

## Bill Cundiff

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**From:** Robert Anders  
**Sent:** Saturday, August 27, 2011 5:54 PM  
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**Subject:** turbines

[Wind Watch: Blade gets splintered during ferocious storm](#)



August 27, 2011  
Ohio

## Blade gets splintered during ferocious storm

By MARK TODD, Star Beacon, [starbeacon.com](http://starbeacon.com) 26 August 2011

CONNEAUT — Lightning damaged one of the blades on the gigantic wind turbine on Conneaut's lakefront early Thursday morning, knocking the big generator out of commission, officials said.

Composite material that coats the wooden blades was splintered by the bolt. Pieces of the material were jarred loose and fell to the ground as the blades kept spinning, said City Manager Timothy Eggleston.

"The tip of the blade got blown off," he said. "(The blade) was still turning, and pieces were coming off."

Lightning struck the turbine shortly after midnight, pelting trucks parked below the machine with debris, according to various reports. Wastewater plant personnel successfully shut down the turbine a few hours later, safety personnel said.

An access road to the Pittsburgh and Conneaut Dock Co.'s limestone dock, next to the turbine, was closed to traffic temporarily as a safety precaution.

NexGen Energy of Boulder, Colo., owner of the turbine, has been contacted, Eggleston said. It's believed the blade will have to be replaced, officials said.

The turbine generates about 20 percent of the power used by the sewage treatment plant, officials have said. The loss of the electricity it provides will not affect the plant's operation, Eggleston said.

"Everything's fine," he said.

The 400-kilowatt turbine is the second of two erected by NexGen, which became operational in early 2010. The first, a larger 600-kilowatt machine, sits at Conneaut Middle School but has worked only sporadically because of hydraulic problems.

The lightning strike occurred during a violent storm that lashed parts of the county with heavy rain. Nearly 3 inches of rain fell within a three-hour span Thursday morning at a weather station monitored by Ron Coursen, National Weather Service observer. The downpour overwhelmed drainage systems, flooding some roads and intersections, officials said.

Some 8.6 inches of rain has fallen in August, Coursen said. "That's a lot of water," he said.