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New efforts made to utilise geothermal for heating in Vienna, Austria



Votive church tower, Vienna, Austria (source: flickr/ Herr P., creative commons)



Austria's capital Vienna is restarting efforts on potential large scale geothermal heating, following the example of its German partner, the city of Munich and its city utility.

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The energy utility of Austria's capital Vienna is planning new efforts to explore the opportunities utilising geothermal energy for heating, looking at the example of Munich in Germany.

The research project "GeoTief" is coordinated and financed by Wien Energie. Starting in February, the Donaustadt part of the city will start with 2D seismic measurements. For the coming winter of 2017/2018, a 3D seismic campaign is planned to provide more details. The shift to the coming winter is subject to approval, as seismic measurements are only allowed during winter months.

Together with the consortium partner OMV, Wien Energie plans to combine the new data with already existing legacy data in order to draw conclusions about the possible commercial exploitation of geothermal energy. These earlier measurements and knowledge of the geological formations indicate that there might be hot water reserves in the east of the city.

The project, will be financed with EUR 5 million (\$5.3 million) from Wien Energie's own capital and is expected to run until 2020. The company plans to invest a total of EUR460 million (\$490 million) over the next five months in renewable energy solutions. In addition to the own resources, a 50% partial financing from Austria's National Climate and Energy Fund is added.

The city utility of Munich (SWM) supports the project with its own experiences from last year's seismic campaign in Munich, which serves as a model for "GeoTief". For example, project manager Dr. Christian Hecht is a member of the project advisory board "GeoTief Wien". Other project partners are the Geological Survey, Geo5, Heinemann Oil (HOL), Montanuniversität Leoben, OMV, RAG, University of Salzburg, University of Vienna and the Central Institute for Meteorology and Geodynamics (ZAMG).

Wien Energie already drilled a 4,000 meter deep well in 2012 to supply the city center of Aspern, but abandoned it after it turned up dry.

This article was published first on the website of our partner publication TiefeGeothermie, the leading news website for the geothermal sector in Germany.

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