

Oklahoma ranks sixth in wind power, trade association says

The wind industry's trade group, the American Wind Energy Association, said Oklahoma added more than 1,100 megawatts of wind power capacity in 2012. Oklahoma moved up from eighth place to sixth in the association's rankings of state wind capacity.

By **Paul Monies** | Published: January 31, 2013 [Leave a comment](#)

Oklahoma now ranks sixth in the nation for wind-generation capacity after a torrid fourth quarter that saw developers scrambling to finish projects before a federal tax credit deadline.

The year-end ranking by the American Wind Energy Association put Oklahoma's total capacity at more than 3,134 megawatts. That's enough to power more than 750,000 homes. The state ranked eighth in 2011.

Oklahoma added 1,127 megawatts of wind capacity in 2012, including 734 megawatts in the last three months of 2012, the association said. That put the state in fourth place nationally for the quarter.

Among the projects beginning operations in December were the 300-megawatt Canadian Hills wind farm in Canadian County and the 235-megawatt Chisholm View project near Enid.

Nationally, wind generation capacity reached more than 60,000 megawatts, with 13,000 megawatts coming in 2012 alone. Most of that additional capacity came online in the fourth quarter.

Texas leads the nation in wind capacity with more than 12,200 megawatts installed. The Lone Star State is followed by California, Iowa, Illinois and Oregon.

Wind power led all fuels in new installed capacity in the power generation sector in 2012, the association said. It was followed by new natural gas generating units.

“It is a real testament to American innovation and hard work that for the first time ever a renewable energy source was number one in new capacity,” Rob Gramlich, AWEA's interim CEO, said in a statement. “We are thrilled to mark this major milestone in the nation's progress toward a cleaner energy system.”

Despite the recent increases, renewable energy generation remains a long way behind coal and natural gas, the main generating fuels. Coal and natural gas each provided about one-third of the country's electricity generation, according to the latest monthly figures from the U.S. Energy Information Administration. Renewable energy, including wind and solar, provided about 6 percent.

Congress extended a key incentive for the wind industry as part of the negotiations over the so-called “fiscal cliff” earlier this month. The production tax credit, which offers

developers a 2.2 cent per kilowatt hour credit, now is set to expire Dec. 31.

The new version includes a provision to have wind developments “begin construction” by the year's end. The Internal Revenue Service is working on rules that would define that term, since it could mean anything from building a service road to erecting a tower.

“We hope that will be done relatively quickly,” Gramlich said in a conference call with reporters. “Some companies are waiting to see what the rules will say before they make very large commitments on projects.”

Apex Wind Energy Inc., which developed and built the Canadian Hills wind farm, plans to begin construction on another wind farm in Canadian and Kingfisher counties this year. The development, called the Kingfisher wind farm, would include 120 wind turbines and provide up to 300 megawatts of generation.