

Wilmington

Gateway for

Wind Energy



Enron Wind Corp's imported wind turbine blades discharge at the Port of Wilmington prior to distribution to Pennsylvania, New York, and Texas.

This summer, Wilmington successfully met a new cargo challenge – the receipt and handling of giant wind turbine blades.

In recent years, wind turbines have become more and more popular as an alternative source of energy becoming a commercially viable non-polluting source of electricity, where the source of energy, wind, is free and abundant.

Wind turbines are plentiful in California, Texas, and the Western states and have recently begun to spread to the East Coast, including Pennsylvania and New York. Because of our strategic location at the heart of the East Coast, Wilmington was chosen as the port of entry and distribution center for the giant turbine blades which are shipped from Brazil.

The wind turbine blades shipped through the Port are called Enron T Z 1.5 MGW (MW) and have a total production capacity of 1.5 MW per hour. A steady wind speed of only as little as 9 miles per hour is enough to achieve this level of energy production. In fact, this supply of energy is sufficient for

22,000 homes and can support the electricity needs of medium size towns.

The wind turbine blades are manufactured in Brazil by Enron Wind Corporation of California and are shipped to Wilmington for distribution in the Eastern United States. From Wilmington, the wind turbines will be distributed to four locations, including Mill Run and Somerset, Pennsylvania; Fenner, New York; and the area of Sweetwater, Texas.

This year, the Port will handle 40 sets of wind turbines, each consisting of four blades. The blades are nearly 115 feet long, and weigh 17,000 pounds each (1.5 tons).

When the wind turbine blades arrive at the Port they are unloaded and placed in a secured storage site at the terminal, then go through a final quality inspection by Enron's engineering team from Brazil. The wind blades are very large and fragile and must be loaded with special equipment onto specialized long trucks, which were constructed for this project by American Transport Systems of Vineland, New Jersey.

When the cargo leaves the Port, in addition to two escort vehicles, each truck is escorted by the Delaware State Police to the Maryland border.

“We decided to use Wilmington Delaware because of three advantages: the Port's great location for distribution; the State of Delaware's welcoming, efficient and easy service in providing transportation permits for distribution routes; and the personal service we knew we would receive at the Port,” explained Stephen W. Donchez, president of American Transport Systems.

Donchez further explained how the turbine blades are very complex to maneuver, with flexibility in handling an important factor in choosing Wilmington as port of entry.

He also described how location was an important factor because the wind turbine blades cannot be transferred through sharp curves, tunnels or small bridges thus making Wilmington a perfect choice as a port for this special project cargo.