production from renewable sources would produce more than just environmental benefits. These strategies would also help utilities ease up on their use of natural gas as a generator fuel, and reduce customer exposure to high prices and the potential for electricity shortages.

While new gas-fired plants can provide short-term reliability benefits, the shaky state of future natural

gas availability argues for a redoubled effort to keep loads from growing.

Prudence also dictates accelerating the deployment of wind turbines, ground source heat pumps, manure digesters and solar water heating systems to shoulder a greater share of the energy burden.

A resource strategy that starts and ends with new fossil fuel generation presents a financial and resource availability risk to ratepayers that is likely to outweigh whatever short-term benefits it would otherwise provide. ®

Editor's note: Petroleum and Natural Gas Watch is a RENEW initiative that reports on the fossil fuel supply-demand picture and provides commentary on the depletion of finite energy sources.

For more information, visit "The End of Cheap Oil" at RENEW's Web site (renewwisconsin.org).

RFP for new wind projects

(continued from page 1)

In addition to this large-scale solicitation, We Energies plans to purchase electricity from small-scale locally owned wind projects scattered about its service territory.

While the solicitation does not impose geographic restrictions on project locations, there is a preference for facilities situated in We Energies' service territory, followed by those that can be interconnected directly to the American Transmission Company, which serves the eastern two-thirds of Wisconsin.

The windpower capacity being sought must be built and operating by December 31, 2004, according to the RFP. Developers had until February 28, 2003 to submit proposals. The minimum size for consideration is 20 MW.

Commitment to new windpower sources of this magnitude will not only mean cleaner air and reduced greenhouse gas emissions, but also new economic opportunities for in-state manufacturers, local building contractors, and farmers who are struggling to keep their land in agri-

What Exactly is Focus on Energy and Who's Involved?

A critically important component of former Governor Tommy Thompson's Reliability 2000 initiative, Focus on Energy (FoE) is a ratepayer-funded public-private partnership offering energy information and services to residential, business, and industrial customers throughout Wisconsin. While the State of Wisconsin retains ultimate oversight of FoE, the design and execution of program services is carried out by third-party administrative teams under contract to the Department of Administration's Division of Energy.

FoE works to achieve three goals:

- Encourage energy efficiency and use of renewable energy.
- Enhance the environment.
- Ensure the future supply of energy for Wisconsin.

The amount of ratepayer funding allocated to achieve these goals is about \$63 million a year, of which \$2.8 million, or 4.5%, is set aside for promoting customer adoption of renewable energy systems.

The administrative team directing FoE's renewable electricity program is called the Wisconsin Renewable Energy Network (WREN).

RENEW Wisconsin is a founding member organization of WREN.

FoE's principal program areas and the organizations responsible for the areas are: Residential Energy Efficiency: WI Energy Conservation Corp. (WECC); Renewable Electricity: WECC on behalf of WREN; Business & Industrial Energy Efficiency: Milwaukee School of Engineering; Environmental Research and Education and Training Programs: Energy Center of WI; Independent Evaluation: PA Consulting; Marketing: Hoffman York. ®

First Year a Success for Wisconsin Renewable Energy Network (WREN)

Focus on Energy's Renewable Energy Program is on track to achieve its annual kilowatt-hour production goals, concluded WREN's Board of Directors in February after reviewing the findings of an evaluation funded by the Department of Administration's Division of Energy.

The evaluation, prepared by PA Consulting, cited three areas of strength:

- Enthusiastic and dedicated program managers and trade and professional allies with significant ex-

perience in Wisconsin renewable energy markets.

- A comprehensive and flexible program approach.
- A firm grasp of the barriers to growing renewable energy markets in Wisconsin.

WREN's Board of Directors set four objectives last summer for the fiscal year ending in June 2003:

- Encourage residential and non-residential customers to learn about and use renewable energy.
- Encourage rural residents and small businesses to install small wind systems to generate one to 20 kilowatts (kW) of electricity.
- Encourage owners of existing homes to use solar electric systems.
- Encourage dairy farms with more than 300 head of cattle to install bioenergy (manure-to-methane) systems

At its February planning meeting, the WREN Board extensively discussed the evaluator's concern that program activities may be too ambitious for its small staff, potentially resulting in administrative overload. WREN's FY04 budget will be

smaller than the current year, so next year's program scope is likely to be more narrowly focused, with some modest reductions in grants and incentives.

The projects already funded or in the works should displace almost 20 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity that fossil-fuel generating plants would have produced.®

The WREN Effect

In 2002 Focus on Energy:

- ✓ Funded 13 projects that are now operating.
- ✓ Committed funds toward 57 systems for installation in 2003.

The projects fall in the following renewable areas:

- ✓ 34 solar electric (photovoltaic).
- ✓ 14 solar water heating or space heating;
- ✓ 11 small wind machines.
- ✓ 7 bioenergy.
- ✓ 3 ground source heat pumps.

The WREN Team

Board of Directors

- Charlie Higley
WI Energy Conservation Corp.
- Ingrid Kelley, Energy Center of WI
- Larry Krom, L&S Associates
- Shelly Laffin, RENEW Wisconsin
- Tehri Parker & Mick Sagrillo
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- Michael Vickerman, RENEW
- Niels Wolter, MSB Energy Assoc.

