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Turbine repair plant gives Culver a tour

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STORY CITY — Mid-Iowa's newest entry in the wind energy economy opened its doors to Gov. Chet Culver on Friday.

Workers at Generation Repair will recondition wind turbine gearboxes for Florida-based NextEra Energy.

Plant manager Beth Benson, of Ames, said the facility finished its first wind turbine gearbox on Dec. 17 and is in the process of filling its roster of 23 full-time jobs.

Culver said he visited the plant to underline his administration's commitment to "green jobs."

Culver said he has asked the Iowa Legislature to continue the \$25 million Iowa Power Fund. Power Fund incentives have helped attract NextEra and seven other companies to the state, helping to create more than 2,000 "green power" jobs in spite of the recession, Culver said.

According to the Iowa Department of Economic Development and the city of Story City, NextEra incentives include state grants of \$415,000, five years of property tax abatement and discounts on the purchase of electricity.

NextEra's commitment included the investment of \$18 million in the purchase and expansion of an existing Story City industrial park spec building.

After its second year of operation, the facility is expected to generate about \$500,000 per year in state and local taxes, according to state estimates.

Steve Stengel, director of communications, said the company is planning an open house

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General Manager Frank Irizarry explains the wind turbine generator repair process to Governor Chet Culver at the new NextEra Energy wind turbine generator repair plant on Friday, January 29th, 2010 in Story City, Iowa. Photo by Karl Hauber

on Friday, Feb. 26.

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