

Renewables go from boom to bust in the wind capital of Canada

Pincher Creek, Alberta, moving away from 'love affair' with wind turbines

[Matthew Scace](#) · The Canadian Press · Posted: Sep 28, 2025

In Pincher Creek, Alberta, wind is king, delivering power for generations, so much so the city made a windmill part of its corporate logo.

Not anymore. District Reeve Rick Lemire said the windmill image, which sits alongside other Alberta icons on the logo will soon be removed. „It's not us anymore,“ Lemire said in an interview.

There are few places where the wind blows as hard and as often as it does in Pincher Creek, where clusters of windmills tower over farmland, with mountains in the distance.

But in a few short years, new rules and changing attitudes have delivered a sudden turn away from wind projects. [...] Regulations forbid renewable energy developments within a 35-kilometre buffer zone from the Rocky Mountains, which applies to Pincher Creek in order to preserve jaw-dropping Prairie views. [...] The district has more than 255 turbines producing nearly 511 megawatts of energy, says a third-party report commissioned last year by the town and district. The issue is also about money. Lemire said stopping renewable development means losing revenue if companies can't repower their wind farms once existing ones reach the end of their life.

About 30% of the district's budget relies on revenues from renewable electricity generation, says analysis by the Pembina Institute, and landowners also collect a percentage of revenue generated by each turbine. [...]

But it is said if the aging turbines are allowed to be replaced by fewer yet more efficient models, everyone wins. [...] While residents aren't keen on new turbines, they're on board with an improved status quo. „The people that live around that Castle River wind farm with 60 turbines, when they hear that six or seven turbines can replace that, they get excited,“ he said.

Regulations 'popped a bubble'

Oliver, a resident of Pincher Creek for over 30 years, said he finds it remarkable how quickly times have changed in a few years. „It just shows you the power of government policy to change the direction of society.“

Will Noel, a senior analyst at the Pembina Institute, said what the industry needs is certainty. [...] He said modernization and consolidation can work. „This is a great middle ground,“ Noel said. „We'll get rid of 40 turbines and put up 10 new ones — that's a quarter of the turbines you have to look at, and you're getting the same kind of power.“ [...]

Name:

KA Text summary



Vocabulary

to apply = hier: auf etwas zutreffend
to be commissioned = in Auftrag gegeben
to preserve = bewahren
revenue = Einnahmen
certainty = Gewissheit
consolidation = hier: Stabilität

- ① Summarize how government regulations have influenced wind energy development in Pincher Creek.