

THE BARRIE EXAMINER

SCHOOL GETTING LESSON IN NATURAL ENERGY

BY NICKI CRUICKSHANK, JANUARY 30, 2010

A Barrie high school will go partly off the grid by summer.

St. Joan of Arc Catholic High School will use a roof-mounted wind turbine to tap into natural energy and reduce its hydro use.

"(The turbines) will power up to four classrooms," said Diane Legg, spokeswoman for the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board. "That's a savings for us and it'll reduce our carbon footprint."

St. Joan of Arc is one of five Catholic schools within the board chosen to take part in the Ministry of Education's Green School Pilot program.

The other four are: St. Mary's Catholic School in Collingwood; Our Lady of Mercy Catholic School in Honey Harbour; St. Peter the Apostle Catholic School in Parry Sound; and St. Mary Catholic School in Huntsville.

The board will also oversee the installation of wind turbines at three schools within the Durham Catholic District School Board.

"This is a really neat project that's generating a lot of excitement from our schools," Legg said. "We're not sure exactly when ours (in Barrie) will be installed, but they'll all be ready by September."

Installation of the turbines is scheduled to begin this spring.

The project will test and showcase new and innovative green products and technologies.

The schools were selected because they are ideally situated for the wind turbines to catch the north-west prevailing winds from Georgian Bay.

"Our schools were also chosen because they are eco-schools," Legg said.

The board is working in partnership with Ontario-based company, **Cleanfield Energy Corporation**, to install the wind turbines.

The school board said the 3.5-kilowatt units will stand roughly eight metres off the roof.

"It has vertical blades and they are a much smaller unit," Legg said.

The cost for installing the wind turbines at all eight schools almost \$500,000.

The project will also support our local businesses, Legg said.

"The nice thing is the majority of the components for the turbines will be made locally," she said.

"That makes this project even more unique."

Simcoe-Muskoka put in a proposal last summer, and Glenn Clarke said the board had good reason for it.

"Our board has a strong focus on supporting green initiatives and that is why our plant Department submitted a proposal," said Clarke, the board's controller of plant.

"Whether it's reducing our energy consumption or teaching our students through the curriculum to become better ambassadors for our earth, we are always looking for ways to become more environmentally conscious."