

Pennsylvania's Inn at Hickory Run Prepares to Erect \$60,000 Wind Turbine - By Glenn Hasek
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Thanks to a grant from the State of Pennsylvania Energy Harvest Program, the Inn at Hickory run here is getting closer to its goal of erecting a 6.6-kilowatt wind turbine. Construction is expected to begin very soon.

Combined with its use of geothermal heating and air-conditioning, as well as high-efficiency lighting and computer control systems, the turbine will help the inn achieve 80 percent of its energy from off-grid, renewable energy sources.

David Pfeil, who owns the inn with his wife Nancy, says the wind turbine will cost \$60,000, with the State of Pennsylvania picking up \$37,600 of the cost. David expects to recover his investment in just seven years and possibly sooner if electricity rates keep jumping. Rates are expected to increase by 35 percent in his eastern Pennsylvania area in 2009.

Pennsylvania Governor Edward G. Rendell launched the Energy Harvest program in 2003 to promote awareness and build markets for cleaner or renewable energy technologies. Innovative projects that are eligible through the program include renewable energy deployment, including biomass, waste coal reclamation for energy, deployment of innovative efficiency technologies, and distributed generation projects.

Geothermal System Heats, Cools

David says he heats and cools the inn at a fraction of the cost of his own home in New Jersey. When the inn was constructed in 2004, a closed-loop geothermal system was installed. Five closed loops of pipe run 50 feet underground to get the ethanol-like liquid running through the pipes to a temperature of 54 degrees. The geothermal system takes heat out of the liquid in winter and cool air out in summer.

'You really need to do new construction to take advantage of a geothermal system,' David says.

David and his wife designed their inn themselves. David has a degree in mechanical engineering and Nancy has a degree in chemical engineering. A HomeSeer system is used to automate lighting and heating and cooling. Compact fluorescents are used throughout to further reduce energy consumption.

The Inn at Hickory Run features four rooms, each with its own wood focus. The rooms include: The Maple Room, The Birch Room, The Oak Room, and The Cherry Room. All of the wood that has been chopped down on the property has been crafted into furniture used in the inn.

On the way to getting his wind turbine approved, David says he ran into several obstacles. The first was a neighbor who complained that the turbine would be an eyesore. He also had to help push through a new township ordinance allowing wind turbines. Finally, he had to show that the turbine would not be harmful to birds. David expects the turbine to be up and running as early as October and as late as December.

This article first appeared on the Green Lodging News website. To sign up to receive the weekly Green Lodging News newsletter, go to www.greenlodgingnews.com. Glenn Hasek can be reached at editor@greenlodgingnews.com.

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