

Wind turbine training to begin

Vancouver-based program will produce technicians following its July launch

Tuesday, May 19 | 9:42 p.m.

BY JULIA ANDERSON

COLUMBIAN STAFF WRITER

After winning accreditation last week, Vancouver's International Air and Hospitality Academy expects to launch its wind turbine technician training program here by July.

The academy has leased 9,000 square feet at 200 Grand Blvd. and soon will begin setting up the space, academy officials said this week.

"We expect to take up to 60 people for the first six-month session, which starts July 13, and another 60 for the session beginning Aug. 3," said Colleen Piller, academy marketing director. "Classes will continue at a one-per-month pace after that."

Training for wind turbine installation and maintenance is being offered through Northwest Renewable Energy Institute, organized as an air academy subsidiary. The energy industry has seen demand for technicians outstrip the supply as wind turbines continue to go up throughout the region.

"The demand is definitely there," Piller said. "Those seeking the training just need to realize that the jobs may not be located in urban areas."

Cost of the six-month program including certification and job placement services is \$11,000.

Program curriculum has been developed in consultation with Vestas, enXco and Columbia Energy Partners, all wind-energy businesses in the Northwest.

The International Air Academy, founded by Arch Miller in 1979, has offered training for the airline and hospitality industries through the air academy and a separate Northwest Culinary Institute.

Tamara Fuller with NAI Norris Beggs & Simpson represented 200 Grand Boulevard landlord JH Kelly LLC in the lease transaction. Wally Hornberger with Coldwell Banker Commercial Bob Bernhardt & Associates represented the air academy.