

Listowel, ON.

September 6, 2012

Mr. David S. Michaud, PhD
Principal Investigator
Consumer and Clinical Radiation Protection Bureau
Healthy Environments and Consumer Safety Branch
Health Canada

Dear Mr. Michaud:

RE: Health Canada's Wind Turbine Noise & Health Study

I would first of all like to express my approval of the Federal Government and Health Canada for their initiative in studying the health impacts of Industrial Wind Turbines. As a resident of a rural Ontario community where there is a proposed Industrial Wind Turbine installation, I would like to bring forward my concerns and my hope that there may be some clear and helpful Federal standards to address human health concerns.

The proposal to place turbines near our farm and in our community by a company called Invenegy is of great concern to my family. It has become evident in the last few months that my daughter is one of that part of the population that suffers immediate health effects when approaching and within a turbine area. Like any other illness from an environmental exposure, some people exhibit symptoms after a short exposure and some

Only after exposure of a year or more and some apparently have or notice no effects. However our daughter has the immediate effects of pressure in her ears, ringing in her ears and headache. The symptoms start about 2 km away from the turbines in the car as we approach the turbine area. The severity of symptoms increase with the duration of stay in the area and symptoms seem to disappear more slowly if she is exposed longer. A one half hour exposure results in symptoms severe enough to have her begging to leave the area.

Wind company spokesman say that these symptoms are the result of the anxiety that comes from the visual cue of wind turbines and the fear generated by the thought of being near them. In other words, it is her own fault for thinking about them and fearing them. This is clearly not the case since her first exposure was driving past wind turbines without any concerns about it, and after the fact, linking the symptoms she suddenly experienced with the location in which they started, that is near turbines. In the 2nd incident, we, the parents, drove her into a turbine area and she was totally unaware of our intentions. The turbines were not visible over the crest of the hill and she had no anticipation or knowledge that we were approaching turbines, and yet she complained of

pressure and headache starting about 2 km before we crested the hill and saw the first turbine. Since then several test visits to turbine fields (but these times with her consent) have repeatedly confirmed the symptoms.

The sudden onset of symptoms may seem extreme to you but her grandmother experienced similar effects when close to Industrial Wind Turbines. Another family acquaintance also experiences discomfort when driving past wind turbines. Anecdotally, but not personally, I have heard of 4 others who experience immediate effects. I have not sought out such people but if I have encountered this level of problem in the limited number of people in my circles, there can be expected to be many more.

It would appear that if the turbines are placed close to our home as proposed (about 1.5 km away), it would no longer be possible for my daughter to continue living at home. We would be involuntarily exposed 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, as long as the wind is blowing. It is totally unacceptable for such a burden to be placed on my family, and for such a violation of my personal property and home.

I understand that the Health Study is to be primarily focused on audible noise. Based on our family's experience of health effects, factors other than simply audible noise are indicated. The 2 km distance of effect and the background noise of automobile travel preclude audible noise as the issue. It suggests that Low Frequency sound or Infrasound or some other as yet unidentified factor(s) is an issue here. Dirty power, stray voltage and electrical hypersensitivity are other effects reported by residents in wind turbine areas. I am recommending that these other factors also be included within the parameters of your study.

In addition to concern about the health and well being of my own family and the other families in the community that I count as neighbours and friends, I have concerns about the placement of this project on prime agricultural land in the most livestock dense area of Ontario. Though the project looks small on Ontario's map, this area produces a significant part of Toronto's (and Ontario's) food out of all proportion to its small size with a heavy representation of dairy, hog, beef and poultry farms. If there are health impacts to people, we can fully expect impacts on other living things like our livestock. Livestock farming is crucial to this area's economy and any impacts on livestock farms will be hugely detrimental to the wider community. I myself own and operate a laying hen farm and have beef cattle as well and I have concerns about my future in farming in this community because of the proposed wind turbines.

My concerns are easily illustrated. In my travels through wind turbine areas such as Ripley, Ashfield-Colbourne-Wawanosh and Kincardine I have observed that livestock farms leave and barns stand empty. Why? Furthermore most houses are boarded up and people move away. The land use changes and becomes cash crop only with very few people living in the turbine area. Why? We would like to know answers. It would appear that those who are not immediately affected by wind turbines stay living there. It would appear that those who are affected leave as soon as it is economically feasible for them to arrange to do so. Such effects on our local community around Listowel

would be devastating both socially and economically and our Provincial government and its institutions are wading into a moral and legal morass for permitting and promoting such effects on local communities.

Any study of the effects of wind turbines needs to include not only those who currently live in the area (possibly because they are not affected) but also those who have had to move away (possible because they were affected). This potential for bias in a study needs to be accommodated.

Our community has expressed near unanimous opposition to this project in a poll that revealed that 96% of residents in the area are not supporting this project. Both municipal councils in the area are also not supporting the project. Furthermore my concerns for my family and my farm operation are shared by other farm communities in Ontario and Canada.

I hope this study will help to address my concerns and establish standards that will protect the health of my family. Perhaps Agriculture Canada can partner with Health Canada in this study to do the research into impacts on livestock farms.

Sincerely,

Resident, Elma, North Perth

Cc. Gary Schellenberger, MP, Perth-Wellington

Cc. Randy Pettapiece, MPP, Perth-Wellington

Cc. Jenny Denhartog, staff member, Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario