

Missouri Utilities Look To Kansas For Wind Energy **News**

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(stltoday) - For some Missouri utilities, compliance with proposed rules intended to curb carbon dioxide emissions may depend on Kansas.



Empire District Electric Co., which serves Joplin and other areas in southwest Missouri, and Kansas City Power and Light say Kansas wind turbines could play a big role in meeting emission targets proposed by the Environmental Protection Agency. Each utility has generation and customers in each state.

Representatives from both utilities said Monday at an industry gathering in Jefferson City that stakes they own in Kansas wind farms are part of early strategies to comply with the proposed rules.

But that assumes Kansas and Missouri are able to and willing to work together.

"If that assumption doesn't follow through, we're going to have challenges just like everyone else," said Paul Ling, KCP&L's director of environmental compliance.

The EPA proposal, released in early June, proposes specific emission targets for each state, the first of which would kick in by 2020. The proposed rule allows for multistate approaches, but how those would account for different targets in each state is unclear.

The rule is not expected to be finalized until June at the earliest, and states have a year or more beyond that to craft individual plans. Lawsuits challenging the rule could also change its final form.

Working with Kansas could run into administrative as well as political roadblocks. It would depend on the development of a method to credit wind generation in a state's emissions formula without double-counting it toward compliance in Missouri and Kansas. States with abundant renewable resources could be reluctant to let other states use them toward compliance.

Political considerations could also block cooperation. Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback, a Republican, opposed the regulations from the outset, saying the day they were released they would "raise the cost of living for every Kansan."

Gov. Jay Nixon's administration has been mostly neutral on the proposal, as has the Missouri Public Service Commission. Each has taken steps to gather input from the industry.

Multistate approaches could go a long way to reducing the overall cost of compliance, said Jennifer Richardson, a regional director of government relations for electric grid operator Midcontinent Independent System Operator Inc., or MISO

"A regional solution is going to be more cost effective than a subregional or state-by-state approach," she said. "Now what that looks like is anyone's guess at this point."