

Wind-farm health fears grow

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Self-testing by a small group of Waubra residents could reveal a link between wind turbines and health.

South Australian doctor Sarah Laurie, director of the Waubra Foundation, says early indications suggest a possible link between turbine operation and early-morning blood pressure problems.

"It appears for some people that their blood pressure first thing in the morning is elevated if the turbines are going, and is not elevated if the turbine have been off overnight and early in the morning," Dr Laurie said.

Dr Laurie said early-morning blood pressure elevation was a known risk factor for heart attacks. She said eight people were checking their blood pressure north of the Waubra wind farm, within four kilometres of the nearest turbine, and some in the group had no knowledge of when the turbines were operating.

All test participants were between one and four kilometres from the nearest turbine. Dr Laurie said not all in the test group had been affected. "It's very early days but there does appear to be something going on," Dr Laurie said.

Dr Laurie urged anyone living within five kilometres of a wind farm to purchase their own blood-pressure monitoring equipment and see a doctor if their blood pressure was over 140/80.

The Waubra Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation formed to foster independent research into wind farms and health. Earlier this year the National Health and Medical Research Council concluded there was no published scientific evidence to link turbines with adverse health effects.

The Clean Energy Council - representing 400 companies with clean-energy interests - released a report last month indicating that there was no evidence that noise levels as allowed under planning guidelines have an adverse effect on health