

Denmark's famed wind industry nothing but hot air

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Few countries capture the imagination of wind power enthusiasts better than Denmark. Supporters of wind power simply point to the statistics, which paint the country as a model "green" economy where wind mills supply 20% of its electricity, while supporting a thriving industry that employs thousands of people.

But those "facts" don't appear to add up. While wind mills do generate a sizable portion of the nation's electricity needs, most of the electricity produced is given away to neighbouring countries (Sweden, Norway and Germany) for free. That's because wind mills tend to produce much of their electricity at night, and since there is no way to store large amounts of electricity (except for hydropower), the energy is shipped off to Denmark's neighbours.

Coal and other traditional sources of electricity often meet the day-to-day needs of the Danish economy.

Sweden and Norway are biggest beneficiaries of such a system. Both of the countries rely primarily on dams for their power, which allows them to simply take the green handouts from Denmark when they're on offer, and then sell Denmark power when needed. They benefit twice over from Denmark's obsession with wind.

According to one specialist, the truth is that Denmark actually receives about 7 per cent of its electricity from wind—not 20 percent as the country and wind supporters often claim.

This situation would likely be humorous if it wasn't so expensive for Danish citizens—who pay some of the highest electricity rates in Europe. [According to Alyden Donnelly](#) [1], Danish rate-payers pay over CAD\$0.46/kWh for electricity in part to generate more than CAD\$0.10/kWh in subsidies for Danish wind companies.

And the oft-quoted "green" jobs are failing to materialize. Donnelly rightly points out that the last 12 wind turbine manufacturing and/or assembly plants constructed by "Danish" companies have been built outside Denmark—including five in North America. Denmark has been a net importer of wind power technology for at least 3 years.

Danish citizens also appear to be tiring of the whole charade, as earlier this year, a new national anti-wind body, Neighbours of Large Wind Turbines, was formed. To date, more than 40 civic groups have become members.

"People are fed up with having their property devalued and sleep ruined by noise from large wind turbines," the association's president, Boye Jensen Odsherred, told the *Daily Telegraph*. "We receive constant calls from civic groups that want to join."

Ontario: take note.

Energy Probe is a keen supporter of renewable energy. We believe renewable energy has the ability to diversify our electricity supply, while allowing for more decentralized sources of power for consumers. But we're not in favour of throwing massive subsidies at forms of energy that are not technically or economically feasible.

Read the previous gangrene economy report, "A line in the sand: wind power's ill effects," [here](#). [2]

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