

## GE Vernova settles with Nantucket for \$10.5 million

Settlement to cover damages caused by blade failure last year;

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July 11, 2025



Debris from the damaged turbine blade that washed ashore on Nantucket. —Courtesy Town of Nantucket

One year ago this past Sunday, a 351-foot turbine blade at the Vineyard Wind offshore wind site fractured, spilling debris into local waters and disrupting the project for months, casting new uncertainty and sparking local environmental concerns over the industry.

On Friday, the town of Nantucket announced that GE Vernova, manufacturer of the Haliade-X blades used on the Vineyard Wind 1 project, [settled with the town for \\$10.5 million](#). The money is to compensate for the economic losses suffered by the island and local businesses resulting from the turbine blade failure on July 13 last year. A minimal amount of debris from the fractured blade landed on Martha's Vineyard and even parts of the Cape during the incident last summer, but the majority of the debris washed up on Nantucket beaches, forcing closures.

Edgartown officials haven't yet pursued legal action but have communicated with Nantucket and respective legal counsel. There were "different circumstances in terms of the damages," James Hagerty, Edgartown town administrator, said. Jeffrey Madison, administrator for Aquinnah, said the select board hasn't taken any action into litigation and that Vineyard Wind was very proactive in managing and cleaning up debris.

Construction on the project, 15 miles south of the Vineyard, was suspended after the incident by order of the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE). Investigation by GE Vernova found a manufacturing flaw at its blade facility in Quebec. Other blades from that facility were subsequently removed from the site, and blade installation didn't resume until December.

As part of the agreement, the town will establish a community claims fund, to be distributed by an independent third-party administrator, according to a statement from the town. Local businesses can submit claims of economic harm, such as cleanup costs and lost rental profits due to the blade failure. Participants waive their right to sue the manufacturer and Vineyard Wind if they accept compensation.

"Offshore wind may bring benefits, but it also carries risks — to ocean health, to historic landscapes, and to the economies of coastal communities like Nantucket, known worldwide as an environmental and cultural treasure," Nantucket select board member Brooke Mohr said in a statement.

Nantucket, like the Vineyard under the purview of the non-profit Vineyard Power, negotiated a Community Benefit Agreement with Vineyard Wind, but the agreement wasn't designed to include blade technology failures. That is the "responsibility of detailed protocols and emergency plans approved by the federal and state governments," a [statement](#) from the town of Nantucket said. Nantucket instead pursued active dialogue with the Vineyard Wind and GE Vernova on settling potential claims.

“Federal law limits localities’ influence in the design and approval of offshore wind projects, but communities have rights when it comes to the safe operations of the farms,” Greg Werkheiser of Cultural Heritage Partners, the legal counsel for the town, said in the statement.

Vineyard Wind is not a signatory on the settlement. “The Town of Nantucket commends GEV for its leadership in reaching this agreement,” the town said in a written statement Friday. “By contrast, the town has found Vineyard Wind wanting in terms of its leadership, accountability, transparency, and stewardship in the aftermath of the blade failure, and determined that it would not accept Vineyard Wind as a signatory to the settlement.”

An investigation by BSEE into the blade failure remains ongoing.