

## Hydroelectric Plant A Job Creator In Western KY

HAWESVILLE, Ky. (AP) —A hydroelectric plant being built along the Ohio River in western Kentucky will eventually provide power for communities in a half-dozen states.

The \$416 million project on the Cannelton Locks and Dam will employ 200 to 400 construction workers, the Messenger-Inquirer in Owensboro reports.

The plant being built in Hancock County by American Municipal Power is expected to begin commercial operations in 2013 and will employ nine to 12 full-time operators.

The newspaper reports that power from the 84-megawatt hydroelectric plant will eventually be sold to municipal electric systems in 79 communities in Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Virginia and West Virginia.

"What a gift from God you have, the Ohio River," U.S. Rep. Brett Guthrie said at a groundbreaking ceremony last week that also featured Gov. Steve Beshear and Marc Gerken, president and CEO of American Municipal Power.

AMP is also working on hydroelectric projects on the Ohio River for the Smithland Locks and Dam in Livingston County, Meldahl Dam in Bracken County, the Willow Island Locks and Dam near Waverly, W.Va., and the Robert C. Byrd Dam near Gallipolis Ferry, W.Va. Those projects are in various development stages.

Linda Church Ciocci, executive director of the National Hydropower Association, said hydroelectric facilities create clean, renewable energy.

Though the plants are expensive to build, more groups have shown an interest in exploring hydroelectric facilities as an alternative energy source, Ciocci said.

AMP's first hydroelectric plant opened 10 years ago in Belleville, W.Va.

"The plant has been very successful and beneficial to the 42 communities in the project," Gerken said.

Hydroelectric facilities are just one of the alternative energy projects AMP is working on. AMP is exploring additional wind and solar generation resources and a significant expansion in energy efficiency efforts, the company said.

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