

Iowa Plans To Generate Power Using Compressed Air, Wind

A group of utilities in the US State of Iowa has released plans to generate electricity using compressed air and wind generation. The project would be the third type of compressed air energy storage facility to be built in the world. The planned Iowa Stored Energy Park will hold compressed air in an underground storage facility, along with wind turbines to generate up to 300MW. The ISEP is designed to take advantage of the intermittent nature of wind generation by compressing and storing air in an aquifer. When electricity demand rises, the stored air will be released, heated, and used to drive generators. "Iowa is a leader in wind production but we have not developed a feasible way to store the abundant energy produced by wind. ISEP is the solution for storing energy," says John Bilsten, Algona Municipal Utilities general manager. More than 130 municipal utilities are supporting the ISEP. The US Department of Energy also is backing the project, with both research and financial support. "The Iowa Stored Energy Park could be a role model for other States and it could help the United States become a greener country," says Imre Gyuk, energy storage research program manager for DOE. Two compressed air energy storage plants are currently operating; one in Alabama and one in Germany.

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