

News

Lenexa firm signs Larned to wind-power contract

By -
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The home of Kansas' correctional mental hospital soon may have a new tourist attraction ♦ wind turbines ♦ thanks to a Lenexa company's expansion efforts.

The Larned City Council approved a letter of intent March 17 to buy 10 megawatts from a proposed Kansas Wind Power project. City Manager Don Gaeddert predicted that the proposed wind farm's seven turbines atop 263-foot-tall towers would bring construction jobs and sightseers to town.

"People are very supportive of this," Mayor Ralph Carnold said in a statement that Lenexa-based Kansas Wind Power released Friday. "And, of course, there's the environmental aspect of it. The more electrical energy you produce with wind power, the less energy that has to come from burning fossil fuels."

The company said it is developing a "distributed generation model" for communities and counties around Larned, which is 300 miles southwest of Kansas City.

The project will enable each city to have a wind farm big enough to handle their power needs, company CEO Troy Helming said in the statement.

KWP said it has obtained commitments for the use of 30 megawatts from five cities and is in the process of obtaining similar agreements with other neighboring counties for the same project.

"This model has been done in Europe, but as far as we know, it's never been done before in the United States," Helming said in the statement.

The project will allow bulk turbine purchases, reduced-cost financing terms and increased construction efficiencies that would not be possible for an individual municipality wind project, the company said.

The company did not immediately return calls for more information on the project.

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