

# ALLIANT'S NEW PLANT IS 84 PERCENT COMPLETE

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Photo provided This aerial view taken on April 17 shows the progress made at Alliant's West Riverside Energy Center. Construction of the power plant is estimated to be at 84 percent.

TOWN OF BELOIT - Construction on Alliant Energy's West Riverside Energy Center is now estimated to be about 84 percent complete.

The center will be a 730-megawatt, natural gas-fueled generating station in the Town of Beloit, powering more than 550,000 homes and businesses.

Project manager Bob Newell said the \$700 million facility is expected to be ready for commercial operations during the fourth quarter of this year. It's estimated to be about \$15-20 million under budget.

Newell said the building is now mostly enclosed with a few small open areas that'll be sealed in the near future.

Crews are now working on oil flushes for the combustion and steam turbines.

He said crews also are testing major electrical systems. Once that is complete Alliant will be able to run air compressors, some water pumps and water treatment equipment. Newell said the substation is across the street on the west side of South Walters Road is now operational.

As of January, most of the 25 full-time positions to staff the West Riverside Energy Center have been filled. Those staff members are currently undergoing intense training until at least June.

Currently the construction crew is down to about 500 members.

"Even though our numbers are down, we just surpassed the 2 million craft hours mark last week," Newell said.

He said this includes welders, boiler makers and electricians.

Those who have lived in the area for a long time likely will remember the candy cane-striped stacks of Alliant Energy's Rock River Generating Station building in the township. The stacks were removed in October of 2016 as a part of the facility's demolition process after having been a staple of the Stateline Area since the mid-1950s. Hearing people's interest in bringing the candy cane stacks back, the stacks are being painted red and white.

Newell said both of the stacks have been partially painted and will be fully covered soon.

Once the energy center has been built, Newell said a 4 to 5-megawatt solar garden will be built adjacent to the natural gas facility during 2020. Newell said Alliant likely will be seeking bids for that project by the end of the month and will start construction about a year from now.

After announcing its goat program to clean up noxious plants at the power plant site last year, Newell said the goats will be back next month to eat the noxious weeds so crews can plant grass and trees near the Rock River.

Currently on the Rock River campus sits the Riverside Energy Center, a 675-megawatt natural gas-fueled generation facility Alliant purchased in 2012. Also on the campus is the 2.3-megawatt Rock River Solar Facility, which went into service in 2016.