

Hydro plant helps KU customers go green

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A small hydroelectric plant on the Kentucky River is now doing its part to help customers of Kentucky Utilities and Louisville Gas and Electric Co. use renewable energy.

Lock 7 Hydro Partners, which owns the hydro plant on the Kentucky River in Mercer County, announced Friday that it will be the primary supplier of renewable energy credits for the "Green Energy" program offered by KU and LG&E.

The Mother Ann Lee Hydroelectric Station on the Kentucky River at Lock and Dam 7 will generate the credits. The station, which produces electricity from the flow of water through turbine-generators, is near Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill and is named in honor of the founder of the Shakers.

Under the agreement announced Friday, 3Degrees of San Francisco has agreed to buy all of the credits generated by the hydro station and sell them to the "Green Energy" program offered by E.On U.S., the parent company of KU and LG&E.

When LG&E or KU produce electricity at coal-burning plants, they produce energy and emissions, said David Brown Kinloch, president of Hydro 7 Partners.

Each kilowatt hour of electricity generated at the hydro station "is about a pound of coal that never gets burned," Kinloch said.

LG&E and KU customers can join the Green Energy program for as little as \$5 a month. For each \$5, the utilities will buy 300 kilowatt hours of renewable-energy credits from Lock 7 Hydro partners, allowing customers to offset the carbon impact of their electricity use.

"If you are concerned about global-climate change and that most of the electricity you use in your house is coming from coal — and you want to not be contributing to that — the way you can do that is buy into this program," Kinloch said.

The revenue will primarily be used to increase the power-generating capacity of the Mother Ann Lee plant.

The plant was built in 1928 and hadn't produced any electricity since 1999. Lock 7 Hydro Partners bought the retired plant from KU in December 2005 and began renovation in March 2006.

After extensive rehabilitation, one of the plant's three hydroelectric generators began producing power again on March 9. A second generator began operating in October.

The third generating unit is expected to be running in late 2008.

Once the plant is completely renovated — which depends on contributions from the Green Energy program — it could eliminate 16 million pounds of carbon dioxide emissions each year.

The plant is the first and only one in Kentucky certified as "low-impact," meaning that it has a low impact on the environment and human activities.

"There are only 28 in the nation to be certified, and we were the 24th in the nation," Kinloch said.

Lock 7 Hydro Partners is a 50-50 partnership between Shaker Landing Hydro Associates of Louisville and Salt River Electric, a member-owned electric cooperative based in Bardstown.

To enroll in the Green Energy program, go to www.eon-us.com.

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FROM: <http://www.kentucky.com/181/story/259002.html>



Janet Worne/Lexington Herald-Leader

Tom Moore, left, of Kentucky Utilities and David Hamilton of the Kentucky River Authority, walked across a bridge to a hydroelectric plant on the Kentucky River in Mercer County. The station, which produces electricity from the flow of water through turbine-generator, will be the primary supplier of renewable energy credits for the "Green Energy" program offered by KU and Louisville Gas & Electric.