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News

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Dedication To Wind Power A Boost To Local Manufacturer

by Donna McCollum

CAB Incorporated in Nacogdoches makes flanges that connect wind towers as tall as 23 stories. The company is the world's leading supplier for the wind tower industry. And it's about to get bigger.

When president Mike Vanderbosch was told the state dedicated a major expansion of Buffalo Gap Wind Farm near Abilene it put a wind in his sail. He confirmed with a fabrication customer that CAB's flanges are used in wind towers for the site. Vanderbosch told his customer on the other end of the phone line, "So that ought to be a pretty good boost for you guys."

It's not like CAB isn't busy enough delivering flanges all over. Standing in front of a large U.S. map Vanderbosch pointed and said, "From Nacogdoches most of our flanges will go up to Dallas/Fort Worth or Shreveport where they're fabricated into towers there. And delivered to the projects in West Texas, but also Oklahoma, Iowa, Kansas, all the way up. We have another big customer in North Dakota. They fabricate the towers there. Another in Quebec, Canada and those towers once they're fabricated can be stood up anyplace from from Washington state to New York and Pennsylvania."

Just three years ago wind transmission development was at standstill. The towers sat idle for a lack of transmission lines. CAB lobbied to put it on fast track. Perhaps the politicians listened. Vanderbosch said, "Wind power has really taken off. This year wind power is number two as far as new energy production in the United States. More wind power plants were put up than coal this year. Ten thousand megawatts gives us good steady business going for the next 5,7, maybe 10 years and I think it ensures that Texas is going to be in the lead in wind power for the next several years for sure." This summer Texas surpassed California as the nation's leader in wind generation capacity.

In the Nacogdoches plant enough flanges for four to five towers a week are built, but CAB produces up to 140 a month through outsourcing in Korea, China and Europe. "We ship into the port of Baltimore. We ship into Los Angeles. We ship into Seattle. Global resourcing is necessary to meet a growing demand," explained Vanderbosch.

CAB is waiting on construction crews to begin a major plant expansion that will stretch from Rayburn Drive to University Drive. Tax abatements have been granted to help with the growth. Now that political leaders are supporting the transmission of wind power companies can begin concentrating on their own growth.

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