

TEP Issues Request for Proposals to Build New, Large Solar and Wind Systems

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TUCSON, Ariz.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Tucson Electric Power (TEP) is seeking bids for the design and construction of large new renewable energy resources, including a community-scale solar array that could power more than 21,000 homes.

Solar Power Project

TEP issued a request for proposals (RFP) today that would enable TEP to purchase power from a solar facility with up to 100 megawatts (MW) of capacity under a 20-year agreement. The project, which could be built within TEP's service territory or tied into existing transmission facilities, would boost TEP's total community-scale solar energy resources by nearly 40 percent.

"We're working to provide more solar power for more customers for less money," said Carmine Tilghman, Senior Director of Energy Supply and Renewable Energy. "This new solar facility will help us achieve our renewable energy goals while preserving safe, reliable and affordable service for our community."

According to the proposal, the new solar facility would begin producing power in early 2019. TEP is working to deliver at least 30 percent of its power from renewable resources by 2030, doubling the state's 2025 goal. TEP anticipates an additional 800 MW of new renewable capacity by the end of 2030, boosting its total renewable energy portfolio to approximately 1,200 MW.

Prices for solar power from large solar facilities purchased through long-term agreements are about one-fourth of what they were just five years ago. The costs of installing utility-scale solar systems fell by about 12 percent in 2015 alone, according to a recent U.S. Department of Energy study.

Wind Power Project

TEP also is evaluating proposals submitted for a new 100 MW wind-powered facility that would be built and owned by a project partner. According to the proposal, TEP would buy power from the new facility for up to 20 years, more than doubling its current wind-powered capacity of about 80 MW.

"Although we'll primarily rely on solar energy to expand our renewable energy resources, the addition of new, cost-effective wind-powered resources would help to ensure reliability for our customers while further diversifying our renewable generation portfolio," Tilghman said.

In a request for proposals, TEP stated it was looking for projects that can tie into the company's transmission facilities located in the Four Corners region and along the Arizona/New Mexico border from geographic areas with productive wind resources.

Both RFPs are being managed by New Hampshire-based Accion Group. More information can be found at tepes.accionpower.com.

Renewable resources play an important part in TEP's increasingly diverse generating portfolio. The company has ceased burning coal at the H. Wilson Sundt Generating Station in Tucson and will retire 170 MW of coal-fired capacity when Unit 2 at the San Juan Generating Station in New Mexico is shut down next year. TEP has options to eliminate additional coal-fired capacity over the next 15 years. TEP has approximately 330 MW of total renewable generating capacity, enough to meet the electric needs of about 70,000 homes.

TEP provides safe, reliable electric service to approximately 417,000 customers in southern Arizona. To learn more, visit tep.com. TEP, UES and their parent company, UNS Energy, are subsidiaries of Fortis Inc., which owns utilities that serve more than 3 million customers across Canada and in the United States and the Caribbean. To learn more, visit fortisinc.com.

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