

Turbine up at MMA

School's president predicts electricity cost savings

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BUZZARDS BAY – Massachusetts Maritime Academy is now officially home to the first state-owned turbine.

It took two cranes and more than a dozen workers to erect the 248-foot, 660-kilowatt turbine yesterday. The windmill should be fully operational next week.

The turbine, which cost \$1.4 million, is driven by three blades and should generate more than 25 percent of the school's electricity.



Go online for video on the erection of the MMA wind tower. www.capecodonline.com

Adm. Richard Gurnon, president of MMA, estimated the turbine will save the state school \$300,000 annually over its 20-year lifespan. The school's electric bill averages about \$900,000 a year.

"For the MMA, this turbine is a money machine," Gurnon said. "Every time

the wind blows, we want to take that money and introduce new green initiatives."

Charlie Healey, general superintendent for Keystone Construction, began the final steps to complete the turbine's construction yesterday morning. Two cranes, one 360 tons and another 60 tons, were used to stack two towers, making a 170-foot vertical stand. Next,



Spectators gather at the MMA campus in Buzzards Bay to watch the construction of the state-owned, 248-foot wind turbine, expected to save the school \$300,000 annually.

the generator portion of the turbine was installed on top of the tower. Finally, the three-blade propeller was attached yesterday afternoon.

The turbine stands near the center of the 52-acre campus, roughly 100 feet north of the school's wastewater-treatment plant.

Although Hull is home to the state's first municipally owned turbine, the turbine at MMA is the first one owned by the state.

In addition to saving taxpayer money, Gurnon said engineering cadets – who account for 53 percent of the entire student body – will have a hands-on opportunity to work directly with a renewable energy source.

He hopes the turbine is only the beginning. The school is investigating other energy initiatives such as solar power, geothermal energy, microturbines and B-100 fuel, which is a 100 percent renewable oil extracted from soybeans.

Monument Beach resident Blaine Thurber watched the turbine go up yesterday. He said he is excited for the future of alternative energy sources.

"I think this is a very good idea with the way oil and energy prices are going," Thurber said. "I really think that this is the future because it is a clean and excellent alternative."

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STEVE HEASLIP photos/Cape Cod Times

Workers wait inside the turbine as the blades are moved into position at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy campus.