

IN THE NEWS...

SCA Tissue Gets Greener with Wind Power

In a perfect example of how small wind turbines are big business, SCA Tissue has erected four 30-meter, 20-kilowatt wind turbines in the Town of Menasha, adding wind power to solar. RVT performed compressive strength testing for the project in December.

Minnesota Projects Create Windfall for Juhl Wind

Congratulations to Juhl Wind, who reported a whopping 777% increase in revenues last year. Their Woodstock Municipal and Grant County projects provided the bulk of the profit. It's heartening to hear of such success in these difficult times and proves unequivocally that wind power is the future.

States Lend Each Other A Helping Hand

Vestas's recently received order for 81 turbines for the Glacier Hills Wind Farm in Columbia County, Wisconsin, will aid them in bringing their new Colorado manufacturing facility online. Aside from the turbines, the order includes a two-year contract for service and maintenance services.

Who'd Have Thought It?

Wind energy is actually a form of solar power, caused by the Earth's surface being unevenly heated.

Things You Should Know:

Topic 1: Proactive Quality Management – Avoiding Delays

One of the simplest, but most important, aspects of a successful construction project is focusing on quality early in the process, and not waiting until something goes wrong. Ideally, the selected QA firm is a part of the design team and involved in project management meetings, as part of each meeting's agenda. One of RVT's innovations is our GAME© management system (Geotechnical And Materials Engineering Management). Aspects of our GAME system include:

- **Project Planning Workshop:** A meeting in which we seek to fully understand our client's expectations, define the scope of services, and set the benchmarks for the project's success.
- **Communication Management:** Regular communication with the contractor to both ensure that we are meeting their needs to the fullest extent, and to better manage our resources. It's effective in keeping the focus on quality and avoiding the scramble and potential problems caused by last-minute testing requests. Wind projects in particular can benefit from this approach, partly due to their large size and the fact that testing firms are often not local to the project area. Since wind farms are often in remote locations, a strong need for extra mobilization time and heightened communications exists.
- **Issue Resolution:** Maintaining open dialog between the contractor, owner/developer, and the supplier helps pull the team together to more efficiently resolve issues that could otherwise become volatile.

When properly utilized, GAME and other proactive quality management systems can not only keep a project on schedule, it can even potentially shorten the construction time. An extra week of fully functioning wind turbines could bring in thousands in extra revenue. Of course, other types of projects also greatly benefit from it; for example, recommendations we made at the Fox Energy Center concerning thermocouple wires saved the contractor three days worth of manpower and propane required to maintain curing temperature and moisture conditions for mass foundation pours.

Regardless of the quality management approach implemented, the bottom line is that surprises always lead to waste in some form and as we all know, time is money. Firms like RVT, when chosen as far in advance as possible, are there to reduce surprises and even eliminate them entirely.