

Why Vermont's largest nonprofit organization devoted to consumer protection and environmental advocacy is proud to

Support Wind Power

Wind is a responsible energy choice. Climate change is real and its devastating impacts are already being felt around the world and here at home. We have a responsibility to do our part to help solve this problem, and developing our clean wind resources is part of that solution. In 2012, wind power in the U.S. made it possible to avoid 84.7 million metric tons of carbon dioxide pollution¹ – or as much pollution as is produced by more than 17 million of today's passenger vehicles in a year.

Wind is a clean, abundant and local source of energy. Harnessing the wind is one of the cleanest, most sustainable, and most economical ways to generate the energy we all use to turn the lights on, heat our homes and, eventually, power our vehicles. Wind turbines produce no toxic emissions, and none of the pollution that contributes to climate change and over their lifecycle (including construction) produce less carbon pollution that contributes to climate change than any other energy source.²

Wind is good for Vermont communities. The four utility-scale wind farms now operating in Vermont already produce enough energy to power more than 45,000 homes. In addition, the wind projects have resulted in huge new areas of conserved land for wildlife habitat and recreation, and add revenue to tight municipal budgets so communities can invest more in education, infrastructure and economic development.

An overwhelming majority of Vermonters support wind power. A statewide survey conducted in April found 71 percent of Vermonters support ridgeline wind development and earlier polling 69 percent of Vermonters would support a wind project in their communities.³

Wind is critical for Vermont's self-sufficient, clean energy future. Meeting Vermont's long-term goal of producing 90 percent of our energy with renewable power by 2050 will require a responsible mix of local, renewable resources. That includes wind, solar, small hydro and geothermal resources, among others. The bottom line is we have to end our dependence on dirty fossil fuels, and responsible wind development will be part of the solution.

For over forty years, VPIRG has been deeply involved in energy issues in the Vermont – working to stop dirty, dangerous and expensive projects and support clean energy solutions. Our approach to energy work is simple: so long as Vermonters are consuming energy, we have a responsibility to waste less and produce what we can in a sustainable way.

For more information, please visit www.vpirg.org.



Why Vermont Communities are Taking the Opportunity to Be Part of the Solution

For the sake of our communities and future generations, it's time to end Vermont's dependence on foreign, expensive fossil fuels that pollute our environment and drive extreme weather. With growing community interest and support for more local clean wind projects, communities should be proud of the promising, secure, clean energy future they're helping to build.

Communities at Risk

Pollution from fossil fuels is driving climate change and contributing to the increasingly extreme weather we're experiencing. Today, major storms hit Vermont nearly twice as often as 60 years ago,⁴ threatening lives, property and our local economy.



Responsibility & Common Sense

Thanks to proven wind technologies, we have the ability to cut the pollution that's disrupting our climate. We owe it to future generations to make responsible energy choices today. Turning our state's wind into clean electricity is just common sense.

Fossil Fuel Addiction

Vermonters spend nearly \$1 billion a year on fossil fuels to heat our homes and offices and fuel our farms and businesses. We pay some of the highest gasoline prices in the nation. And now there are plans to build a massive new pipeline to pump fracked gas through the state.



Independent & Self-Sufficient

By tapping into Vermont's abundant wind resources we can become a clean energy success story. Wind energy is a clean and affordable way to provide for more and more of our electric, heating and transportation needs. Why buy foreign oil when we can have local wind?

More Pollution, Health Risks

Traditional fossil fuel alternatives to wind and solar energy have been linked to massive environmental destruction, increased risks of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, and complications with pregnancy.⁵



Clean Air, Healthy Communities

Wind energy became the number one power source of new U.S. electricity generation capacity in 2012.⁶ In Vermont, four wind farms are already producing environmental benefits and enough clean power for 45,000 homes.



¹ Schneider, J., Dutzik, T., & Sargent, R. (2013). Wind energy for a cleaner America II: Wind energy's growing benefits for our environment and our health. *Environment America Research and Policy Center*.
² Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2014). Working Group III Report - Mitigation of Climate Change. Retrieved from http://report.mitigation2014.org/drafts/final-draft-postplenary/ipcc_wg3_ar5_final-draft_postplenary_annex-iii.pdf
³ Poll by Fairbank, Maslin, Maulin, Metz & Associates, available at <http://bit.ly/cleanpoll>. And Clarke, R. (2013, February 26). Castleton poll results. Retrieved from http://www.castleton.edu/polling/feb26_2013/windpower.htm
⁴ Madsen, T. & Willcox, N. (2012). "When it rains, it pours: Global warming and the increase in extreme precipitation from 1948 to 2011." *Environment America Research and Policy Center*.
⁵ Liu, X., Lessner, L., & Carpenter, D. O. (2012). Association between residential proximity to fuel fired power plants and hospitalization rate for respiratory diseases. *Environmental Health Perspectives*, 120(6), 807-810.
⁶ U.S. Department of Energy. (2013, August 6). *U.S. Wind Energy Production and Manufacturing Reaches Record Highs*.