

The two Oak Creek Expansion units at the north end of the site went into service in 2010 and 2011, respectively. They are among the cleanest and most efficient coal-fueled power plants in the U.S. and are part of the company's \$7.8 billion investment in necessary infrastructure upgrades.



LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP DELIVERS MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RESULTS



EC Energy Group, parent company of Wispark LLC, and the City of Oak Creek have enjoyed a positive relationship for decades. In fact, WEC Energy Group subsidiary Wisconsin Electric Power Co. (now doing business as We Energies) has been part of the community since the utility's first generating units were built at the Oak Creek site in the 1950s.

The Oak Creek generating site occupies 1,100 acres of land on the shore of Lake Michigan, on the southeastern corner of Oak Creek. The site straddles the Milwaukee/Racine County line. Wisconsin Electric placed its first 120-megawatt generating unit in service at Oak Creek Power Plant in 1953. Seven more units were completed through 1968. The first four generating units built at the site were retired in the 1980s. Four units continue to operate at the original site; two new units were added in 2010 and 2011, respectively. All of the generating units are coal-fueled and feature modern environmental controls.

By the late 1990s, demand for electricity had been growing steadily across the country and especially in the Midwest. The increased demand, plus some aging generating units, compelled Wisconsin Electric and its parent company to plan for future growth.

Subsequently, the company's Power the Future initiative was unveiled. The plan called for the construction of new generating

units and the retirement of older, less-efficient units. The plan also included environmental upgrades at its existing units, as well as the addition of renewable energy to its operating portfolio.

From 2000 to 2003, company officials worked with Oak Creek elected officials and staff to reach a mutually beneficial agreement for the addition of two new generating units at the Oak Creek site. The units adopted the latest technology for efficiency and environmentally responsible operation.

The agreement inked by the City of Oak Creek and WEC Energy Group called for the company to invest \$20 million in the City. This \$20 million would come from WEC shareholders, not We Energies customers.

City officials envisioned a bright future for Oak Creek. They were particularly impressed with Wispark's LakeView Corporate Park, in Pleasant Prairie, Wis. Oak Creek wanted to emulate the LakeView model to bring jobs and tax dollars to the City. Officials were poised to grow beyond its bedroom community status to a thriving, growing City with a unique identity.

Wispark President Jerry Franke worked closely with City leaders, including now retired City Attorney Larry Haskin, to plan for Oak Creek's future. A true partnership was forming. An agreement was reached between the City and the company before Wisconsin Electric filed its request for a conditional use permit with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, one of the many steps involved in building the new generating units.

Left: A \$750 million project to add advanced air quality control systems (AQCS) significantly upgraded existing environmental controls on the older units at the Oak Creek site.



Looking north to south, We Energies operates six generating units at the 1,100-acre Oak Creek site.

The City and Wispark agreed on a three-point master plan for Oak Creek’s future.

The plan included:

- 1.** Develop land at the southwest corner of Oakwood and Howell Avenues for a business park. The land initially was owned by the Metropolitan Milwaukee Sewerage District (MMSD). Wispark purchased the land and subsequently developed OakView Business Park. Stella & Chewy’s, a manufacturer and distributor of high-quality pet food, is the first tenant to locate at OakView. A second leasee is Ad-Tech Medical. That building is under construction. Ad Tech manufactures surgical medical devices.
- 2.** Develop Oak Creek’s lakefront between the MMSD plant on the north and the Oak Creek power plant site on the south. Once a former industrial property, the blighted area will be redeveloped as a park with walking trails providing outstanding views of Lake Michigan. Work on this site has not yet started.
- 3.** The third – and without a doubt – most visible point in the plan is the mixed-use development at the corners of South Howell and West Drexel Avenues called Drexel Town Square, located on the former site of the Delphi plant. Wispark and its development partners have transformed the 85-acre site into a place to live, dine, shop and conduct business. The site includes the City of Oak Creek’s new Main Street, with its Civic Center – City Hall and Public Library – as well as a variety of retailers, high-end apartments, medical center and hotel (visit DrexelTownSquare.com).

“Our joint efforts led to the creation of a mutually beneficial public/private partnership to eliminate blight, create tax base and generate thousands of jobs,” says Franke of Drexel Town Square’s success.

“All three of the projects undertaken as a result of the PTF commitment were complex and very expensive,” Franke explains. “Without the partnership with the City, we would not have been able to accomplish this plan,” he says.

Another example of the partnership that has been mutually beneficial is the expansion of the high school adjacent to its current location. Previously, the School District had planned to build a more costly, separate building on a parcel distant from the school’s current spot. The change in plans was achieved through a three-way land swap between the Oak Creek-Franklin Joint School District, City of Oak Creek and Wispark.

“Throughout the years, we’ve appreciated the opportunity to work with the City of Oak Creek to achieve mutually beneficial goals and we look forward to a long and prosperous future as Oak Creek continues to grow,” concludes Franke.

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clentz@amfam.com