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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

**RESEARCH**[Science](#)  
[General](#)  
[Business](#)  
[Archives](#)**NEWS INDEX**[This Year](#)  
[Slide Shows & Videos](#)  
[Archives](#)**PUBLICATIONS**[Inside Illinois](#)  
[II Archives](#)  
[II Advertising](#)  
[About II](#)[Postmarks](#)  
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[Illinois in the News](#)[Campus Calendar](#)[Other News Sources](#)▶ PUBLICATIONS ▶ Inside Illinois ▶ [Vol. 25, No. 10, Nov. 17, 2005](#)

## Inside Illinois

### Wind turbines, solar power to bring renewable energy

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In the coming years, wind and sunlight will help generate power at the UI's Urbana-Champaign campus, thanks to a blossoming student-initiative and a \$2 million grant from the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation.

Three 1.5-megawatt wind turbines will be built in the South Farms area. The campus will use all of the electricity generated – about 10.6 million kilowatt-hours a year. The wind turbines also will be used as teaching tools and in research in several academic disciplines. The ICECF also gave \$186,500 toward solar panels on a new College of Business facility.

"We are proud to work with the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation in promoting sustainable energy technologies to benefit the university and the state," said Chancellor Richard Herman.

The \$2 million grant includes \$600,000 in a two-for-one match tied to \$300,000 to be allocated for the \$5.7 million project from a student-approved fee that began in 2003. Students for Environmental Concerns – the oldest student-run environmental organization on campus – proposed the fee. The UI will cover most of the remaining costs.

"The students' initiative to institute the campus clean-energy technology fee was a crucial catalyst to bringing these renewable energy technologies to the campus," said Matt Malten, the sustainability coordinator on the Urbana campus.

"Installation of these technologies will be a significant accomplishment," he said. "As our campus develops and implements a comprehensive sustainability strategy, I believe these projects will prove to be a key turning point toward aligning campus education, research and operations with the principles of sustainability."

J. Philip Novak, the foundation's chairman, praised the university's leadership and the substantial financial commitments by students and the UI.

"The multiple benefits of the wind farm are what make it so compelling," Novak said. "It will generate clean, fixed-price electricity for the campus at a time of rising energy prices, and it creates research and teaching opportunities in several departments. It also will demonstrate how Illinois farmers may be able to develop similarly sized wind projects on their land."

The \$2 million grant is the largest given to a university by the ICECF, said Ed Miller, program director of the foundation. "The UI wind farm is at the leading edge of a growing wave of interest for 'community-wind projects' that generate power for local use."

Solar power also is gaining traction around the state, Miller said. He noted that the solar energy system for the College of Business facility is the 31st such project the foundation has supported and one of several that are part of energy-saving 'green' building.

The Chicago-based ICECF is working with more than a dozen other universities, school districts and municipalities in Illinois that are exploring putting up their own wind turbines or solar PV systems in the next few years, Miller said.

The wind turbines and photovoltaic cells, also known as solar PV panels, which will be installed at the College of Business Instructional Facility to be built at Sixth Street and Gregory Drive in Champaign, will replace some of the electricity now generated with coal and natural gas at the Abbott Power Plant.

Each of the wind-turbine towers will be up to 262 feet tall and hold a three-blade rotor. Together, they are expected to provide 2.7 percent of the campus's annual total energy consumption and eliminate the release of



*Click photo to enlarge*

Photo by L. Brian Stauffer

**Additional funding**

Lt. Gov. Pat Quinn, center, talks with Interim Provost Jesse Delia, left, and Rebecca Guyette, University YMCA program director, after a news conference on Nov. 14 announced a \$2 million grant for three wind turbines for campus. The YMCA sponsors the student group that proposed the student fee to help fund cleaner campus technologies.



http://news.illinois.edu/ii/05/1117/windturbines.html

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6 Dec 10 - 29 Dec 15

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renewable energy and protect natural areas and wildlife habitat in Illinois. In the last five years, it has awarded more than 1,700 grants totaling more than \$92 million for projects in 96 counties.

[Back to Index](#)

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