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### **Obama budget includes \$28 million for Pantex wind farm**

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President Obama's proposed \$9.9 billion Energy Department budget includes \$28 million for a Pantex wind farm project with Texas Tech University that would be designed to meet the nuclear weapons plant's energy needs, budget documents released today show.

The Pantex Renewable Energy Project would be built on land in the vicinity of Pantex and could generate surplus electrical power that could be sold to utilities, according to budget documents.

The project's overall scope would be dependent upon available funding, but plans call for enough wind turbines to generate up to 75 megawatts of electrical generating capacity. Initial funding in the budget would only support construction of a 10 megawatt to 15 megawatt system.

"The project shall ...work with Texas Tech University to allow for renewable energy research to be conducted at, around and in the vicinity of the Pantex Plant," a budget document summary states.

Preliminary plans call for the wind farm to be built by 2012.

"At a minimum, the installed capacity will be sufficient to meet or exceed Pantex Plant energy demands," a project description said.

U.S. Rep. Mac Thornberry said Thursday he hasn't seen all the budget details about the project, but said it should help spur renewal energy growth and research in the Panhandle. Thornberry said he does not have numbers on projected jobs the project would create in construction and operations.

The Texas congressional delegation, he said, wrote a letter urging Energy Secretary Steven Chu to fund the project.

"The idea is that Pantex could get some of its energy needs met by this wind farm and Tech would use it as a research facility on wind energy, which would be good for Tech and also good for our area in developing wind energy, Tech and Pantex are very enthusiastic about the idea, so that looks like a good thing for everybody."

By comparison the Wildorado Wind Ranch, west of Amarillo, is capable of producing 161 megawatts.



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