Associate Directors

- Jim Gibson and Bob Gilbertson
WI Technical College System
- Sherri Gruder, UW-Extension
- Pat Walsh, UW-Extension

Staff

- Charlie Higley, Program Director
- Beth Shippert, Program Assistant

WREN Takes Reins of Statewide Renewables Program: Milestones and Achievements, 1999 through 2003

Oct. '99	Legislation enacted transferring ratepayer funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy from utilities to the state's Department of Administration (DOA). Marks the birth of the statewide Focus on Energy (FoE) program. Legislation earmarks 4.5% of program revenues to encourage and support customer adoption of renewable electricity systems. This amounts to about \$8 million over a three-year period beginning July 2001.
Sept. '00	DOA agrees to hire separate administrative team to design and operate FoE's renewable electricity program.
Nov. '00	Six organizations and consulting firms - Energy Center of Wisconsin, L&S Technical Associates, Midwest Renewable Energy Association, MSB Energy Associates, RENEW Wisconsin, and Wisconsin Energy Conservation Corporation (WECC) - join forces to form Wisconsin Renewable Energy Network (WREN). This core group begins meeting regularly to shape and design an effective statewide program.
Feb. '01	DOA issues a Request for Proposals to administer FoE's renewables program.
March '01	WREN submits formal proposal in response to DOA's solicitation. Proposal designates WECC as prime contractor and sets forth governing board composed of WREN's six founding organizations. Two other groups also submit bids.
Aug. '01	DOA selects WREN to design and run FoE's renewable program. WREN begins drafting three-year workplan.
Sept. '01	WREN hires Charlie Higley to serve as Program Director.
Dec. '01	WREN's administrative team expands to include Wisconsin Technical College System, UW-Extension, and WI Center for Environmental Education.
Feb. '02	WECC and DOA sign a contract defining WREN's Year 1 activities and budget (through June 30, 2002).
March '02	FoE's Renewable Electricity Program officially launched. WREN begins issuing grants and incentives for underwriting customer-sited renewable generating systems, facilitating renewable electricity installations, and providing education and training events for installers, contractors, suppliers, and interested customer-generators.
April '02	FoE sponsors and helps organize first symposium in Wisconsin to address and promote farm-based anaerobic digester systems. Held in Plover, the event draws over 200 people.
June '02	WECC and DOA enter into contract defining WREN's Year 2 activities and budget (through June 30, 2003).
July '02	Year 2 begins. About \$1.5 million becomes available for grants, incentives and cash-back awards.
Nov. '02	FoE organizes symposium on small wind turbines at Lakeshore Tech. Institute, Cleveland. 100 people attend.
Feb. '03	FoE organizes workshop led by Dan Juhl to help local developers structure and build windpower projects financed in part with local capital.

YES! I want to help RENEW increase the use of clean, self-renewing energy resources to generate electricity or replace fossil-generated electricity.

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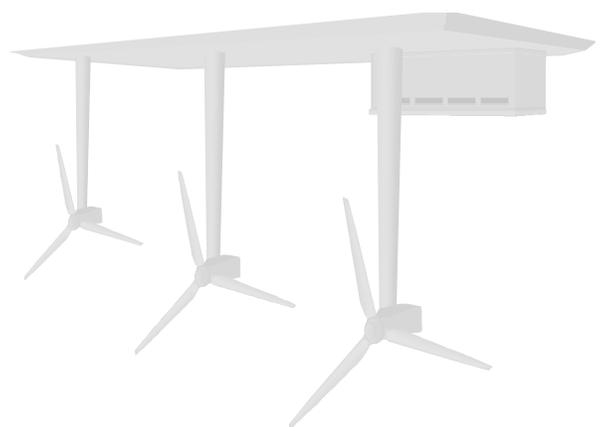
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Renewable & Energy Efficiency Events

March 27	Wisconsin Biogas Symposium. Stayer Center, Marian College, Fond du Lac. This one-day symposium will help farmers and others understand the technical, economic and regulatory issues involved in developing and implementing biogas projects; it will also showcase biogas systems already in operation. For more information, check the Master Events Calendar under About Us on the Web site of Focus on Energy (www.focusonenergy.com).
April 9	The Greening of the Built Environment V: Making it Happen – Getting Results! Olympia Conference Center, Oconomowoc. The annual conference will focus on convincing building owners, developers, and decision-makers of the benefits of green building products and services. More information at 414.224.9422 or connielindholm@wgba.org .
April 12	Moral Choices for Powering Our Future: A Public Dialogue. Unitarian Universalist Church West, 13001 W. North Ave., Brookfield. We Energies' Power the Future plan envisions building three new coal-fired power plants in SE Wisconsin. Generating electrical power with coal produces pollution and adds to global warming. This conference examines the Power the Future from an ethical and religious perspective. RENEW's Michael Vickerman speaks on renewable energy at 10:45 a.m.
May 13	Greening Businesses with Renewable Electricity. Alumni Memorial Union, Marquette University, Milwaukee. The day-long program features workshops and Q&A sessions with purchasers and providers of green power. Sponsored by RENEW, Center for Resource Solutions, and others. More information from RENEW at 608.255.4044 or mvickerman@renewwisconsin.org .
June 20 – 22	Midwest Renewable Energy and Sustainable Living Fair. Renew the Earth Institute, Custer. The world's largest renewable energy, energy efficiency, and sustainable living festival. The Fair offers working demonstrations of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies; products that help consumers save money, save energy, and protect the environment; workshops and entertainment for children and families; and a friendly festival atmosphere. Over 100 exhibitors, including RENEW. More information at www.the-mrea.org .

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