

Grants could lift local wind projects

HYANNIS, MASS.: More than \$170,000 in grant money is coming to the Cape and Islands to help get some wind projects off the ground.

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Five organizations around Cape Cod and Martha's Vineyard -- Cape Cod Academy in Osterville, the Centerville-Osterville-Marstons Mills Water District, Falmouth Academy, Allen Farm and the Up-Island Regional School District, both on Martha's Vineyard -- will share about \$178,000 in state funds to help determine the feasibility of building wind turbines on their respective campuses, officials from the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative announced yesterday.

Each of the organizations, which will receive between \$20,000 and \$66,000, has been working with local planners to develop the idea. Each applied to the collaborative, the state's development agency for renewable energy projects. And now, with the money in hand, they'll be able to move forward to determine if the proposed sites are suited to support a turbine.

"My feet haven't touched the ground since I heard," said Mitchell Posin, co-owner of Allen Farm, who is looking to build a pair of turbines on the Chilmark farm land.

"This is great news," said Craig Crocker, COMM water superintendent. "There's no way we could ever afford this ourselves."

The proposed turbines, which range in size from 250 kilowatts at Cape Cod Academy to 900 kilowatts at Allen Farm, could each serve to lower energy costs while protecting the environment, representatives from three of the five organizations said. Administrators from Falmouth and Cape Cod academies could not be reached for comment.

State officials selected these specific projects, along with Colony Place developers in Plymouth, because of their location and the status of their applications, said Philip Giodece, commissioner state Department of Energy Resources.

If the studies support the projects as feasible, more money will likely be available for design and construction, Giodece said. Neither project designs nor funding plans have yet been considered.

"It's no secret that the Cape and Islands have some of the best wind resources in the state," Giodece said. "We want to make sure these (projects) can move forward."