

Windsource® Minnesota- Frequently Asked Questions

WIND ENERGY

Where does the wind come from?

The energy that supplies Windsource is 100 percent wind energy generated from Minnesota wind farms. The electricity is added to the Xcel Energy system for use across our service area in Minnesota. We also recently added Moraine II Wind Farm, a 50 MW farm in Woodstock, MN, to our portfolio.

At any given time, Xcel Energy may be purchasing more or less renewable energy than is being sold through Windsource. We then balance the sales and generation of the program on an annual basis using the environmental and consumer protection standards established by the non-profit Center for Resource Solutions in its Green-e Energy™ Program. For more information on Green-e Energy, visit www.green-e.org. Green-e certifies that Xcel Energy generated as much renewable energy as you purchased, above and beyond our other regulatory mandates.

How does renewable energy get to my house?

The renewable energy facilities that supply Windsource are connected to the electric system or grid. Windsource and all other Xcel Energy electric customers draw electricity from the grid to meet their electricity needs, 24 hours a day.

Electricity generated by renewable facilities, such as wind turbines, as well as conventional sources travel together to supply homes and businesses. A simple analogy is to think of the electric grid or system as a giant lake that all customers draw from as they use electricity. Many different generation sources contribute to filling the “lake”; electricity from wind turbines, coal plants, hydroelectric plants, and natural gas fueled plants. As demand for Windsource increases, over time more wind turbines will be added to help supply the “lake” with more clean, wind-generated electricity.

How much power does the typical home use?

The average home uses around 700-900 kWh per month.

Is Windsource reliable? What happens when the wind isn't blowing?

Windsource won't affect the reliability of your electric service. While wind energy generation is dependent upon the availability of the wind, your electric service will continue to draw from the electric grid, which includes a variety of energy sources. The amount of renewable energy on that grid will be increased by the amount of your subscription, but the energy provided to your home will not necessarily be made up entirely of renewable energy electrons.

Doesn't Xcel Energy already supply a significant amount of renewable energy?

Yes. The Xcel Energy electricity mix in Minnesota uses a variety of resources. For comparison, the 2014 average mix of resources supplying Northern States Power customers included: coal (38.5%), nuclear (29.2%), natural gas (7.7%), wind (13.8%), hydro (7.7%), biomass (3.0%), and other (0.1%). The energy that supplies Windsource will be purchased entirely from wind farms in Minnesota and will go above and beyond government mandates.

GETTING STARTED

How do I sign up for the Windsource?

Residential customers may contact Xcel Energy at **1-800-895-4999** or visit xcelenergy.com/Windsource to enroll. Business customers can contact their account manager or call our Business Solutions Center at **1-800-481-4700**.

How much renewable energy can I get through Windsource?

You choose how much you want. Start with one block, which is the equivalent of 100 kilowatt-hours of electricity, or about enough electricity to power the lights in a typical home for a month*. You can also choose to get 100% of your energy from Windsource.

What does the additional money go towards?

The money received from Windsource customers is used to purchase wind energy. As the program grows, more wind energy will be added to our electric system/grid to meet the needs of Windsource customers.

What are the benefits of Windsource?

Residential customers join Windsource to support the increase in renewable energy generation and to be a part of a growing community of environmentally-sensitive consumers.

The increase in wind energy generation has a number of tangible environmental benefits. Wind energy takes advantage of an abundant, inexhaustible natural resource with no greenhouse gas emissions and little waste.

Wind energy has real economic benefits. Installing and maintaining wind turbines creates jobs. Ongoing lease payments are made to land owners who can still use the land for other purposes uses, such as farming. And wind turbines create additional tax income for counties.

Perhaps most importantly, wind energy prepares us for the future. Wind is a domestic energy source that helps preserve our natural resources for the future.

For business customers, Windsource can be a valuable tool in supporting sustainability initiatives. Over 1,000 businesses currently use Windsource as a means to meet environmental goals, achieve LEED certification, or position themselves as environmental leaders.

How much does Windsource cost?

In Minnesota, Windsource subscriptions are available in 100 kilowatt-hour (kWh) blocks for a small additional premium of \$3.53 per block, less a credit for fuel costs. In 2014, the average fuel cost credit for a residential customer was \$2.85, making the net charge for Windsource \$0.68 per block.

How am I billed for Windsource?

Windsource is billed on a monthly basis. The extra renewable energy charges appear as a separate line item labeled "Net Windsource Charge." Other taxes, fees and adjustments still apply.

Can I participate in Windsource if I rent my home?

Absolutely! As long as you are an electric customer of Xcel Energy in Minnesota, you can participate in Windsource and contribute to a cleaner environment while taking advantage of our abundant natural resources.

How would changes in the fossil fuel prices be accommodated in the Windsource program?

Customers receive a fuel cost credit, so that as the price of fossil fuel generation increases, so does the Windsource Minnesota credit which reduces the net premium for Windsource.

Can I be on Windsource and Time of Use?

Yes, Windsource is compatible with Time of Use. Customers will pay the additional Windsource rate on top of their Time of Use rates.

PROGRAM TERMS & CONDITIONS

What are the terms and conditions of the Windsource contract?

Windsource is available to all Minnesota retail metered electric customers. The minimum monthly subscription is one, 100 kWh block. You can also sign up for 100% of your monthly electric use.

Customers agree to enroll in the program for a minimum of 12 consecutive months. After the minimum period, your subscription will continue month-to-month, unless terminated with 30 day notice. For non-residential customers, some event-specific arrangements can be made at the sole discretion of Xcel Energy.

If your metered energy use is less than the subscribed renewable energy blocks, the additional charge on the last 100 kWh block will be prorated accordingly. All rates are subject to periodic re-pricing as approved by the Minnesota Public Service Commission. Xcel Energy reserves the right to deny or terminate subscription under this tariff to customers with accounts in arrears. Xcel Energy reserves the right to limit subscriptions due to limitations on the availability of renewable power.

How do I increase my Windsource commitment?

You can increase your Windsource subscription at any time. To do so, please either send an email to Windsource@xcelenergy.com or contact us at 1-800-895-4999.

How do I cancel my Windsource commitment?

Customers may contact Xcel Energy either at **1-800-895-4999**, by a written letter, or by email at windsource@xcelenergy.com, or to cancel their commitment on their account, with 30 day notice.

Is there an early cancellation fee?

There is no fee for early termination. Early termination is not allowed, unless you move from your premise and finalize your electric service.

*Lighting Calculation: Based on home with 42 light sockets, using a mix of CFLs, LEDs and incandescent bulbs.