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## FloDesign preps Waltham HQ launch for new commercial turbine work

By [Kyle Alspach](#)

FloDesign Wind Turbine Corp. will open its new headquarters on Tuesday in Waltham, where the company plans to develop its first commercial product, a more powerful wind turbine that uses mature jet engine technology.

The company is moving most of its 28-person staff into the Waltham Watch Factory complex, which will serve as the company's primary research and development facility in addition to the headquarters, said Matthew Commons, company CFO. The company will occupy 10,500 square feet in the facility, Commons said.

FloDesign had been based in Wilbraham and will keep its aerodynamic research and development in the company's offices there.

The move comes through a [\\$3 million financing package](#) from the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, which requires the company to increase its staff to 50 by March 2011 and to at least 100 by 2013. The company also must keep its headquarters and primary R&D facility in Massachusetts for five years under the deal.

FloDesign's product, a "shrouded" wind turbine, would be the world's first turbine to integrate an aerospace technology known as a mixer ejector, Commons said. "This is a fundamentally different approach to what's been done before," he said.

The turbine promises to deliver three to four times the energy of a traditional turbine for the same size rotor, allowing the turbines to be located in places turbines haven't been able to go before, Commons said.

"They could be closer to populated areas, closer to system load," he said. "We think they're a good fit for the Northeast."

The turbines also promise to cost less, have fewer avian and bat issues and be easier to transport, Commons said. Another major plus is the promise of lower radar impact, which could allow turbines to be placed at airports, he said.

Indeed, Commons said one of the first customers to discuss siting one of the turbines is the Massachusetts Port Authority, which operates Logan Airport.

FloDesign has a small prototype in the field for testing now and is actively looking for demonstration sites for the turbines, he said. The company hopes to have a commercial product ready within a year or two, Commons said.

The company was founded in 2007 and has raised \$40.5 million in venture capital to date.

In January, the company announced it had received \$34.5 million in a Series B round from return backer Kleiner, Perkins, Caufield and Byers, as well as new investors Technology Partners, VantagePoint Venture Partners and a Goldman Sachs managed investment fund. The company had received a \$6 million Series A round in June 2008 from Kleiner, Commons said.

Last October, the company was awarded an \$8.3 million grant as part of the U.S. Department of Energy's Advanced Research Projects Agency - Energy (ARPA-E).

<http://www.masshightech.com/stories/2010/05/24/daily51-FloDesign-preps-Waltham-HQ-launch-for-new-commercial-turbine-work.html>