



INTERVIEWING

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STUNNED

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Today's weather

HIGH: 28
LOW: 19
Sunrise 7:53
Sunset 5:15

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THURSDAY, January 7, 2010

50¢

WIND POWER TO THE PEOPLE



AUDREY MCCRONE / GAZETTE

Three D Metals, 5462 Innovation Drive, Liverpool Township, sees its FirstEnergy electric meter run backward at night when the business is closed, said David D. Dickens Jr., president of the metals servicing company.

Company sees electric meter 'run backward' after installing county's first commercial wind turbine

Audrey McCrone
The Gazette

LIVERPOOL TWP — Three D Metals Corp. is using the wind to lower its electric bill.

Last month, a 100-kilowatt wind turbine began spinning at Three D Metals, the first commercial turbine in Medina County, the company said.

There were "so many government incentive programs out there" that the out-of-pocket cost of it is "far less than its \$500,000 price tag," company President David D. Dickens Jr. said.

The wind turbine will cover 20 to 25 percent of energy consumption and will lower the company's FirstEnergy electric bill by that much, he said.

"The technology was so new that everyone was going through this for the first time. Our whole approach on this was foreseeing energy prices increasing on the horizon, and we had to find ways to control our cost to continue to be competitive in a global economy."

David D. Dickens Jr.,
president of Three D Metals

Being allowed to erect the wind turbine, however, took allaying the concerns of residents and required obtaining a zoning variance.

Initially, everyone was speaking up about the wind turbine,

Dickens said, and they probably got "misinformation" about turbines from the Internet.

Last June, more than 30 residents attended a public zoning hearing to voice their concerns about the wind turbine, said

Theresa Scherry, the township's zoning department secretary.

Scherry said there were a lot of "misconceptions," such as potential health problems the turbine might cause, the possibility of noise pollution, and a fear of it falling over or catching on fire. None of the township's fire truck ladders could reach the top, she said.

The turbine stands 36 feet high and the company needed a zoning variance to install it, Scherry said.

The variance was 10 feet — six feet higher than the zoning code allows, township trustee Barbara Mack said.

"The tower doesn't exceed the

See WIND, A3

height restriction, just the blades do," Scherry said.

Dickens said members of the township Fire Department were at Three D Metals, 5462 Innovation Drive, for the installation through the final inspection, and he is grateful for that.

As for residents' concerns,

the idea of it catching on fire was a moot point to Kristopher McCrone, president of Renivus LLC in Cleveland, which marketed the project to Three D Metals. Renivus also performed a feasibility study and contracted SUREnergy of Sandusky to install the turbine.

The documented cases of fires in wind turbines "are 0.01 of 1 percent," McCrone said.

There isn't a gear box in the

particular model installed at Three D Metals — Northwind 100 — he said.

"It's a direct-drive system" powered by magnets and only requires about a quart of grease, versus "six to eight quarts of oil" it would take to run a gear box, he said.

Concerning noise pollution, "not one turbine has exceeded 60 decibels," McCrone said. "That's less noisy than the

library.

Three D Metals' electric meter runs backward at night when the building is closed, Dickens said.

"The technology was so new that everyone was going through this for the first time," he said. "Our whole approach on this was foreseeing energy prices increasing on the horizon, and we had to find ways to control our cost to continue to

be competitive in a global economy."

Three D, a metal services company, experienced a 20 percent reduction in its workforce over the past year, Dickens said.

"It's a strong team we want to keep together" and "we keep looking for ways reduce our costs," he said. "This is one way."

With the state looking posi-

tively at alternative energy use, "we're just going to see more of it," Mack said.

She said she sees Three D Metals' wind turbine as a test case for the county and wouldn't be surprised if more businesses erect them on their properties.

She said she "applauds Three D Metals for using alternative energy to supplement its electrical needs."



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