

March 21, 2013

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Open letter: Request that the Government of Canada discontinue Health Canada's ongoing experiment on Canadians exposed to wind turbines

Dear Prime Minister Stephen Harper

I am a published peer reviewed author on the subject of wind turbines and health effects ¹ and have written to you previously.

I am writing to request that the Federal government immediately discontinue Health Canada's ongoing experiment on Canadians exposed to wind turbines.

Wind turbines can harm humans if placed too close to residents. ²

Wind turbine sound is perceived by humans to be more annoying than transportation noise or industrial noise at comparable sound pressure levels. ^{3, 4, 5, 6}

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Peer reviewed and other references acknowledge modern wind turbines produce sound characteristics which are plausible causes for annoyance and/or other health effects. These characteristics include amplitude modulation (swooshing);^{7, 8, 9, 10, 11} audible low-frequency noise;^{12, 13, 14} infrasound;^{15, 16, 17} tonal noise, impulse noise;¹⁸ and night time noise.¹⁹

Symptoms of annoyance include stress, sleep disturbance, headaches, difficulty concentrating, irritability, fatigue, dizziness or vertigo, tinnitus, anxiety, heart ailments, and palpitation.^{20, 21, 22, 23}

Representatives of Health Canada, including The Minister of Health²⁴ and Dr. David Michaud,²⁵ acknowledge noise induced annoyance and/or complaints are health effects. Dr. David Michaud is the Principle Investigator/Project Manager of Health Canada's Wind Turbine Noise study.²⁶

Health Canada examined the scientific literature on wind turbine noise and determined the health effect "conclusively demonstrated" from exposure to wind turbine noise is an increase of self-reported general annoyance and complaints (i.e., headaches, nausea, tinnitus, vertigo).²⁷

In Canada and elsewhere some people exposed to wind turbines experience physiological and/or psychological symptoms and/or reduced quality of life and/or degraded living conditions and/or adverse social economic impacts. Reported effects include annoyance and/or sleep disturbance and/or stress related health impacts and/or reduced quality of life.^{28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39}

A 2009 panel report sponsored by American Wind Energy Association and Canadian Wind Energy Association determined "Wind Turbine Syndrome" symptoms such as headaches, nausea, tinnitus, vertigo "... are not new and have been published previously in the context of "annoyance"..." and are the "... well-known stress effects of exposure to noise ..."⁴⁰

In some cases the effects are so severe that some Canadian families have effectively abandoned their homes and/or been billeted by wind energy developers and/or negotiated financial agreements with wind energy developers.⁴¹

Prevention of noise induced health effects is a fundamental health principle.⁴² Harm to human health can be prevented with wind turbine setbacks and sound limits designed to protect humans from the health effects of unwanted wind turbine sound (noise).

Instead Health Canada representatives, including Dr. David Michaud propose wind turbine sound limits which are predicted to result in health effects (increase in percentage

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highly annoyed).^{43, 44, 45} Proponents of wind energy development frequently cite these references co-authored by Health Canada's Dr. David Michaud.

In Ontario a non trivial percentage of Canadians exposed to the sound from wind turbines are expected to experience health effects.⁴⁶

Wind turbine development in Canada has resulted in the creation of a living laboratory where a non trivial percentage of exposed Canadians are predicted to experience "conclusively demonstrated" health effects from exposure to wind turbine noise. For years some Canadians have been exposed to these health effects. Now Dr. David Michaud has been granted the opportunity to lead a Health Canada study which intends to examine these health effects.

In my opinion Health Canada's proposal to expose Canadians to "conclusively demonstrated" and predicted health effects and then research the effect on humans is cruel and unethical. Canadian families should not be treated like rats in a laboratory.

I call on you as the Prime Minister of Canada to:

- discontinue Health Canada's ongoing experiment being conducted on Canadians exposed to wind turbines;
- provide full disclosure of the "conclusively demonstrated" and predicted health effects from exposure to wind turbine noise;
- take immediate action to protect Canadians from the "conclusively demonstrated" and predicted health effects from exposure to wind turbine noise;
- stop this preventable harm to human health.

Informed Canadians look forward to your response.

If you should have any questions or require copies of the references cited in this letter please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment

Open letter conclusively demonstrated wind turbine health effects March 10 2013.pdf

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