

INDIANA'S HOOSIER ENERGY INVESTS IN RENEWABLE ENERGY: PV SOLAR SYSTEM INSTALLED IN MEROM, IN

Hoosier Energy may seem like an unlikely company to embrace renewable energy but that is just what this Indiana power company has decided to do. It has done so with the direction of Hoosier Energy's renewable energy coordinator, Heath Norrick who plans to provide a model educational resource for renewable energy at the company's learning center located at Turtle Creek in Merom, IN. The center is in proximity to the reservoir which acts as a cooling pond for the coal-fired power plant. Among the sustainable projects underway at the center is the installation of a 3 kilowatt (kW) Photovoltaic (PV) system to offset the energy requirements of the learning center which is used by the general public, including school groups for environmental education. The PV install is being done by SunWind Power Systems, a company located in southern IN. The system will be tied to the grid and ground mounted (See Figure 1).



Figure 1a) Jeremy Coxon, mechanical engineer, is the project manager for the solar install at Turtle Creek.



1b) Ground mount 3 kW PV system in Merom, IN

In June, the directors of Touchstone energy cooperatives throughout Indiana will convene at the Turtle Creek to view a demonstration of the installed system. Touchstone Energy consists of over 600 consumer-owned electric cooperatives in 46 states and delivers power to over 30 million members. Currently, Indiana electric co-ops have a wide variety of net-metering and interconnection agreements for wind and solar. In some cases, co-ops have no agreements in place for customers interested in grid tying these systems. The neighboring state of KY has recently passed a House bill 313 into law that increases the maximum amount of electricity a facility can place on the grid and still receive energy credits, expands the application to other renewable sources, and requires PSC to create a statewide interconnection standard.

It is hoped that the demonstration at Turtle Creek will help ease concerns by electric coops and lead to greater adoption of net-metering and interconnection policies in the state of Indiana.