

Open Submission

Health Canada Wind Turbine Noise and Health Study

***Health Impacts and Exposure to Wind Turbine Noise: Research Design and
Noise Exposure Assessment***

**Proposal for an Inquiry-Investigation into the Health including Socio-
Economic Impacts of Industrial Wind Turbines in Rural Canada**

September 5, 2012

Submitted by Carmen Krogh, BScPharm and Beth Harrington, BMus

To:

David S. Michaud, PhD
Principal Investigator
Consumer and Clinical Radiation Protection Bureau
Healthy Environments and Consumer Safety Branch
Health Canada
Email: wind.turbine.health.study@hc-sc.gc.ca or david.michaud@hc-sc.gc.ca

Copy:

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
pm@pm.gc.ca

The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq
Minister of Health
minister_ministre@hc-sc.gc.ca

Dear Dr. Michaud,

Re: Health Canada Wind Turbine Noise and Health Study [The Study]

1 Purpose

The purpose of this submission is to propose that Health Canada convene a public inquiry-investigation into the reported adverse health effects associated with industrial wind turbines prior to finalizing the Study design.

While it is encouraging that Health Canada intends to research the reported adverse health issues, expectations are an inquiry–investigation would likely result in an improved understanding of the health including socio-economic impacts of siting industrial wind turbines in quiet rural communities.

It is proposed that:

- Health Canada conducts a public inquiry-investigation into the health, environmental including socio-economic impacts in rural Canada associated with industrial wind turbine facilities.
- The type of inquiry consist of: ¹
 - § A judicial inquiry (under oath / affidavit), or
 - § An open inquiry (not under oath)
- Participants include members of the public including those affected in the past or currently affected, and those with pending projects; First Nations; municipalities; wind energy proponents and industry; other
- A Panel consist of health specialists; community representation (includes those reporting issues, municipality, other); multidiscipline - acoustics, engineering, psychology, social scientists, legal, ethics
- A selection of MPs / Senators from various regions of Canada participate ²
- Processes and criteria be established and announced publicly to ensure openness and transparency

2 Disclaimer

The contents of this submission should not be used to infer any bias for or against wind energy.

This submission is not to be associated with and/or used to characterize any individual and/or organization.

No financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this submission has been received.

Any errors are unintended.

3 Rationale

Krogh and Harrington attended the InterNoise 2012 conference held in New York City, August 19 to 23, 2012 and are participating in The Study design peer review process.³ Krogh presented three papers and was the co-author of a fourth.⁴

A significant number of presentations (over 1500) regarding noise issues in general and noise related to industrial wind turbines were made. In addition, a number of workshops, poster sessions and exhibits were held. Noise in general and noise related to industrial wind turbines is being examined closely.

4 Community Input: an opportunity

An inquiry is consistent with the principles of the Health Canada Decision-Making Framework to “Provide adequate opportunities for affected and interested parties to be involved in the risk management decision-making process.”⁵

Indications are the Michaud et al (2012)⁶ study design paper is narrowly focused on noise; however, there are other issues which can lead to health risks:

- § negative impacts to human and environmental health;
- § negative socio-economic impacts on individuals and communities;
- § loss of decision-making rights of municipalities and communities;
- § the perception of an increased urban/rural divide; and
- § other

Other jurisdictions have conducted a public inquiry-investigation to better understand the health including socio-economic impact of wind energy development.^{7, 8, 9}

Recently an inquiry into the collapse of the ALGO Mall in Elliott Lake was announced for the purpose of sharing personal impacts with the panel. According to Justice Paul R. Bélanger, commissioner of the Elliot Lake Inquiry:

“A public inquiry investigates and reports on matters of substantial public interest to a community.”

“They have a duty to make sure that all issues bearing on the public interest are brought to my attention.”¹⁰

This illustrates the value of an Inquiry and the importance of investigating and reporting on “matters of substantial public interest to a community”.

