



A Program of the Maine Public Utilities Commission

Press Release

Efficiency Maine and University Of Maine Orono Team Up To Provide Equipment and expertise For Wind Power Research

April 30, 2008

ORONO, Maine – With rising Energy costs putting high pressure on Maine business, school and nonprofit budgets, the Maine Public Utilities Commission's Efficiency Maine Program has teamed up with University of Maine Orono to help these organizations explore wind power as an alternative energy source.

To a background of flying kites and music provided by members of the University Orchestra's wood wind section, MPUC Commissioner Sharon Reishus today launched an assistance program which will loan qualifying organizations the necessary equipment and expertise to determine wind energy potential at their sites.

Commissioner Reishus said Efficiency Maine had secured two advanced wind-measuring devices, called anemometers, which qualifying organizations can apply to use.

"Maine enjoys enormous potential for the development of wind energy, which will save us money over the long haul without producing any greenhouse gases. Big projects like Mars Hill are getting a lot of attention these days, but many Maine organizations want to get smaller projects up and running and this program can help them figure out the possibilities," she said.

Commissioner Reishus said the Wind Turbine Site Survey Program which will be administered through Efficiency Maine, was developed in response to the many requests received from Maine citizens who want to use wind to create energy, but who aren't sure whether their site is suitable to warrant an investment in a wind turbine. The U S Department of Energy assisted by providing \$50,000 in grants.

The anemometer equipment remains at sites for up to 12 months with staff and students from the University of Maine Orono's School of Engineering Technology erecting the equipment and collecting data, and writing reports to provide the client with information regarding the viability of wind at the site. That information will also be made public via the Efficiency Maine website. The landowners are responsible for the equipment while it is installed at their site as well as for permitting and insurance requirements.

Efficiency Maine has teamed up with the University of Maine on a variety of energy related projects – including a wind turbine at the Presque Isle campus.

More information on the Wind Turbine Site Survey Program can be obtained from Shirley Bartlett at Efficiency Maine on 287-3318 or Shirley.bartlett@maine.gov.

The Maine Public Utilities Commission is committed to ensuring that consumers have access to safe and reliable service for public utilities and that the rates for these utilities are just and reasonable. MPUC programs include Maine Enhanced 911 Service, Dig Safe, and Efficiency Maine.

To arrange an interview with Chairman Reishus, Commissioner Vendean Vafiades or Commissioner Jack Cashman, please contact Fred Bever at 207.287.6141 or by e-mail at fred.bever@maine.gov. The Commission's website, www.maine.gov/mpuc may be accessed through the Maine School and Library Network at all public libraries in Maine.