

# Keep Minnesota's Sensible Wind Siting Guidelines Strong

**Minnesota businesses benefit from our current predictable and efficient wind siting standards, not more government regulation.**

**Minnesota's growing wind industry keeps investment and jobs in the state.**

**In 2010 alone, wind power projects**

- contributed \$7 million in land lease payments,
- contributed over \$6 million in property tax payments,
- provided diversified income for Minnesota's farm families, and
- supported at least 2,000 direct and indirect jobs.

Wind is already a significant electricity resource in Minnesota. In fact, Minnesota already has over 2,500 megawatts of installed wind energy – enough to power 700,000 Minnesotan homes.

There is still much more potential – Minnesota's wind energy could provide *25 times* the state's total current electricity needs!



**Minnesota's wind siting law balances flexibility and consistency.**

Not all wind projects or communities are the same. Existing Minnesota statutes and rules allow local governments to set guidelines for developments specific to their land-use needs, while at the same time providing businesses with consistent statewide guidelines. This minimizes county-by-county patchwork regulations that create uncertainty and increase costs for businesses.



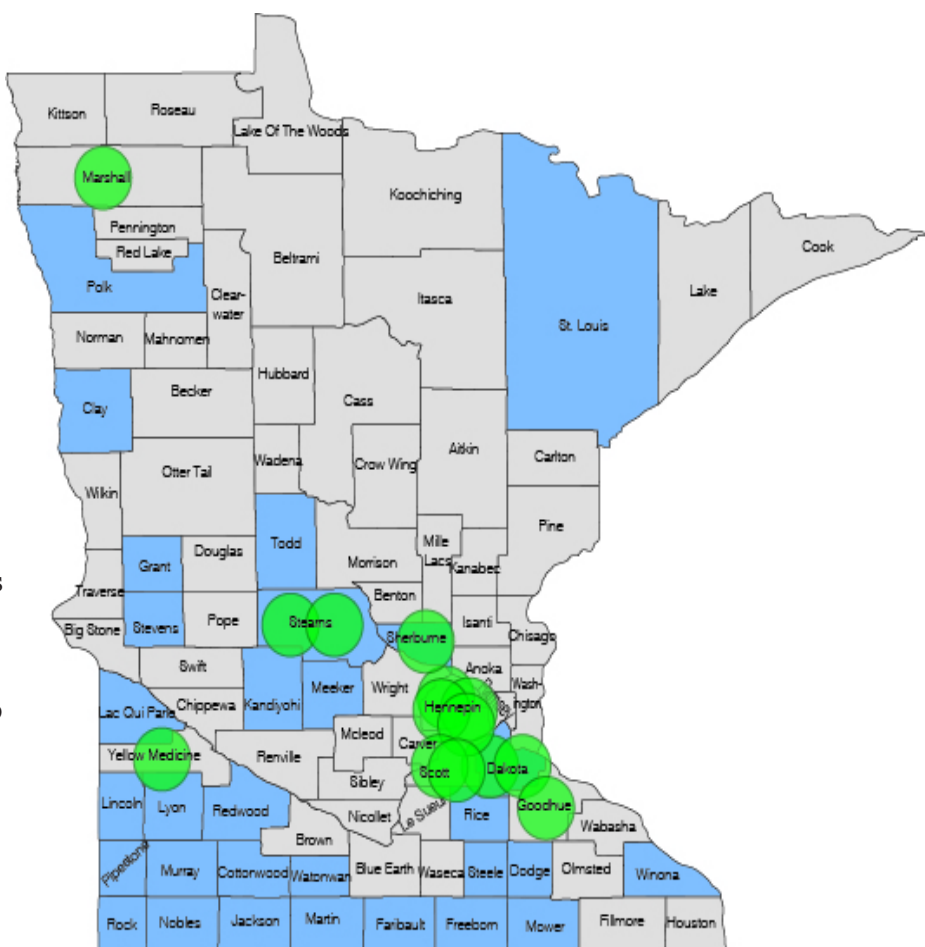
**Under the current Minnesota wind siting law:**

Projects under 5 megawatts are controlled by local governments; those above 25 megawatts are governed by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC). Projects between 5 and 25 megawatts are regulated by the MPUC unless a county decides to exercise its own siting authority for these projects. They may apply either state standards or even more restrictive standards, which are adopted unless the MPUC finds that there is "good cause" to not apply them.

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## Current Minnesota wind siting laws are comprehensive.

In Minnesota, minimum setbacks from homes range from 750 to 1,500-plus feet, based on sound and other factors. Proposed wind projects over 5 megawatts must undergo an extensive siting process: the developer submits a pre-application, draft application, and a draft site permit. There are two public comment periods before the MPUC approves or rejects the permit. The Minnesota Department of Commerce provides a 20-page guide for these large wind facility application processes; the application itself requires consideration of 36 categories of environmental impacts and various other issues ranging from wind rights to the location of collector and feeder lines and substations, seasonal variations in site characteristics, impact on local roads, the number of miles required for turbine access roads, and decommissioning and restoration plans when the turbines reach the end of their useful life.



Blue counties have wind projects  
Green dots are online wind energy manufacturing facilities

## Nearly all Minnesota wind projects have successfully used existing wind siting standards.

Minnesota currently has approximately 2,500 megawatts of wind production. Existing siting standards were designed over a period of 20 years to allow all concerns to be presented and addressed and to allow projects to move forward, while allowing flexibility necessary to address differences in projects, geography, and demographics. Current standards provide a well-planned and thorough process that still provides regulatory certainty for businesses in Minnesota. This certainty is essential to allow private businesses to flourish in Minnesota, rather than navigate a patchwork of county-by-county regulation.