Those reporting negative health, socio-economic, community related and other adverse effects would welcome a similar Inquiry. To date, the voices of those adversely affected in rural Canada have not been heard. An inquiry to investigate wind turbines and health and other issues would provide the opportunity to obtain first hand knowledge from rural residents who are currently exposed, who have been exposed in the past, and those who expect to be exposed as the result of the anticipated proliferation in the future¹¹ of industrial wind turbines in Canada.

5 Conclusion

A public inquiry would:

- § Follow the principles of public consultation as described in the “*Draft Proposal Researching Human Health and Industrial Wind Turbines: A Dose Response Relationship, Prepared by Carmen Krogh, May 4, 2012*”;
 - o “Convene a public consultation process that is consistent with the principles of the Health Canada Decision-Making Framework to “Provide adequate opportunities for affected and interested parties to be involved in the risk management decision-making process.”¹²
- § Assist with the study design through first hand testimony by those affected in rural Canada;
- § Enhance the knowledge and contribute to the understanding of study team;
- § Support a cost-effective study design;
- § Enhance the level of confidence and trust of rural communities affected by industrial wind turbine installations; and
- § Contribute to a scientific study based on the people-based requirements.

Recommendations: That Health Canada

- § Convene a public inquiry-investigation into the reported adverse health effects associated with industrial wind turbines prior to finalizing the Study design.
- § The inquiry-investigation include issues such as health, environmental, socio-economic impacts in rural Canada associated with industrial wind turbine facilities.
- § The format of the inquiry-inquiry consist of options for participation:
 - o A judicial inquiry (under oath / affidavit), or
 - o An open inquiry (not under oath).
- § Participants include members of the public including those affected in the past or currently affected, and those with pending projects; First Nations; municipalities; wind energy proponents and industry; other.
- § A Panel consist of health specialists; community representation (includes those reporting issues, municipality, other); multidiscipline - acoustics, engineering, psychology, social scientists, legal, ethics.
- § Processes and criteria be established.
- § The public be given an opportunity to comment on the processes and criteria established prior to launching the inquiry-investigation.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Harrington, BMus
326 Inglewood Drive
Toronto, ON, M4T 1J5
Cel 647 588-8647
beth.harrington@sympatico.ca

Carmen Krogh, BScPharm
1183 Cormac Rd, RR4
Killaloe, ON, K0J 2A0
Cel 613 312 9663
Krogh@email.toast.net

-
- ¹ An open inquiry would be simpler with less infrastructure support required but one under oath would be perceived as having more authority. Witnesses could choose the method preferred.
- ² Members of Parliament in ridings could announce this to constituents and invite participation through media announcements, press releases and other communications used.
- ³ Notice to Stakeholders - Health Canada Wind Turbine Noise and Health Study, July 10, 2012
- ⁴ InterNoise 2012, August 19-26, New York City, NY, USA
- ⁵ Reference: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/pubs/hpfb-dgpsa/risk-risques_tc-tm-eng.php
- ⁶ Michaud, David S. PhD, Keith, Stephen E. PhD, Feder, Katya PhD, Bower, Tara, MSc, Health Impacts and Exposure to Wind Turbine Noise: Research Design and Noise Exposure Assessment
- ⁷ New South Wales. Parliament. Legislative Council. General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5, Rural Wind Farms, 2009
- ⁸ The social and economic impact of rural wind farms: Public hearing before the Senate Community Affairs References Committee, Commonwealth of Australia (2011, May 17).
Retrieved from http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/clac_ctte/impact_rural_wind_farms/index.htm
- ⁹ Falmouth Board of Health, Correspondence June 11, 2012, Falmouth, Massachusetts USA, Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MASS DPH)
- ¹⁰ ALGO Mall Inquiry, Elliott Lake Ontario, Justice Paul R. Bélanger, Commissioner, <http://www.elliottlakestandard.ca/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=3601267>
- ¹¹ Science Advisory Board Meeting, Proceedings - Science Advisory Board (SAB), February 1-2, 2012
- ¹² Health Canada Decision-Making Framework http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/pubs/hpfb-dgpsa/risk-risques_tc-tm-eng.php