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ONTARIO POWER GENERATION “THROWS THE SWITCH” ON NORTH AMERICA’S LARGEST WIND TURBINE

Pickering – Ontario Power Generation (OPG) “threw the switch” on North America’s largest wind turbine at a start up ceremony today. The 1.8 MW Vestas turbine, which is located at the Pickering Nuclear Generating Station, will produce enough power to supply about 600 homes for one year.

Graham Brown, OPG’s Chief Operating Officer said, “this is an exciting project. We expect renewable energy will play a growing role in Ontario once the market opens and customers can choose their suppliers.” Brown said the turbine is connected to the grid and will produce power intermittently over the next few days while final commissioning takes place.

“Wind power is a zero-emission source of energy and we are pleased to see it become part of the generation mix for this province,” said Elizabeth Witmer, Ontario Minister of the Environment. “New green technologies like wind turbines complement our government’s tough new air regulations.”

Jim Wilson, Minister of Energy, Science and Technology, said “Two of the key principles guiding Ontario’s transition to a competitive electricity market are protecting our environment and encouraging new sources of power. I congratulate OPG for increasing the amount of green energy available in the province.”

OPG’s Brown noted that renewable energy was not yet in a position to displace traditional forms of generation, such as nuclear power. “The wind doesn’t always blow, the sun doesn’t always shine. We expect this turbine will produce some power two days out of three, and should run flat out about 10 per cent of the time.”

The Pickering turbine is OPG’s second wind project. Since 1995, a 600 kW turbine has been producing power near the site of the Bruce nuclear station. OPG is also a partner in Huron Wind, a planned 10 MW wind farm on the shores of Lake Huron, which is expected to be in service in the summer of 2002.

The wind projects are part of OPG’s commitment to increase its renewable energy portfolio to 500 MW by 2005. OPG has about 138 MW of renewable energy – run of the river small hydroelectric, wind energy, solar and landfill gas projects - that is operated by its Evergreen Energy division.

At the opening ceremony, Pickering Mayor Wayne Arthurs said the project will certainly become a community landmark.

"Part of our City's vision statement says we're 'ready for the 21st century' and this is a perfect example of that. We're thrilled to see this project go up in our community," Arthurs said.

Jim Salmon, Past President of the Canadian Wind Energy Association, noted that wind power will play a major role in providing energy in the future. "We estimate that by the end of 2010, there will be 10,000 MW of wind power across the country and we congratulate OPG on their pioneering role in developing wind power in Ontario."

"Ontario Power Generation is an Ontario based company, whose principal business is the generation and sale of electricity to customers in Ontario and to interconnected markets. OPG's goal is to be a premier North American energy company, while operating in a safe, open and environmentally responsible manner. Our focus is on producing reliable electricity from our competitive generation assets; power trading; and commercial energy sales activities."