

Thursday: August 20th 2009

## Urban Turbines

POSTED BY: JULIE SABATIER



Rooftop wind turbines in London.

### LATEST COMMENTS

- [Thanks for having me on the show earlier today... One ...](#) - chriscrowley
- [If you want something that pays for itself in 5 ...](#) - justinerickson
- [kalle1974, I wasn't replying to your comment specifically. Sorry ...](#) - scottmil

Portlanders may have noticed a new addition to the downtown skyline this week when four [wind turbines](#) were added to the roof of developer Gerding Edlen's new Twelve West Building on southwest 12th Avenue. These small-scale turbines (45 feet tall compared to the massive 400-foot turbines in the Columbia River Gorge) will only produce about one percent of the building's total energy usage. However, the development company also hopes their presence will help promote renewable energy and help Portland [stand out](#) in the field. Portland isn't the only city to try rooftop wind turbines. Boston, New York and Hampton, New Hampshire have all taken an interest in small scale wind power. Some green building experts have [raised concerns](#) about the economic and energy efficiency of urban turbines. [Zoning laws](#) would still have to change in Portland before people could install turbines on the roofs of their homes.

While the issues with integrating small-scale wind power into an urban landscape center mainly around questions of engineering and structural integrity, large-scale wind farms are still [struggling](#) with integrating their turbines with wildlife. And while urban and rural wind may still be an intermittent power source, the Bonneville Power Administration reported wind power generation was at an all time high earlier this month.

Have you considered putting a wind turbine on your home or business? What factors did you weigh in making your decision? Do you live near a rural wind farm? How has that impacted your life?

**UPDATE:** Sadly, we are going to start today's show with a look at [the legacy of Bob Gerding](#), the co-founder of Gerding Edlen Development, who died on Tuesday. Feel free to post comments here about his impact on Portland — or on green building more broadly — in addition to your thoughts on urban turbines.

## GUESTS:

- **Damin Tarlow:** Development manager for [Gerdling Edlen Development](#)
- **Alex Wilson:** Founder and executive editor of [Building Green](#)
- **Andy Kruse:** Senior VP of Business Development and Cofounder of [Southwest Wind Power](#)
- **Brent Fenty:** Executive Director of [Oregon Natural Desert Association](#)
- **Chris Crowley:** President of [Columbia Energy Partners](#)

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