



### Ritger-Preder Wind Turbine

- 254 N. Hwy I Random Lake, WI 53075
- Off-Site Investor / Owner: Ed Ritger  
d/b/a Ritger Law Office
- Site Owner: Jeff & Kathy Preder  
d/b/a Jeff-Leen Farms
- Farm Size: 140 acres
- Farm specializes in Piedmontese  
cattle and pastured chickens
- Website: <http://jeffleenfarm.com/>



N544 Silver Creek Cascade Road  
Random Lake, WI 53075  
920.994.9433  
[rfaller@kettleviewre.com](mailto:rfaller@kettleviewre.com)  
<http://www.kettleviewre.com/KVRE/Site/Home.html>



29 Pitman Road  
Barre, VT 05641  
877.906.6784  
<http://www.northernpower.com/>

### Prepared by:



222 S Hamilton St. Madison, WI 53703  
<http://www.renewwisconsin.org/>

## *Sustainable family farm operation powered by renewable wind energy*

The rising cost of oil and fertilizers, coupled with growing concerns over the use of pesticides and hormones, have spurred the growth of sustainable farming operations across the United States. Jeff and Kathy Preder—owners and operators of the Jeff-Leen Farm in Random Lake, Wisconsin—became part of that movement in the late 1990’s, when they set out “to produce the healthiest food products possible, in a sustainable manner, without the use of growth hormones, antibiotics, or steroids.” The Preders achieved this goal by ending their conventional dairy operation in favor of livestock raising, specializing in grass-fed Piedmontese cattle, pastured chickens, and organic eggs. In recent years, the Preders have introduced grass and natural grains into their livestock operations as well as reduced transportation mileage from the farm to the consumer via local farmer’s markets and area restaurants. They are also working towards being certified as organic.

But the Preder’s vision of a sustainable farming operation included more than just low-input food production. With the help of Random Lake attorney and renewable energy champion Ed Ritger, the Preders are now powering their farm with clean, renewable wind energy. In August 2011, a 100 kW turbine manufactured by Northern Power Systems of Vermont, was installed on a small hill behind the Preder farmhouse. The project is a joint venture between the Preder and Ritger families, who have lived next door to one another for many years. Ed Ritger financed the \$500,000 turbine, with nearly half the cost covered by grants received from the federal government and Wisconsin Focus on Energy.



### **Wind Turbine Specifications**

- Turbine Model: Northern Power 100
- Capacity: 100 kW
- Hub height: 121 feet
- Average output: 160,000 kWh/yr
- Utility: We Energies
- Year of installation: 2011
- Manufacturer: Northern Power Systems
- Installer: Kettle View Renewable Energy
- Incentives: \$250,000 in grants from Focus on Energy and federal agencies

### **Further Information:**

#### **Sheboygan Press Online**

“Wind turbine to produce electricity for Random Lake farm”

Bob Petrie. August 26, 2011

<http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/sheboyganpress/access/2451829501.html?FMT=ABS&date=Aug+26%2C+2011>

#### **The Sounder, Random Lake, WI**

“Wind Turbine Dedication Planned”  
September 22, 2011.

“Ceremony Dedicates New Wind Turbine”  
October 6, 2011.

[http://www.thesounder.com/#Highlights\\_News](http://www.thesounder.com/#Highlights_News)

Ritger believes the turbine will pay for itself over the next 10 to 15 years, but more importantly, it will generate clean electricity long after the initial investment is paid back. “It’s an investment, but it’s also an opportunity to send a message that we need to use more renewable energy,” said Ritger, age 64. “That’s a message I’ve been preaching for a long time, so my wife and I are putting some dollars behind it.”

About a decade ago, Ritger’s law firm building in Random Lake was equipped with photovoltaic panels to power the building and sell excess electricity back to the local utility. But Ritger’s enthusiasm for renewable energy did not stop there. Instead, it led him to envision the installation of a wind turbine out in the country, and the Preders were receptive to the idea. “You can’t put a wind turbine in a valley, you put it on the best hill that you’ve got,” Ritger said. So that’s how this joint venture was put together; the Preders provided the site and the Ritgers provided the capital. The Preders, whose energy bills total nearly \$400 a month, worked with Kettle View Renewable Energy, a Random Lake contractor, to install the wind turbine. The company, which has been in business since 2006, has installed turbines for other nearby clients, including Cascade Wastewater Treatment Plant and Random Lake High School. The 37 meter-tall turbine should on average produce 160,000 kWh of energy per year, which is about 120,000 kWh more than the Preders typically consume annually. The excess electricity, which is sold to We Energies through a net energy billing arrangement, will be sufficient to power 12 to 15 area residences. In 2012, the retail rate credited to the turbine’s output is approximately 12 cents/kWh.

