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# **NEWS**

## **Thunder Spirit's first wind turbines begin generating electricity**

Hettinger, North Dakota—The first of 43 turbines at ALLETE Clean Energy's Thunder Spirit wind farm has begun generating renewable energy at the installation being constructed about 100 miles southwest of Bismarck, N.D.

The first turbine went online Oct. 21 and was followed quickly by four more. ALLETE Clean Energy, a wholly-owned subsidiary of ALLETE Inc., (NYSE:ALE) is building the 107-Megawatt wind farm which is expected to be completed in December. The installation near Hettinger, N.D., and its energy output—enough to power about 30,000 homes—will be sold to Montana-Dakota Utilities.

When completed, Thunder Spirit will consist of 43 Nordex N100 wind turbines, which were shipped from the German wind equipment manufacturer via the Saint Lawrence Seaway into the Port of Duluth, Minn., and then trucked to the construction site.

Eric Norberg, President of ALLETE Clean Energy, cited the working relationship with MDU, in part, for the success of the project. "MDU has been a strong and collaborative partner as we work together to bring this project to commercial operation," said Norberg.

About 17 miles of new roads have been built and 25 miles of underground cable will be used to collect power for transmission. At peak construction, more than 200 contract employees were at work across the 10,000 acres of land included within the wind farm's perimeter. Thunder Spirit's proximity to the Montana-Dakota transmission system enhances the projects deliverability of power to MDU's customers.

"Having the first turbines produce power is a huge milestone. We're excited that the project continues to be on schedule for full production by the end of the year," said Montana-Dakota President and CEO Nicole Kivisto. "The partnership with ACE has been very good and we look forward to Thunder Spirit Wind becoming part of our generation portfolio and providing affordable power to our customers for many years to come."

Community members, government representatives, utility executives and contractors were on hand in August for an event where they signed their names on one of the 160-foot fiberglass wind blades that eventually will be hoisted into place where it will turn steady North Dakota breezes into electricity.

ACE operates wind generation facilities in Minnesota, Iowa, Oregon and Pennsylvania. ACE was established in 2011 to acquire or develop capital projects to create energy solutions by way of wind, solar, biomass, hydro, natural gas, shale resources, clean coal technology and other emerging energy innovations.

ALLETE, Inc. is an energy company headquartered in Duluth, Minnesota. In addition to its electric utilities, Minnesota Power and Superior Water, Light and Power of Wisconsin, ALLETE owns ALLETE Clean Energy, based in Duluth, BNI Coal in Center, North Dakota, U.S. Water Services in St. Michael, Minnesota, and has an eight percent equity interest in the American Transmission Co. More information about ALLETE is available at [www.allete.com](http://www.allete.com).

*The statements contained in this release and statements that ALLETE may make orally in connection with this release that are not historical facts, are forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties and investors are directed to the risks discussed in documents filed by ALLETE with the Securities and Exchange Commission.*

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