

Environment

Community Strengths:

NATURAL RESOURCES

The Oshkosh area has abundant water, land resources and wildlife available for the enjoyment of citizens and visitors.

RECYCLING

Recycling has become an accepted practice, resulting in stable solid waste production.

COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT CONCERN

There is a strong level of community and business awareness of environmental issues and a desire to maintain the environment, resulting in high expectations of industrial, corporate, and private citizens.

Community Challenges:

LAND AND WATER USE CONFLICTS AND CONCERNS

The population in the area is growing and we are experiencing the effects of urban sprawl. Changing farming practices, and conflicts between rural and urban needs create challenges around the issue of land and water use.

CONTINUED AND INCREASED RECYCLING PRACTICES

We need to remain committed to recycling and work toward decreasing the solid waste generated in the county.

NEED TO COLLECT MORE DATA FOR FUTURE ANALYSIS

We need to identify existing data sources or encourage data collection of additional environmental indicators for future editions of this report.

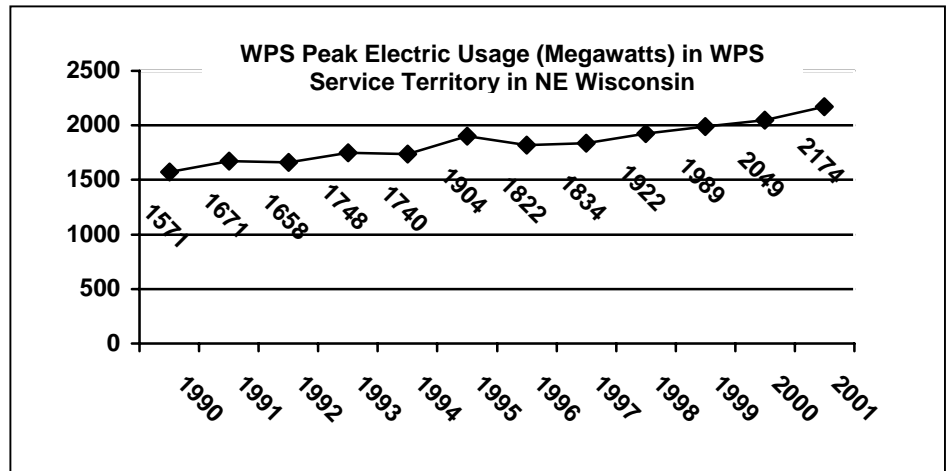
NEED TO PREPARE FOR FUTURE ENERGY DEMANDS

In order to move forward in terms of economic development, leadership is necessary to balance energy capacity with supply that incorporates generation as well as transmission.

Energy Usage

Peak summer electric usage in greater Oshkosh

- Increases in the cost of natural gas, electricity, and transportation fuels have a significant impact on industry, business, non-profits, and family budgets.
- Approximately 1,100 or (4 percent) of households, had overdue utility bills in the spring of 2001, and therefore, were at risk for disconnection of their utility service due to non-payment.
- In the 2000-01 heating season, cold weather and high demand for natural gas caused home heating costs to nearly double, compared to the prior year.
- In 2000-01, 2,578 households or 3.35% of the households in Winnebago County qualified for assistance under the energy assistance program.



Why Are We Concerned?

Adequate energy supplies at affordable costs are crucial to the economic vitality and quality of life for all residents.

Energy Usage and Supply

Energy is a basic human need in a climate where the average daily temperature drops to as low as 11 degrees in January. Likewise, energy drives the wheels of industry and powers an economy that is increasingly dependent on new technology to function.

After stable and even falling energy prices from the mid-1980's through the late 1990's, consumer rates for both electric and natural gas began to rise at the end of the 90's.

WPS researches emerging technologies that have the potential to provide energy in an environmentally friendly manner. Solar Power and Naturewise are two such programs offered by WPS.

SolarWise for Schools is a solar energy and education program offered within the WPSC territory. The goal of this program is to install solar electric systems on high schools and educate students about solar power. Over 900 customers have agreed to voluntarily contribute to this program. Oshkosh West and Lourdes High School have active 2,000 watt systems on their buildings. Oshkosh North and

Oshkosh Christian Schools have applied for the SolarWise for Schools program. They are being "evaluated for Implementation", but haven't been scheduled for implementation.

Naturewise is a new program being offered to WPSC customers. It allows the customer to choose where their electricity comes from. It is a blend of local renewable energy from wind and biomass (energy from farms and landfills). Over 200 customers have signed up for this innovative program.

Projections by Wisconsin's utilities and energy regulators indicate that the state will need to add new electrical sources over the next few years to keep up with an increasing demand. Additional electrical generation facilities and major transmission line are being proposed, however this is a controversial subject, especially for environmentally concerned groups and local property owners.

Electric energy comes from:

Winnebago County Landfill: 3,000 KW and all other generation is imported to WPSC by transmission lines: voltage levels 138KV, 345 KV
Peak demand for 2001: 200,000 KW

Natural gas comes from:

Pipeline source: ANR Pipeline Co. *Peak demand for 2001: 2,000 Dekatherms*

Source: Wisconsin Public Service Corporation